

Underlying principles of the Family Reunification Program

- Children have a right to their family.
- The family is the focal point of child welfare services.
- Our first and greatest investment is the care and treatment of children in their own homes.
- Parents should be supported in their efforts to care for their children.
- It is in the best interest of the child for his or her family to remain intact in the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary.
- Families are diverse and have a right to be respected for the special cultural, racial, ethnic and religious traditions that make families unique.
- Children can grow up successfully in different kinds of families. One type of family should not be discriminated against over other types.



The Family Reunification Program is a resource available to families that are welcoming their children back home after placement in foster care. It is made available through the Michigan Department of Human Services.



Our Mission:

Serving people as an expression of the love of Christ

Our Vision:

Communities of service that meet the needs of people, upholding human dignity, advocating equality and justice

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FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROGRAM

A guide for referring agencies



KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Family Reunification Program

The Family Reunification Program (FRP) is designed to successfully reunite children with their families and prevent repeated foster care placements. These goals are accomplished with intensive, home-based services. Since 1999, the FRP has helped reunited families grow strong and healthy in 12 Michigan counties.



Program Evaluation

The Skillman Foundation evaluated the FRP from 1992 to 1995. Their report emphasized the substantial success of the model:

- 85% of children who completed the program were reunited with their families.
- 73% of those children remained safely at home with no further out-of-home placements 12 months after reunification.
- Children who required a repeat out-of-home placement were returned to their homes more quickly than those who had not received FRP services.

“The program was equally effective for families typically considered ‘hard to serve.’”

Skillman Foundation Report

Cost-Effectiveness

The Skillman Foundation report also indicated that the FRP was cost-effective for the State of Michigan. The state saved \$5,283 per child during the 18-month period following FRP services.



Program Model

- **Assessments:** strengths, needs, safety and risk
- **Services:** therapeutic, supportive and concrete, including parenting classes, parenting and family workshops, and family activities
- **Initial Service Plan:** goals, action plans and monthly progress reports
- **Two-person family reunification teams:** one master's-level team leader and one bachelor's-level family worker
- **Service duration:** four months, with a possible two-month extension
- 24-hour/7-day staff availability
- Specific assistance to meet concrete family needs