

# Children and Families



Supervisor Solis believes that the County of Los Angeles must provide needed services that improve the quality of life of local residents. However, the County's greatest responsibility is to protect our children and to ensure their safety.

Several County departments offer care, resources, and support for our most vulnerable children and youth. The well-being of children in Los Angeles County remains a top priority for Supervisor Solis. As a result, the Supervisor authored a motion early on in her administration that called for a clearly stated County-wide mission statement on child safety. With this, the welfare of children and their families are now at the core of all County work.

Supervisor Solis has worked at strengthening our foster care system so that social workers can effectively help all children who live in Los Angeles County. As part of a comprehensive approach toward improving our system, Supervisor Solis has focused on hiring more social workers and has succeeded at providing them with appropriate training and support so they can effectively investigate all potential signs of child abuse and neglect. She has also called for the recruitment of more foster care parents to accommodate the growing number of children and youth who are awaiting placement.

But, placing children in foster care homes is simply not enough to meet their evolving developmental needs. Supervisor Solis has advocated in favor of meeting the full needs of all children and youth in foster care – from offering them health screenings to mental health services and housing for Transitional Age Youth.

Supervisor Solis is committed to the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission, which include the creation of a new Office of Child Protection that will coordinate all child safety efforts, and the implementation of new accountability measures and improved data sharing with appropriate County departments. In order to leverage all resources, Supervisor Solis helped pass a motion requiring that the County establish a philanthropy liaison who would foster a closer working relationship between the County and the philanthropic community with the intent of further promoting the health and well-being of all children in the County.

Supervisor Solis supports providing more access to quality early-learning programs so that every child in Los Angeles County can be ready for kindergarten. She has actively fought against proposals to dismantle Head Start and other early childhood educational programs. She will continue to help strengthen state and federal funding streams to expand early educational programs throughout the County. Supervisor Solis aims to help improve the educational stability of children/youth by enhancing communication among stakeholders involved in our foster care system. Supervisor Solis will continue to work on establishing stronger collaborative relationships among representatives from child welfare, probation and local schools in order to streamline data and provide integrated services.

In order to fully support and protect children, we also need to support their families. Supervisor Solis has supported such family strengthening programs as Home Visiting and Kinship Care because these programs improve parenting skills and allow children to remain with their families. Supervisor Solis will also work to assist families in helping them identify supportive networks that will allow them to connect with local resources that can aid the child and his/her family in such areas as education, health/mental health, family supports, child welfare, parenting, and job placement.