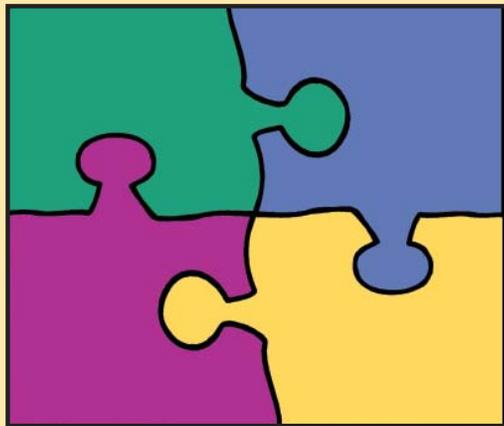


Is the Parent Partners Program the only way a parent can be involved?

No, the Parent Partners Council hosts Partnering With Parents information fairs from time to time at various locations around the state. Workers will invite parents to these events as well as other events.

Thank you for helping us serve you and your children.

PARTNERING



WITH PARENTS

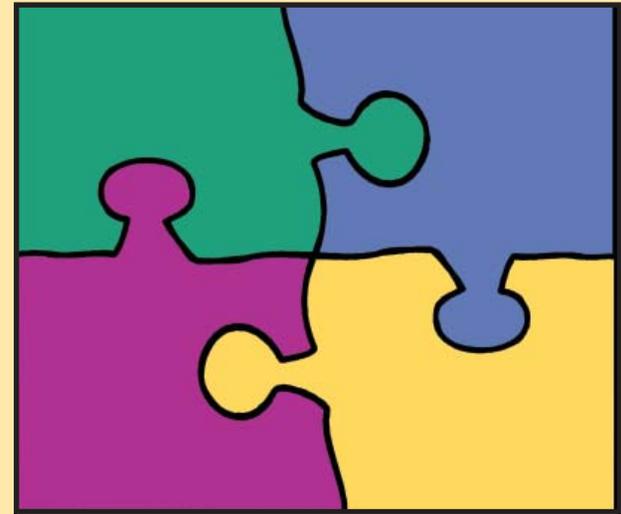
Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services
www.DCFS.illinois.gov



Pat Quinn
Governor

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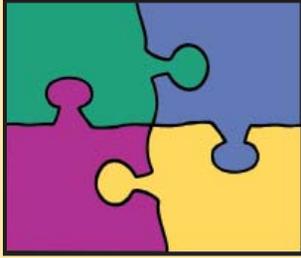
PARTNERING



WITH PARENTS

TRI-COUNTY CHAPTER,
GREATER PEORIA

DCFS Parent Partners Councils
Work with Parents to Build Strong Families



Welcome!

Welcome to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Partnering with Parents Program, of and for families created through birth, who are served by DCFS and private child welfare agencies.

Our goal in partnering with parents is to assist them on their journey to become stronger and more flexible, to develop a rich network of support, to be able to access public and private resources when they need them, and to use knowledge of their families to create strong, healthy relationships with each child.

DCFS needs your help to teach us what we need to do and how we need to change in order to better assist you on your journey. We recognize that you are committed to doing the hard work necessary to bring your children back home or to keep them home. Be assured that we are committed to working with you to provide the resources and support as you strengthen yourself and your family.

In this process, caseworkers and the court are empowered by the state to help make decisions on your behalf. This is frustrating, but it helps the child welfare agency caring for your children to reunite you and your child as soon as possible, or to help you keep your children at home. We need you to help us learn how we can assist you on your journey. Your caseworker is best able to make good decisions with your collaboration and participation.

The Partnering with Parents Council is governed by parents with assistance from staff advisors, and it provides a voice for parents in the child welfare system. Please join us and help us build stronger families.

What is the Parent Partners Council?

The Parent Partners Council is an official council DCFS created to advise the department on issues affecting families with whom we are working. Parents participate in discussions and review and comment about agency policies, procedures, programs and practices for families who are served by the child welfare system.

The goal of the Parent Partners Council is to provide families with a voice in the policies, programs and services provided to them. The Partnering with Parents Council is one way parents can assist DCFS to see, hear and understand the needs of families as they journey toward reunification or work to stay together.

Parent Partners members discuss areas of concern or interest. Council members may discuss and make recommendations to the department. DCFS staff may also ask members for comments on issues and to provide opinions and suggestions about child welfare programs and services. Parents may also request to have speakers come and talk about topics of interest.

Who may participate in the Partnering with Parents Council?

Parents of families DCFS and private agencies serve are the most important members of the council. A parent who is receiving DCFS services now or received service in the past may participate. The experience of these family experts is needed to shape the thinking and direct the planning of DCFS. Other council members may include caseworkers, managers and program staff.

When and where does the Partnering with Parents Council meet?

The Tri-County Chapter meets the last Wednesday of each month, except for November when the meeting is held on the third Wednesday. There is no meeting in December. The meetings are held from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at White Oaks New Leaf Substance Abuse Treatment Center, 3500 New Leaf Lane, Peoria IL. Parents are reimbursed for childcare and transportation to attend these meetings. A DCFS manager plans and facilitates the meetings, but parent members are encouraged to take leadership roles and set their agendas. Questions about the Tri-County Chapter should be directed to Shirley Williams at 309-671-7900. Parents may also call Ray Gates at 217-524-2422.