



Young Children in Care (YCIC)



DCFS BIRTH TO FIVE PROGRAM

Healthy Development Depends on Healthy & Safe Relationships



BACKGROUND

As of 2022, children aged birth to five make up 30% of the total child population in Los Angeles County; however, they make up 49% of all the new entries into foster care with 23% of those entries being Black children.* As of January 2024, per DCFS data, this age group makes up an average of 40% of all open cases in DCFS. Children in this age group are extremely vulnerable due to the critical period of physical and socio-emotional development. However, young children's brains are the most malleable, which means that the earlier we can intervene to strengthen nurturing supportive relationships between children and their caregivers, the more likely we can have a positive impact on their life trajectory.

YCIC BIRTH TO FIVE PROGRAM

The YCIC Birth to Five Program is designed to strengthen emerging practices and policy guidelines around engaging, assessing and servicing newborns, infants, toddlers and preschoolers (ages birth to five) and their caregiver(s). Staff within this program will be supporting countywide birth to five work, as well as supporting YCIC Birth to Five Program practices in DCFS regional offices. There is a Birth to Five policy as of February 2024 to assist CSWs in better assessing and servicing children and families from birth to age five.

Currently, the YCIC Birth to Five Program has begun DCFS office-level support in four offices: Palmdale, Pasadena, Belvedere and Vermont Corridor. This support includes building an office-based birth to five program, resource gathering, case presentations, team building, training and more.

In addition, the YCIC Birth to Five Program now has a dedicated email inbox for anyone to contact for support countywide.

ABCs
ALL BABIES NEED LOVING AND ATTUNED CAREGIVERS

123s

- 1 Observe, assess & document the relationship between the baby and each caregiver.**
- 2 Find ways to strengthen the relationship between the baby and each caregiver.**
- 3 When unsure about the relationship, CONSULT.**

Practice Tip: Assessing Nurturing & Attachment
Take a closer look at interactions between children and all adults in the home. How does the caregiver show love and support to the child? How does the child respond? How does the parent describe the child?

ASK THE YCIC BIRTH TO FIVE PROGRAM

birthto5program@dcfs.lacounty.gov

- Case Questions
- Resource Questions
- Data and Outcome Questions
- Training Related Questions
- Request for a Case Consultation
- Other Birth to Five Support Questions

Practice Tip: Assessing Social Connections

Everyone needs help in raising children. Who is there to help support the caregiver and child? What do others say about the child's experience with caregiver? Who knows about the safety worries and how can they help?

WHAT'S TO COME

Each service area is uniquely individual. The YCIC Birth to Five office-level framework will be developed in areas where our program can support each office's specific needs. Further, the program will support a countywide transdiscipline model to bring all county programs and community stakeholders to support the needs of young children and their families. Some areas include, but are not limited to:

- Case Consultation
- Training Support
- Central and Regional Resource Building
- YCIC Birth to Five Office-Level Program Development
- Case Presentation Framework
- Data Collection
- And More!