



### **(RE) Services Background and Operational Standards**

(RE) Services was started from the perspective of foster parents with a focus on flexibility to provide better opportunity for parents to see their children. (RE) Services aims to reduce recidivism and promote reunification by providing the time necessary to restore family bonds, trust, and parental abilities.

- No visits during critical school hours
- Flexible hours Open 8am to 8pm seven days a week
- Open on Thanksgiving and Christmas to give parents time around and during those holidays
- Provide transportation services to assist resource families

### **Locations in Montana**

Great Falls, Billings, Missoula, Helena, and Havre.

### **Services THE LADDER TO REUNIFICATION**

#### **Visitation Coaching (VC)**

Advocates provide direct support to families for visitation at one of our child friendly visitation rooms or in the home whenever possible. The focus is on the needs of the children and the strength of the parents. Continued involvement in family time creates an opportunity to increase engagement with other services such as mental health, substance abuse services and CPS worker interaction and engagement.

#### **Nurturing Parent**

Advocates educate families on parenting skills and child interactions implementing specific curriculum within each meeting that discuss appropriate child development and interactions.

#### **Family Based Services (FBS)**

Advocates help to stabilize families by providing support with housing, Medicaid/SNAP benefits, education and resources for mental health services and substance use disorders. During reunification families are supported with life skills and continued parent education within their environment.

#### **TIME with parents and children creates successful reunifications.**

At the time of referral when parents are in crisis and child trauma is high (RE) begins visits with two (2 hour) weekly visits. As parents demonstrate engagement and are actively working with CPS and other providers, another 2 hours of visitation is added. The aim is to give parents time with their kids almost every other day. Additionally, as families begin the reunification process FBS services step in to provide additional time in the home to teach life skills, further parent-child interaction, and maintain long-term stability.

#### **Results of University of Providence Capstone Study Project of Services**

Out of 140 cases that were closed while in services with (RE) as of 12/1/2021:

- **72% of families reunified**
- 4% of families were compliant when their case was moved to another jurisdiction
- 10% of cases were adopted or placed into guardianships
- 14% of cases were closed by CFSD due to non-engagement

Our early data demonstrates that families who are in services for 9-15 months have the highest rates of success. Those families often have engaged in multiple services, particularly VC and FBS with RE, and have active engagement in mental health, substance abuse recovery services, and with their CPS worker.

This data and continued experience suggest that the more structured time that parents have with their children throughout the process the higher the chances of successful reunification.

**The strongest indicator of reunification and family success is structured time spent together.**