

SECTION 5: LEARNING ABOUT SERVICES FOR YOUR FAMILY IN YOUR OWN HOME



WHAT ARE IN-HOME SERVICES? WHAT IS THEIR PURPOSE?

The main purpose of in-home services is to help you stay together as a family while providing services to support your family. In-home services are different from traditional office-based services because they take place in your own home, not in and around your community. In-home services help you learn the skills you need to provide care and protection for your children, and prevent out of home placement. If your child is already placed away from your home, in-home services can help you and your child live together again.

In-home services have many goals to assist in supporting your family

1. Improve the safety & well-being of your child & family
2. Enhance family functioning
3. Increase competence in parenting skills
4. Foster a sense of self-reliance
5. Reduce risk factors
6. Increase protective factors
7. Stabilize your family

WHILE ENGAGING IN IN-HOME SERVICES, YOU CAN EXPECT THE FOLLOWING:

- Your family will be encouraged to take charge of your own lives
- Your family will be an active partner in all of the services referred by DCS
- Services will be in your own language and respectful of your culture
- Your family's basic needs will be addressed, such as food, shelter, clothing, health care, childcare, training for employment, etc.
- Services to meet your family's individual needs, such as parenting skills, and counseling.
- In-home services vary in length (number of weeks or months) and intensity (number of hours per week or month) depending on the individual needs of your family.

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTERVENTION IN IN-HOME SERVICES?

Yes. There are different levels of intervention that can occur with in-home services. They include:

Voluntary In-Home Services

Voluntary in-home services are services offered to you and your family in your own home. During voluntary in-home services, there is no court involvement, and your child remains in the home. You have an assigned Department of Child Safety Specialist who will visit with you and the service providers working with your family at least once a month.

In-Home Intervention

In-home interventions are offered to you and your family when court oversight is recommended while your family participates in voluntary in-home services. During an in-home intervention the court becomes involved, however only a judge is assigned, there is no court case unless concerns about the safety of the child develops. During an in-home intervention, the parent/guardian keeps both physical and legal custody of their child while the parent/guardian participates in voluntary in-home services. These services are outlined in the family's case plan and are short term (up to one year), designed to enhance caregiver protective capacities present within the family's system.

In-Home Dependency

During an in-home dependency, DCS has legal custody of the child; however, the child remains in the home with their parent/guardian. During an in-home dependency, the court becomes involved, and a

The decision to participate in an in-home intervention, or in-home dependency is not made in isolation. These decisions are made after the family meets with DCS at a Team Decision Making Meeting, and the team decides together which option will work best for your family.

dependency petition is filed. The court sets hearings to review the family's progress, usually every six months. During the in-home dependency, the parent/guardian engages in services, in their own home, and outlined in the case plan. DCS will provide services or refer the family to services that address the risk factors that prevent the family from ensuring the child's health and safety without DCS involvement.

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROGRAMS OFFERED DURING IN-HOME SERVICES?

Yes. There are several different types of in-home services offered to families who are involved with the Department of Child Safety.

Family Preservation - The focus of Family Preservation is to improve the safety and well-being of families, strengthen the family functioning, increase the protective factors, and enhance parental/caregiver protective capacities through a set of family-centered services. These services are provided by an In-Home Team consisting of a therapist and a family support worker. There are two levels of service:

- Intensive Family Preservation is needed when a child is at immediate risk of being removed from the home. These services are provided for four months.
- Moderate Family Preservation is provided when moderate conditions exist within the home and there is no safety threat, but there is a risk of future abuse or neglect. These services are provided for three months.

When a referral for Family Preservation Services is made, the family will be contacted within 24 hours, and an intake will be scheduled within 48 hours after the first contact. Once the family agrees to services, and a comprehensive assessment has been completed, a family service plan will be developed. The family preservation In-Home Teams will assist families to handle many issues that may be causing stress within the family, such as conflict resolution and anger management, applying problem solving skills and developing positive parenting techniques, counseling, budgeting, nutrition and managing the household, in addition to many more services, including connecting families to community resources for ongoing support. If concrete services are needed such as utility payments, food, and household items, the In-Home Team can provide the family with flexible funds available through the program.

