

To Be a Cultural Broker

Cultural Brokers will

-be African Americans who will serve to ensure maximum cultural bonding.

-possess knowledge of the child welfare system and/or juvenile/dependency court operations.

-be able to effectively and objectively assess situations and think critically in order to react intuitively under pressure and in time of emergency.

-be able to speak in public in a professional manner.

-provide emotional support and guidance to families involved with the DCFS by participating in Child and Family Team meetings.

-be accessible to the families and meetings and follow up on agreements from case plans.

-be willing and available to monitor child parent visits, provide transportation to appointments, assist with the enhancement of parenting skills, etc, as the need arises.

-be available to attend 5 days of intensive training on topics pertinent to the role of Cultural Brokers including, but not limited to, the law and child abuse, cultural awareness, child development, and best practices in child welfare.

-have a schedule that will allow for a volunteer commitment of at least one year to serve as a Cultural Broker with DCFS.

General information about DCFS

DCFS is the County of Los Angeles agency that investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect, provides services to strengthen families in order to reduce risk of abuse and neglect, and oversees foster care placements and adoptions for children and youth in the greater Los Angeles area. With 18 regional offices scattered throughout the County, DCFS provides needed case management services to families and children. DCFS is the largest child welfare agency in the United States, supervising approximately 36,000 children every year.

DCFS Mission:

The Department of Children and Family Services, with public, private and community partners, provides quality child welfare services and supports so children grow up safe, healthy, educated and with permanent families.

DCFS Goals:

- Improve child safety
- Decrease timelines to permanency
- Reduce reliance on out-of-home care
- Improve self-sufficiency
- Increase child and family well-being
- Enhance organizational excellence



Additional Information

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer Cultural Broker or would like more information about the Cultural Brokers Program, contact the DCFS Volunteers and Interns Section at VIP@dcfs.lacounty.gov

L.A. County Department of Children and Family Services

425 Shatto Place
Los Angeles, CA 90020
www.lacdcfs.org

Child Protection Hotline

1.800.540.4000

Adoptions and Foster Care Information

1.888.811.1121

Acting Director

Brandon T. Nichols

Los Angeles County
Department of Children and Family Services
In collaboration with
The Cultural Brokers Program

**Cultural Brokers
are
Adults 18 years and older**



**The Cultural Brokers...
A Partnership between
The Community and its Families**





What is the Cultural Brokers Program?

Throughout the United States, African American children are overrepresented in the client populations of child welfare agencies. This problem is a fact and the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services is trying hard to change this outcome.

- The Cultural Brokers Program uses volunteers from the community to provide services and support to families

Who can serve as Cultural Brokers?

Cultural Brokers are African American community members, who participate in meetings to help families understand the procedures and expectations of the child welfare system.

Cultural Brokers are knowledgeable of the DCFS and Children's Court systems and will assist families as they go through the child welfare process. They support and help families towards their goal of doing what is best for the children and family.



How will Cultural Brokers Support the Family?

The Cultural Broker speaks on behalf of the family to help communicate the strengths of the family.

They work to improve the relationship between DCFS and the families it serves by asking questions and helping families voice concerns.

What is the Purpose of Cultural Brokers?

- Provide advocacy for parents
- Help the family communicate with DCFS to know family strengths
- Keep children safe from harm
- Prevent families from entering the Foster Care System, whenever possible
- Lessen the likelihood that children will experience extended stays in the Foster Care System
- Ensure that families have a clear understanding to go through the child welfare process

Volunteer Cultural Broker Vision:
 Volunteer Cultural Brokers are liaisons to increase the quality of the relationship between DCFS and African American families. Volunteer Cultural Brokers support African American families by strengthening them to voice their concerns and highlight their strengths.



What Does the Data Say about Disproportionality and Disparity within DCFS?

Disproportionality refers to the extent to which children are over- or under- represented in the child welfare system relative to their proportions in the census population. Disparity refers to the unequal or inequitable treatment of one group as compared to another.

As of calendar year 2014, African American children represented 8.0% of the child population in LA County, yet 23.8% of the population in care.

Race/Ethnicity	Child Population (N)	Child Population (%)	Children in Care (N)	Children in Care (%)	Disproportionality Ratio	Disparity Index Compared w/ White
Hispanic/Latino	1,700,093	63.54%	6,275	63.41%	0.998	1.623
White/Caucasian	472,174	17.65%	1,074	10.85%	0.615	1.000
Black/African-American	212,818	7.95%	2,358	23.83%	2.996	4.871
American Indian/Alaskan Native	3,954	0.15%	24	0.24%	1.641	2.669
Asian/Pacific Islander	286,732	10.72%	165	1.67%	0.156	0.253
Total	2,675,771	100.0%	9,896	100.0%		

Data Sources: The California Child Welfare Indicators Project, CWS/CMS 2015 Quarter 1 extract, as of August 21, 2015; Child population data source extracted from the Department of Finance, as of August 21, 2015.

The Cultural Brokers Program is implemented throughout LA County in an attempt to address the overrepresentation of African Americans and Native Americans in the Foster Care System.



“Black Lives Matter: Bridging Institutions and the Streets”

