



The County of Ventura Human Services Agency is the central resource for public services that promote personal independence and a strong community. Our mission is to strengthen families, promote self-sufficiency, and support safety, health and well-being. Serving more than 10 percent of the county's population, we provide a safety net for individuals and families who need assistance with basic necessities, such as food, housing and health care.

We offer programs and services that strengthen family bonds and ensure the protection of children, the elderly and dependent adults. Additionally, we help people secure employment through education, training, job placement and basic job search skills.

Through our delivery of local benefits and services, we help people of all ages develop the tools they need to live healthy and productive lives.



Referral line for
health, human and
community services.



COUNTY OF VENTURA
Toll-Free: (866) 904-9362
www.vchsa.org

Team Decision-Making



Ensuring the
brightest future
for our children



Children deserve the best

Each year, over 300 children in Ventura County make a transition – moving from the home they have known with their birth parents to a new home with foster parents who are reliable, stable and committed to caring for this child.



Strong teams make the best decisions

The Human Services Agency is here to help

The Human Services Agency's Children & Family Services works to ensure that the best possible placement decisions are made for children in foster care. To help make that happen, Team Decision-Making (TDM) meetings are scheduled to bring together the people who care most about the family to provide the best solutions for the child. As a team, they join their personal and professional knowledge to make the best decisions for the safety and placement of the child, while preserving strong family and community ties.

Everyone benefits from a TDM

Building trust through communication

Each person at a TDM meeting has information to share that will add to the child's and family's success. Parents share the unique details about their child only they can know. They talk about the child's favorite toys or sleep patterns, their reading skills or tutoring needs, favorite sports and things to do for fun. Other team members add their ideas and experience.

During the meeting, team members use their combined knowledge and experience to explore all options and find the best course of action for the child's next transition.

Scheduling a TDM meeting

Good timing helps create good decisions

Knowing the right time to schedule a team meeting can make all the difference. TDM meetings occur when a child has been separated from his home and family; is in out-of-home care and a change of placement is needed; is returning to his birth parents' home; or when a permanent plan for adoption, a legal guardian, or long-term foster care needs to be developed.

At the TDM

The who, what, and how of the meeting

The TDM participants (or team members) can include parents, family members or care givers, as well as people who support the family, social workers or supervisors, and community representatives. Family advocates, service providers and others identified by the family or social worker may also attend.

Each TDM follows guidelines to ensure that all participants contribute and that they are direct, honest and respectful of others. Each person is given the chance to be heard, and everyone makes a commitment to support the decisions made at the meeting. A trained facilitator guides the meeting, makes introductions, explains the TDM guidelines, and identifies the child's and family's needs and the community resources available. The facilitator outlines the Child Safety Plan—a plan agreed upon by the family, community and agency that will keep the child safe either at home, with relatives, or in a foster home—and talks about placement options. At the end of the meeting, each participant receives a written version of the agreed-upon plan.

Family-to-Family: principles for positive solutions

Team Decision-Making is a strategy of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Family-to-Family initiative, which is dedicated to improving the outcomes for children in foster care. TDM is based on the principles that families need the help of strong, nurturing communities and that child welfare agencies can best help children and families when everyone involved can work as a team.

