

2021 Springboard Prize for Child Welfare
Clark County Department of Family Services
121 S. Martin Luther King Blvd, Las Vegas, NV 89106
702-455-5444 / FAX 702-385-2999
martinbv@clarkcountynv.gov
www.clarkcountynv.gov/family-services

One Sentence Summary of the idea:

In collaboration with the local public health district, this program delivers early intervention, prevention & supportive services to vulnerable families at risk of child welfare involvement to reduce the # of children affected by abuse & neglect.

Idea Description:

The Thrive by Five program is an innovative program utilizing a proactive approach serving families to prevent child abuse or neglect. This program is a collaboration with the Department of Family Services (DFS), Southern Nevada's local public child welfare agency, & the Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD), to deliver early intervention, prevention & supportive services to families with children between the ages of 0-3 years with risk factors that could lead to child abuse & neglect. Launched in 2020, Thrive by Five has begun to impact our community by establishing a rapport within our black, brown, low-income & indigenous communities across Southern Nevada who have had trust issues with the child welfare system. It has bridged the gap of preventative services, public health and child abuse & neglect for those families.

Thrive by Five gathers quantitative & qualitative data of the number of children that have been referred to DFS before the age of three & partners with SNHD who provides an evidence-based approach to public health. An analysis of previous abuse & neglect reports will assist with identifying demographics, generate information about children born with health risks & provide additional insight about the families from information provided by vital records.

Our primary goal is to offer comprehensive services, leverage resources, increase public awareness, & education and collaborate with community partners that have expertise. Thrive by Five offers supportive services to at-risk children & the entire family in order to decrease the number of children affected by abuse & neglect. Those services include: application assistance, community referrals, baby items, behavioral, birth certificates, childcare information, clothing, dental, education, employment, food, home visits, housing, hygiene, identification, infant needs, medical, mental health, pregnancy, prenatal care, resources, respite, special needs, substance exposed infants, transportation & vocation training.

With this funding, we will be providing services while increasing programming efforts to develop advanced ways to support child abuse & neglect prevention as a public health issue by 1) expanding our reach beyond what is being reported vs. the number of children that have been impacted 2) promoting mental/emotional health as a prevention to the negative impact that abuse & neglect can have on a child's physical/emotional well-being resulting in cognitive delays 3) addressing abuse & neglect as a social problem that can directly & indirectly impact our economic & social development through hospital costs, medical treatment as a result of physical abuse, lower academic achievement & possibly leading to adult criminality 4) increasing resources & collaborations to create a continuum of care & provide long-term access to assistance to reduce risks & recidivism of abuse & neglect.

Why choose CCDFS:

The Clark County Nevada Department of Family Services (CCDFS) is the local public agency whose role is to help keep children safe. The agency was formed in July 2002 in response to the merger of state and county child welfare services and serves an estimated population of 2.267 million people in Clark County (United States Census Bureau). CCDFS currently has over 900 staff including child welfare workers, administrators, IT professionals, fiscal staff, clerical and support staff, and Quality Control responsible for intake and assessment of allegations of child abuse and neglect as well as permanency case management for children in foster care, foster home licensing, independent living services, parenting project and adoptions. In an average month CCDFS receives 2,476 referrals resulting in 971 assessment or investigations. CCDFS coordinates services with other local government agencies such as LV Metro Police, Social Services, Juvenile Justice Services, the District Attorney, the Southern Nevada Children's Assessment Center, and various community partners. CCDFS has developed and maintains many diverse local nonprofit agency partnerships and support services, and receives and administers resources from Federal, State, and local funding sources in a consistent and responsible manner as evident by the Internal Auditor's Report. As the local child welfare agency, CCDFS has the established resources and support from profit and nonprofit community agencies and with these supports pioneer as an agent of change to raise awareness that child abuse prevention is a public health issue not just an abuse and neglect prevention issue.

The Thrive by Five program will have full access to the existing programs through the Department of Family Services and Clark County Social Services. Through established efforts and achievements in child safety from abuse and neglect, DFS esteems to be the Center of Excellence in Health and Human Services in Southern Nevada. The Thrive by Five program can increase its footprint in abuse and neglect prevention for children, by developing new partnerships and increasing services to families at the preventative stage and offer supportive services to enhance caregiver protective capacity to avoid underprivileged or at-risk children from entering into the child welfare system.