



Shared Family Care Program Fact Sheet

What is Shared Family Care?

Shared Family Care (SFC) is an alternative foster care program that is designed to keep birth families together by placing the parent(s) and their children in the home of a licensed foster family. The foster family will provide a safe environment for the children and mentor the birth parents as they learn and use the necessary skills that support self-sufficiency. The primary goal of SFC is to help the whole family move towards independence.

How Does Shared Family Care Differ From Traditional Foster Care?

There are two levels of care in the SFC Program:

Residential Level- Birth Parents and their children move into the Foster Home.

Non-Residential Level- The children move into the Foster Home. The Birth Parent does not live in the Foster Home but they will come to the home regularly (3-5 times a week) to work with the Foster Parent and interact with their children.

Although the Foster Parent serves as an advocate, resource, and mentor in regard to parenting and daily living skills, the Birth Parent maintains primary responsibility for the care of his or her child(ren). In traditional foster care, children learn a different way of life in the foster homes where they live. The SFC program teaches parents and their children a new way of life. As both children and Birth Parents receive continuous support during their involvement with SFC, it is anticipated that the length of time a family is involved with SFC will be dramatically reduced from the length of time a family would be involved in traditional foster care. In addition to regular foster parent training, SFC Foster Parents receive 50 additional training hours that focus on mentoring and supporting adults addressing such areas as parenting, child safety and care, household management, budgeting, developing daily schedules and structure, etc.

The Commitment to Developing the Shared Family Care Program

Innovative Family Partnerships, Inc., in collaboration with Children's Service Society of Wisconsin, the Milwaukee Women's Center, Inc., is committed to the development of an alternative foster parent program that will provide an opportunity for both parent(s) and children to develop the skills necessary to ensure a safe nurturing environment while in the SFC Program and after they leave the program. During the pilot phase, SFC will be available to families involved with the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare Site 3. A comprehensive evaluation will be conducted during the pilot phase of the program. The anticipated outcomes are cost neutrality, shortened length of time in the child welfare system, and ability on the part of the family to achieve and maintain independence.