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April 2013



Baby Learning Programs: Investing in Families



Just a few days old, baby Danette began experiencing difficulty sleeping and eating. Her mother, Jackeling explains, "We worried all the time because we did not know what was wrong with her. I was so worried and depressed. I felt like a bad mother."

Mentally and physically exhausted, Jackeling enrolled in the *Safe Passages Baby Learning Playgroups*. Through the program, Jackeling received assistance finding a medical specialist for her daughter. The family learned that Danette had an undiagnosed

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The mission of Safe Passages is to advocate for children, youth, and families with special emphasis on vulnerable populations.

To accomplish this mission Safe Passages develops public policy, evaluates programs, conducts research,

breathing disorder that was not allowing her to nurse or sleep properly. The case manager helped Jackeling with enrolling for health benefits so that the baby could get the surgery she needed.

Jackeling explains, "After the surgery, Danette is a much happier baby. I stopped feeling guilty and now know that I am a good mother."

During the Baby Learning Playgroup, Jackeling also learned of the services provided by Early Head Start. "I learned how important it is for babies to learn to play with other children and to have caring adults around them, so I enrolled Dannette in daycare. It also gave me an opportunity to go back to school to gain more skills and improve my English."

Because Jackeling was able to enroll baby Danette in Early Head Start, she was able to return to school. She is now a certified Dental Assistant and is completing her service hours.

Danette, now one year old, is expressive, happy and healthy.

About the Baby Learning Communities Collaborative Program. *The BLCCP is a partnership between Safe Passages, Family Paths, Through the Looking Glass, Jewish Family and Community Services, The Central American Refugee Committee (CRECE), Oakland Unified Schools, and the City of Oakland Fund for Children and Youth (OFCY). Families with young children participate in community playgroups, parent education, and case management. The program focuses on low income families exposed to community and domestic violence.*

develops and manages initiatives.

The organization works in the areas of Violence Prevention, Early Childhood, School Linked Services, Juvenile Justice and Career Pathways.

Elev8 Provides Families with Access to the Legal System



I heard there were lawyers in my son's school from a friend. I was desperate for help. I was stuck. I had no papers. Ms. Bay said that there was a special U visa to help women like me. I am now living in a safe location with my four children. I have the lawyers of Elev8 to thank for my new life."

Elev8 Mother

Safe Passages implements Elev8, a full service community school initiative at five middle school campuses in Oakland. A unique and exemplary support provided through this multi-prong initiative are legal services provided by the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC).

EBCLC Staff Attorney and Clinical Instructor, Rosa Bay, explains the services, "By far, immigration is the most common legal issue that arises. We are able to provide general immigration consultations and representation in U Visa cases, which are Visas for victims of serious crimes."

In one case, Ms. Bay and a law student helped a single mother of four and her teenage son apply for the U Visa based on having suffered years of unimaginable domestic violence.

In addition, several families have also received assistance with appealing adverse determinations relating to public benefits programs like CalWORKs, Food Stamps (CalFresh), and Medi-Cal. In one case, a single mother's Food Stamp benefits were cut off without notice due to an administrative error. She received representation and was able to get her benefits reinstated.

Since the inception of the Elev8 Legal Services Project, approximately 300 families have accessed legal services and attended workshops at schools on topics such as education,

consumer and tenants rights, access to college for undocumented students, and the U Visa.



Since its founding in 1988 by law students at UC Berkeley's Boalt Hall School of Law, EBCLC has become the largest provider of free legal services in the East Bay and a nationally-recognized poverty law clinic. The Elev8 Legal Services Project seeks to support and promote the education, health, and empowerment of Oakland middle school students and their communities. For more information please contact Rosa Bay at rbay@ebclc.org.



Mentoring Success!!

"Ms. Heston [you're] the kindest, sweetest person I've ever met. you helped me so much throughout the year. I just want to thank you!"

"Ms. Heston, thanks for all of those days you helped me and I'm very [grateful] for that."

