

A Family For Every Child (AFFEC)



FAMILY PRESERVATION PROGRAM

There are families in our community at risk for child abuse and/or neglect. These families need guidance to move on from the past and into the next chapter of their lives, learning how to make positive changes for themselves and their families.

AFFEC's **Family Preservation Program** focuses on keeping the family unit together. We believe these early and often preventative steps can make the difference between a family successfully parenting their children and losing them to the foster care system. Effective family preservation efforts could keep many children from the trauma of entering foster care. AFFEC utilizes informal (self-referrals and community partners) and formal (DHS) referral processes, as well as AFFEC's own programs to identify families in need.

AFFEC's Family Preservation Program is an intervention and prevention program that is both culturally responsive and community-based. Through this program, parents and their children/youth become empowered to create positive and long term change for their families

AFFEC's Family Preservation Program utilizes mutual support (the giving and getting of help). Parent mentors lead by example to achieve personal growth, improve family functioning, and achieve parental and child/youth resilience.

Our Family Preservation and Parent Mentor program works with families to bring about constructive change through support, guidance, instruction and training. The ultimate goal is to maintain children safely at home, in order to spare them the trauma of separation.

Keeping the Family Unit Together: Parents are looking for a supportive, non-judgmental environment to learn new parenting strategies and develop leadership and advocacy skills for their families. AFFEC recognizes the strengths and knowledge of families and the key role they play in the lives of not only their own family members, but in the lives of other families on a similar journey.

AFFEC's Family Preservation Program is a *Parent Mentor Program* that supports families connecting with one another throughout the community. This program pairs parents with trained mentors who can provide support, encouragement, and information on ways to advocate for your child and family.

Where We Come In: Neighbors help neighbors. Every day they use their time and their gifts to strengthen families and communities. What we are offering is the gift of time; a hand up rather than a handout. Money can help in many different ways as we are all aware; taking time to empower individuals and give them the tools to become better parents to a child who is part of our community is priceless. Many, work hard to deal with the challenges of environments where unemployment, violence, and drugs are taking their toll. In the face of these obstacles, community residents look for the connections to vital resources to improve their odds of succeeding. How important and valuable is the simple gift of friendship? How rewarding would it be to pass on valuable life skills to a person or family in need of a hand up to the next step in life?

It's All About Whom You Know: There are many community members who possess valuable tools needed for success. How valuable would it be for a family having financial difficulties to have access to a financial advisor? A working parent with limited education may not be equipped to help a child failing in school, but how

valuable would a tutor be to this family's success? There are countless other scenarios in which bridging the gap between the low-income and established members of our community is key to success.

AFFEC staff continuously seeks out new partnerships with local community agencies in the hopes of creating as many avenues to refer parents too. Depending on their specific need, this could include, but is not limited to housing assistance, financial advice, job counseling, continued education, and much, much more! Our hope is that by educating the parents on how to help themselves through community resources that are already available, we will empower them to transition on to the next phase of their lives successfully and with several useful skills to pass on to the next generation, ending the cycle of poverty and abuse one family at a time.

Parent Mentors: AFFEC already has a well-established mentor training model. AFFEC's Parent Mentor Program develops community members who make a one-year commitment, after having passed a rigorous DHS and FBI background check. Mentors attend a mandatory monthly training covering such topics as essential parenting skills, parental supervision, hygiene issues, creating budgets, creating emergency plans, and non-physical means of discipline. AFFEC staff is adept at connecting low-income clients with existing community resources.

When a family expresses an interest in having a Parent Mentor, to either a Family Resource Specialist or Social Worker, the family is referred to the Parent Mentor Program. The Parent Mentor Coordinator will contact the family, explain the program, and find out what the family is looking for in a mentor. After obtaining a thorough understanding of the family's needs and preferences, the Coordinator will try to match the parent with an appropriate volunteer from Support for Family's pool of trained mentors.

Matches are based on the needs expressed by the family, so each family is able to determine the kind of mentor they need.

We work with families as a team to see to it that the family is provided services and training (e.g., job training, job search assistance, housing, anger management training, respite care). There is monthly reporting and interaction with all the members of the team. Qualitative outcomes we seek include strengthening parent-child attachment, at risk families and others marginalized by the system. The Parent Mentor Team is made up of clinical staff, case managers and Parent Mentor who provide individual and group treatment to parents, their children and other family members. Services are provided in the family's home as well as in community settings.

Quantitative outcomes we seek include increasing the number of families we serve and increasing access to community resources for families of modest means and living under challenging circumstances.

AFFEC NEEDS MENTORS FOR PARENTS. YOUR TOUCH ON THE LIVES

OF THESE FAMILIES IS IMPORTANT, GOOD AND LASTING. THANK YOU.

Call us at (541) 343-2856



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