

For The Child Agency History

For The Child is the product of the merger in July 1996 of Cedar House and Sarah Center. Both of these agencies were founded by the same two visionary social workers who saw a need for programs in Long Beach that would focus treatment on physical child abuse (Cedar House - 1974) and later sexual abuse (Sarah Center - 1984).

In the 90's, escalating local child abuse rates as well as the increasing severity of abuse created a critical need to expand the circle of safety for Long Beach area children. The two boards saw an opportunity to combine the agencies into one that could serve more children with less overhead. After a period of discussion and soul searching on the part of both agencies, the decision was made that the most potential for an economical, cogent and cohesive expansion of services for our community was merger.

The combined agency has extensive experience in providing comprehensive services. Clinical treatment has been provided for the past twenty-five+ years. The treatment programs each agency developed were on the cutting edge of child abuse research and well respected by county professionals and local community members. For The Child proudly continues that tradition. Parent Child Interaction Therapy is the latest addition to our treatment program toolbox.

Both agencies had also expanded from their initial treatment focus to delivering prevention programs. Our primary pregnant & parenting teen prevention program was piloted in 1989. In 1999 it was chosen by the State Attorney General's Office to be one of four programs statewide featured in a "Vision of Hope" video on effective community based programs. "Aware Bears" has been provided to community schools for over 12 years. Parenting education has been provided with several models for over 19 years. We have been providing in-home family services since 1993. The Child Abuse Response Team (CART) has been in full operation since March 1996. We have had 24 hour emergency contact availability for several years.

In addition, Beverly Fancher, Executive Director, originated and is currently heading meetings to identify gaps, set standards and develop better collaboration for families and children in Long Beach affected by the overlapping trauma of domestic violence and child abuse. This currently informal group includes representatives of the Court, Police Department, DCFS, Probation, community based organizations serving domestic violence, child abuse and women with substance abuse needs, and private practitioners in the area of batterer's treatment. Active in the ecumenical community, she co-authored a handbook on policies and procedures for churches for prevention of child abuse in the church.