At The Village Family Services (TVFS), children and families always come first. TVFS’ mission is to protect children from abuse, preserve families and build a stronger, safer community for all. With a complete spectrum of integrated, strengths- and evidence-based, family-focused and culturally competent services, TVFS can accomplish its mission. In 2012 the agency received the Human Rights Campaign’s All Children – All Families seal, showing cultural competency in working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) youth and families. In addition, the agency collaborates with a variety of other federal, state and local organizations. Specifically to our Foster Care program, the agency is a member of the Foster Family-based Treatment Association (FFTA) which is a national organization to develop, promote and support Treatment Foster Care. The agency’s involvement with FFTA includes recently being involved in establishing a California chapter of FFTA.

TVFS has been contracted by Los Angeles County Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) to provide the comprehensive bilingual/bicultural services for children 0-21 in out-of-home care. These services include, but are not limited to, short and long-term placement, initial assessment of children’s needs, ongoing case management services, visitation, family reunification services, mental health services, and wraparound services. The aforementioned services are provided by a professional staff that is almost 100% bi-lingual, English-Spanish speaking including licensed therapists, case managers, social workers, administrative and executive staff. Staff members have experience and education as required by Title 22/Interim Licensing Standards, the state regulations related to community care facilities.

TVFS receives referrals for youth to be placed in its Foster Care Program (also known as a Foster Family Agency, FFA) from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in Los Angeles, Riverside, Orange and San Bernardino Counties. TVFS does significant outreach to find appropriate resource family homes and then works to match DCFS referrals with agency approved resource families. To assist in this matching process, the agency has a vacancy list with descriptions of the homes, which includes what populations the resource family home is more suitable to serve, such as: teens or adolescents, youth 0-5 and/or bilingual.

To be a Resource Family with TVFS, families must go through a significant approval process which includes:
- Face to face visit/interview with parent recruiter and or Administrator, during this visit a request for history of child abuse/neglect will be signed and submitted to DCFS’s Out of Home Care Management Division (OHCMD)
- An initial home inspection
- An application to become a resource & adoptive parent; if applicant has prior history of fostering, TVFS will contact previous agencies via phone and in writing to discuss any pertinent information
- Completion of a Live Scan background check, checks of Megan’s Law Website at http://meganslaw.ca.gov, the law enforcement database and LAARS/LIS checks.
- Completion of an extensive Trauma Informed Training Curriculum for Resource Families
- Psychosocial Assessment

In addition to traditional treatment Foster Care, TVFS also has some homes that are approved as Intensive Services Foster Care (ISFC), where youth designated by DCFS and Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH), with a higher level of need can be placed. Usually only one ISFC youth can be placed in a home at time; exceptions may be made for sibling placements. These youth are required to have therapy in addition to other services; this therapy is usually the evidenced based practice, Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). Another evidenced based therapy would be used if TF-CBT is not appropriate for the case. Each youth is assigned an ISFC team at TVFS that consists of an In Home Support Counselor, County Social Worker, Agency Social Worker, Therapist, and Resource Parent, all of whom focus on meeting the needs of the youth through the

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Core Practice Model and creating formal and informal supports for the youth. This collaboration is coordinated at Child-Family Team Meetings (CFTs) on a monthly basis. In ISFC homes, to help with the matching process, pre-placement visits occur with the youth and prospective family; this could include an outing, overnight, and/or trial period placement. The placement process has to be pre-approved by DMH and DCFS.

The agency has staff members available to receive crisis/emergency calls and referrals 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. Placements will be made pending availability of an appropriate home for the referral.

TVFS has some limitations in the youth it serves. Youth with extreme medical or mental health needs, such as seizures or if they were known to have a history of fire starting, may not be appropriate for TVFS’s program. In such an instance, TVFS would notify the referring county who is responsible to have additional resources to assist the youth.

Once a youth is placed in a home, staff members visit each resource home once per week during the first 90 days of placement, and every 14 days thereafter depending on the placement. ISFC staff may visit more frequently based on the needs of the youth.

TVFS’s FFA is designed to:

- Provide placement as quickly as possible, on a short-term basis if applicable, and provide assessment and treatment services with an understanding of the youth and their family’s cultural background; and to help county placement agencies alleviate crowding at existing shelter facilities, 24 hours seven days a week.
- Provide intensive reunification services to youth and their families, using a youth-centered and family-focused model. The final objective is to maintain the youth in his/her community, with their extended family, and provide appropriate individually tailored services.
- Provide placement services for siblings who otherwise would be separated.
- Provide an alternative to institutional or group home placement for youth who require intensive treatment, through the use of specially trained and approved therapeutic resource families.
- Provide placement and services geared to meet the needs of emancipating youth.
- Upon contract negotiations, provide supportive placements for pregnant teens, and young mothers with children to ensure family maintenance.
- Depending on the needs of the child, coordinating with other community services.

TVFS FFA’s priority for youth and children has been established in accordance with the Los Angeles County DCFS goals, which are: (1) Safety, (2) Permanency of the child in the home, by reunification with natural family, adoption or legal guardianship; and (3) the Child’s Well-being in all facets. TVFS strives to create the best home environment for each youth in placement.

Each youth in placement has specific personal rights that they are assured by law. These rights are posted in each home and reviewed with the child at placement.

TVFS receives a Case Plan from DCFS for each youth placed in a home. Agency staff members follow that case plan to assist the child in meeting their individual goals. Thirty days after placement the agency compiles a report that covers basic information, conducts a needs assessment and establishes goals using the youths’ words and based upon their strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences. And once that initial report is established, a quarterly report is drafted and adds visitation information as well as treatment status, therapy, schools, medical, independent living

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information, incident reports and progress on goals. These reports are reviewed with the family, shared with the Child’s (County) Social Workers and filed.

Additional services provided in the agency for TVFS’s FFA include:

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<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling, including individual, group and family counseling</td>
<td>Independent Living Skills Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Engagement and/or Visitation as appropriate</td>
<td>Respite Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration with Outside Treatment Providers</td>
<td>Resource Parent Recruitment &amp; Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-Approval Training</td>
<td>On-going Training &amp; Support Services</td>
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<td>Referral Process &amp; Intake</td>
<td>Psychological &amp; Psychiatric Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>For Youth Ages 14 and up, access to TVFS’s Drop In Center, including</td>
<td>Anger Management, Occupational Training and Healthy Recreation</td>
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| A youth may leave a placement for a variety of reasons that could include: | reunification, adoption, to be closer to a sibling/home school, different levels of care needed, interagency placement change and/or removal at the discretion of DCFS. Prior to discharge from the agency a Termination/Transfer/Discharge report is prepared to provide a summary of most recent medical/dental, therapy, school, birth family information as well as current recommendations for the youth. After leaving placement and the agency, a youth could return if a reunification fails or if they ran away from placement. However, a contract requirement by DCFS states that a placement cannot be left open without the youth for 7 days. So the youth would only return to the same placement if it was again available. Foster Care is funded through grants, program contracts with the Los Angeles County Departments of Mental Health and Children and Family Services, philanthropic contributions, and in-kind support. Additional support comes from interest and dividend income, special events, and unrealized gain. There is no fee for families to participate in our Foster Care program.

Huntington Park Office: 6728 Seville Avenue, Huntington Park, CA 90255

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