Family Support – Building Resilient Families is a program designed for families whose children are assessed as safe, but the families need assistance and guidance to strengthen family protective factors: parental resilience, social connections, concrete supports in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional competence of children. The Building Resilient Families services are available for cases that are closing after an investigation; non-dependency cases that remain open for DCS oversight or additional assessment; and young people with a goal of Extended Foster Care. The main goal is to help families stay together, and avoid further involvement with DCS.

Family Reunification/Placement Stabilization - The focus of this service is to support and enhance the family unit during the process of reunifying children with their parent/caregivers or while stabilizing children in out-of-placement living arrangements. There are two service levels:

Family Reunification: Services for families with complex needs or intensive behavioral health challenges requiring therapeutic intervention to safely reunify a child with their family once the Conditions for Return are met. Services are provided for 90 days, by a Team Lead/Therapist and a Family Support Worker. They will each visit the family once a week. Aftercare services may be provided for an additional three months.

Placement Stabilization: Services for a child or youth and/or the out-of-home caregiver when either is in need of support to maintain and strengthen the relationship between the child or youth and the out-of-home caregiver to prevent placement disruption. These services may also be provided to transition a child or youth from a more restrictive placement, such as from a behavioral health treatment facility to a foster or family home. Services are provided for 90 days, by a Team Lead/Therapist and Family Support Worker. During the first 60 – 90 days the Therapist will visit twice a week, and in the maintenance phase, from the 91 – 120 day the therapist will visit once a week and the Family Support Worker will visit once a week.

The type of service and level of intensity is different for every family. Not every family needs intensive services or substance abuse treatment. Speak to your DCS Specialist about your family's needs, and together you can decide which programs and services are a best match for the needs of your family.

Substance Exposed Newborn Safe Environment (SENSE) The SENSE program provides services for families referred to the Department of Child Safety after the birth of a substance exposed infant. The program develops and implements a coordinated Family Service Plan with the family and staff from an In-Home Family Preservation Team, Arizona Families FIRST, Healthy Families Arizona, and the Department of Child Safety. A nurse may visit the home to perform their own assessment and evaluations concerning development and overall health of the infant. This program aims to keep infants with their parent while the family works with service providers to achieve or maintain sobriety.

Arizona Families First - This program helps parents address substance abuse issues affecting their ability to care for their children. It provides the opportunity for families to overcome the barrier of substance abuse in order to provide a safe environment for their children. The goal of the program is to provide services and supports to the parent that addresses the reasons for their substance abuse, to reduce or eliminate abuse of and dependence on alcohol and other drugs, and to address other adverse conditions related to substance abuse.

Healthy Families Arizona - Healthy Families is designed to help expectant and new parents get their children off to a healthy start. Families are screened according to specific criteria and participate voluntarily in the program. Families that choose to participate receive home visits and referrals from trained staff. Program services are designed to strengthen families during the critical first years of a child's life. Intensity is based on each family's needs, beginning weekly and moving gradually to quarterly home visits as families become more self-sufficient. This service may continue long-term if needed until the child turns five years old.

You or your child may also receive mental health services from your health care plan. These services will be coordinated with any service DCS provides to the family.

HOW CAN I GET IN-HOME SERVICES?

In Arizona, families are referred to in-home services after a report of child abuse or neglect. If your family needs help to stay together and keep your children safe, you should be eligible to receive in-home support services. In addition, if your child is returning from out of home care, services to help you remain together will be available to your family.

Referrals for services may be made by your assigned Department of Child Safety Specialist. There are three ways you can receive in-home services. Your DCS Specialist can refer you, you can be ordered by the court to participate in in-home services, or you can ask for the services yourself.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I REFUSE IN-HOME SERVICES?

If the in-home services are not ordered by the juvenile court, you can refuse to participate, or you can stop participating. If there is a concern for your child's safety, the court can order you to participate and failure to do so could result in your child being removed from your care by the court or DCS Specialist.

ARE THERE ANY CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH IN-HOME SERVICES WOULD NOT BE PROVIDED?

Yes. If your child would not be safe at home while your family is involved in services, they would be placed out of the home before services are provided to the family.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR FAMILIES

- Request that your family and friends be involved in your support system
- Request the appointments for in-home services take place at times that work for your family, for example, after the regular workday or weekends
- Speak to your assigned DCS Specialist about in-home services, and which services you feel might be the best fit for your family based on your unique needs
- If you think you need help, ask for it
- Ask for services in your own language