



United Way  
California Capital Region

## **Stanford Home for Children** **One agency that never gives up**

A startling fact: Fully half of all foster youth who are emancipated into the community will be homeless, on the streets, in prison, addicted to drugs or alcohol, or dead before they're 21.

Consider just one example. Amy was abused when she was only 3 years old. She then spent the next 12 years living in 24 different foster homes. Is it any wonder that girls like Amy would leave the foster home system with feelings of distrust, abandonment, anger and hopelessness? But Amy is one of the lucky ones. When she was 14, she was referred to Stanford Home for Children, which got her into a stable situation. From that point until she was 18, Amy lived in just one home with just one family—a remarkable change for a girl who had moved every six months on average. What kind of difference did this stability make for Amy? If graduating from high school as an A student is any indication, Stanford Home helped Amy turn her life around and change her future from one of hopelessness to one of opportunity. Today, says Kären Woodruff, Associate Executive Director at Stanford Home, foster youth like Amy are much more likely to succeed, thanks to Stanford Home.

“Everything we do is focused on making a difference in the lives of the kids and families we serve,” says Executive Director Keith Diederich. One of the most important ways that Stanford Home helps children is by finding permanent, stable homes where they have an opportunity to heal, recover from physical and psychological trauma, and, like Amy, eventually thrive. “Whatever the crisis is with the child,” says Kären, “our goal is to get them back in a natural or biological family setting so that they can succeed.” In fact, 70% of the kids they serve reconnect to a safe family.

Statistics like that are extremely important to Stanford Home, which focuses on what Keith calls “The 2 Cs: Caring and Competence.” You really need to have both, he says: “If you care but you're not measuring outcomes, that's sentimentality.” Stanford Home is rigorous about measuring its results and outcomes. The agency sets high goals and uses evidence-based practices—a scientific method for measuring objective results of the work they do—to evaluate whether they're meeting their goals. Evidence-based practices are more expensive to employ, Keith says, “but they're more effective, and in the long run they save tax-payer dollars. We do whatever we can to ensure positive outcomes for the kids and families we work with.”

There's no question that the problems Stanford Home takes on are tough. But the alternative for many children, families, and communities is bleak: more kids on the streets, committing crimes, in jail—or worse. “That's why the community is a big part of the work we do,” Kären says. “When we have healthier kids and healthier families, we have healthier communities. We're all in this together.”

Would you like to help? As Stanford Home looks forward to the fall school year, children in its programs will need new school supplies. A new backpack, notebook, or calculator will help a young person through school, and help them better focus on healing.

For more information, please contact Stanford Home at 916-344-0199 or online at <http://www.stanfordhome.org>.