

STEPS

Strengthening Ties & Empowering Parents (STEPS) is a prevention program for safe, high-very high risk families. STEPS workers are co-located with the Child Protection Investigation (CPI) units, which refers the family once a decision is made not to detain the child. The program provides in-home intervention to prevent families from entering the foster care system and to help them work toward stabilization. STEPS workers have five days to contact the family and complete an assessment. Depending on their risk level, families receive between one and three home visits per month, for an average length of service of three months.

Referrals sent to the STEPS program are accepted from the community, self-referrals, and from the Department of Children and Families. The whole community of Duval County is eligible for STEPS, but DCF cases have first priority. Additionally, FSSNF and Duval County Public Schools function, in partnership at select schools, with onsite supports to assist families in need.

STEPS offers in-home services and connects families to available community resources. In-home observation allows for assessments of child safety and family needs specific to individual circumstances that may put a family at risk for abuse or neglect. Services offered by STEPS include:

- Parenting
- Budgeting
- Behavior Modification
- Case Management
- Community Resources

FAST and Safety Management

Family Assessment Support Team (FAST) in-home voluntary program centers on providing intensive supervision and services to Duval's and Nassau's high-very high risk and unsafe, Department of Children and Families involved cases.

FAST Safety Management is a short-term, family-focused service designed to assist families in crisis by improving support around the identified safety threat to keep the children safe and the family stable until engagement in change services. Safety Management grew out of the recognition that children need a safe and stable family and that separating children from their families is traumatic for them, often leaving lasting negative effects.

Once family crisis situations are stabilized, FAST ongoing case management services build upon the conviction that many children can be safely protected and treated within their own homes when parents are provided with services and supports that empower them to change their lives. FAST Ongoing case management is based upon the wrap-around model with a team comprising a FAST certified child welfare case manager, FAST Therapist, SAMH FIS (Family Intervention Specialist), and High Risk New Born for ages 0-3. FAST approaches families in a partnership focusing on increasing parental protective capacities and decreasing the risk of future abuse or neglect by providing skill-based strategies to address family system issues.

A FAST non-judicial case plan can include any of the following services:

- Case Management
- Parenting and Behavior Modification
- In-Home Counseling and High Risk New Born
- Family Team Conferencing
- Anger Management
- Substance abuse education
- Domestic Violence advocacy and counseling