

**EVALUATION OF CALIFORNIA'S RESIDENTIALLY BASED SERVICES REFORM
PROJECT**

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN

**SPONSORED AND CONDUCTED BY
CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS AND WALTER R. MCDONALD & ASSOCIATES, INC.
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
SERVICES, AND THE CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE OF CHILD AND FAMILY
SERVICES.**

Principal Investigators:

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PURPOSE, PARTICIPATION, AND PROCEDURES

You are being asked to participate in a research study to evaluate residentially based services, or "RBS" for short. This evaluation will investigate whether RBS reduces the time that children live in group care, and whether children and parents or caregivers are happy with these services.

RBS was authorized by the California Legislature in 2007 to change the current system of group care for foster children and youth. The main goal of RBS is to help children connect or reconnect with their home, school, and community. RBS will try to accomplish this goal by offering children therapeutic, educational, behavioral, and social services, and by involving them and their families in treatment and other decisions. You have been selected to participate in this evaluation because county staff have determined that your child could benefit from RBS, and you and your child have agreed to participate in these services.

Two organizations – Casey Family Programs and Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc. – are conducting the evaluation of the project. This evaluation will be from May 1, 2010 to April 30, 2012 in Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Bernardino, and San Francisco. We will ask about 178 families each year for two years to help us with the evaluation.

RBS includes asking each child or youth, and his or her parent or caregiver, to fill out a survey every six months. If you agree to participate in the evaluation you are allowing these surveys that you and your child would already be asked to complete to be sent to the project evaluators. All names will be removed from the surveys before they are sent to the project evaluators.

Specifically, if you agree to participate in this evaluation, you will be asked to allow the following information about you and your child to be sent to the project evaluators:

1. Information about your child such as his or her birthday and services received, and also information written down by service provider staff when they conduct ongoing assessments of your child.

2. Your child's answers to questions on a survey he or she will be asked to complete every six months.
3. Your answers to questions on a survey that is very similar to the one that your child will be asked by complete every six months.

DESCRIPTION OF RISKS

There are no foreseen physical, psychological, social, or economic risks to you or your child while participating in the evaluation study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All efforts will be made to protect you and your child's confidentiality. There is a small risk that someone outside of the group of people who would already see information about families involved in group home care could learn that you or your child is involved with RBS. However, a number of procedures have been developed to reduce the chance of this happening. These include having county staff remove any names from all surveys and assessment forms before sending them to the state. And a person at the state will check each survey and assessment form to make sure no names or other personal information is given to the project evaluators.

DESCRIPTION OF BENEFITS

There are no benefits to you or your child for participating in this evaluation other than the satisfaction you might receive in sharing information that may help improve these services.

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES

If you choose not to participate in this evaluation, you and your child will still be asked to complete the surveys every six months, but your answers will not be used for the evaluation.

COMPENSATION

You will not receive money or other compensation for participating in this evaluation.

TREATMENT FOR INJURY

Participating in this evaluation will not place you or your child at risk of injury. Casey Family Programs and Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc. will not pay for any injury.

POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FUNDING

The persons conducting this evaluation do not have conflicts of interest.

