

# STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROGRAM



## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Roanoke Valley Youth Advocate Program's (YAP) Strengthening Families Program works with parents to keep families at risk of out-of-home placement together or reunify children with their parents/caregivers. The goal is to reduce future placement and safety concerns by building parents' supports, competencies and decision-making skills. We use the minimum sufficient levels of care developed by Rose Wentz to define desired outcomes.

Strengthening Families offers intensive in-home services for 3-6 months that help parents safely care for their children by offering support across a number of life domains, including parent education, household management and maintenance, appropriate discipline techniques, positive family interactions, connection with supports in the community and improving family dynamics. Available 24/7, staff work with families 2-3 times a week using the "teachable moment" model, assisting parents in the day-to-day activities of the home.

No family will be refused services or ejected from services because of challenges that arise. YAP partners with parents in the planning process and empowers them in taking responsibility for the care and development of their children.

## Examples of some of the activities available through the program:

- Assist in house maintenance; monitoring skills and helping parents keep their home clean and manageable.
- Coaching and supporting parents through interactions with their child(ren), including remaining consistent, following through and/or providing positive feedback.
- Assist parents with finding community support in areas such as planning and preparing nutritious meals and budgeting household finances.
- Assist parents in making and keeping appointments for their themselves and their child(ren).
- Provide transportation to appointments if necessary and assist parents in securing their own transportation for future appointments to ensure sustainability.
- Assist in setting up household routines to secure stability and predictability.
- Assist families in understanding court proceedings/orders and ensure the orders are being followed to the letter and spirit in which they are written.
- Identify desire of parents to further their education and assist them in navigating through services whether it is financial aid applications, the YAP Endowment Fund Scholarship application, or enrolling in a local trade school.
- Assist parents in making appropriate plans for childcare and how to interview prospective sitters/childcare centers.

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## Services Include:

- Rapid engagement
  - Strength-based Assessment
  - Child-Family Team
  - Individualized Service Plan
  - Safety Planning and 24/7 Crisis Support
  - Nurturing Parents Curriculum
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## Sample Service Delivery Flow

Referral to Strengthening Families Program



Staff calls referral source to discuss emergent needs and non-negotiables to be addressed upon intake.



Services begin within 24-48 hours of receipt of referral or sooner if requested. Assessment process begins with parent and family.



Staff completes crisis and safety plan. Plan includes emergent needs identified by CPS worker and/or court system.



Set up team meeting with all service providers within 2 weeks of intake and continue services to family.



Team Meeting occurs; after Team Meeting is conducted the Individualized Service Plan (ISP) is created and will include all life domains and in-home "teachable moments" for family interactions. Parental education opportunities are maximized.



Continue to monitor and evaluate progress addressing parental and family needs as they arise as well as service provider concerns. Make modifications to safety plans and goals as needed.



Re-convene team meetings every 6 weeks (at least – more frequent if needed).



Continue to assist family in navigating systems and advocating through systems to overcome obstacles.



Prepare family for discharge with strong discharge plan and resources identified and agreed upon by all team members at least 30 days before case closing.



Close case and continue to monitor progress for 6 months post discharge.