These are some of the notes written by middle school students being tutored and mentored by Rebecca Heston, a Safe Passages Elev8 AmeriCorps Volunteer at San Lorenzo Unified. The program has significantly improved academic performance amongst youth tutored while providing profound learning opportunities for the AmeriCorps members.

Rebecca explains, "I never cease to be amazed by my students. The progress they make with just a few kind words and tutoring support is astounding. A girl who was painfully shy was able to organize her class today to give me a surprise. A boy who acted out and had many behavioral issues, hugged me today!"

AmeriCorps members serve for one year at Oakland or San Lorenzo middle schools through the Safe Passages Elev8 program. Members receive intensive training and ongoing coaching to deliver lesson plans to support students struggling in math and language arts.

"With a 5 to one teacher to student ratio, students are able to receive the individualized academic support they need to be successful learners," explains Demetrie Broxton, Director of the Elev8 AmeriCorps Program.

The program focuses on providing tutoring and mentoring to the most underperforming students in state tests. Preliminary independent evaluations show that after one year in the program, over 60% of students demonstrated a functional grade level improvement in reading.





Rebecca is currently an Elev8 AmeriCorps Mentor in San Lorenzo Unified. She is also an doctorate candidate in the Educational Leadership Program at Mills College in Oakland.



Upcoming Opportunity

Make a difference in your community while developing your skills to mentor urban youths by becoming an Elev8 AmeriCorps Member for Safe Passages. Manage a cohort of up to 10 middle school students by providing academic support, mentoring, and conflict resolution at one of eight middle schools in Oakland Unified School District or San Lorenzo Unified School District. Help strengthen the school site and neighboring community by participating in service and volunteer initiatives by training, recruiting and mentoring volunteers.

Service Commitment/Member Benefits

- Full Time positions with one year commitment required.
- Living allowance stipend, post-service education awards and health benefits available.

Deadline for Applying:

Potential candidates are encouraged to apply ASAP for service to start August 2013. To complete an application please log onto: <https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/viewListing.do?id=44101>

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Welcome to Our New Board Members

It is with great pleasure that Safe Passages welcomes two new board members: Ms. Sherri Young, Vice President of One Pacific Coast Bank and Dr. Tomas Magaña, Principal Investigator Public Health Institute and Co-founder/Director FACES Program.

We are excited to have such committed community leaders join the organization and welcome their expertise and dedication to improving the lives of children and youth of Alameda County.

CALIFORNIA LIFELINE PROGRAM

Did you know... that YOU may qualify for telephone discounts with the California LifeLine Program?




A Program of the California Public Utilities Commission

The **California LifeLine Program** provides discounted basic home phone service to qualified households, helping consumers lower the cost of their home phone bills. Consumers can have unlimited local calls for less than \$7 a month.

There is also no charge for deposits or toll-blocking. The discounted rate for connection fees is \$10. Installment payment plans are also available.

“HELLO, SAVINGS!”



TWO WAYS TO QUALIFY

1 PROGRAM-BASED

You can qualify if at least one member of your household is enrolled in any of the following public assistance programs:

1. Medicaid/Medi-Cal
2. CalFresh, Food Stamps, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
3. Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC)
4. Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
5. National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
6. Healthy Families Category A
7. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), also called:
 - California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKS)
 - Stanislaus County Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (StanWORKS)
 - Welfare-to-Work (WTW)
 - Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN)
8. Supplemental Security income (SSI)
9. Federal Public Housing Assistance or Section 8
10. Tribal TANF
11. Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
12. Head Start Income Eligible (Tribal Only)
13. Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

OR

2 INCOME-BASED


| Household Size | Annual Income Limits |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1 or 2 members | \$24,700 |
| 3 members | \$28,800 |
| 4 members | \$34,800 |

*Add \$6,000 per person for each additional person after four people. Effective from 06/01/12 thru 05/31/13


MAKE THE CALL

FIVE EASY STEPS TO SAVINGS

- 1 Contact your Local Home Phone Company and ask for the California LifeLine discounts.
- 2 Your Local Home Phone Company will review the eligibility rules with you.
- 3 Your application with your PIN in a PINK envelope will be mailed to you.


- 4 Submit your application online at www.CaliforniaLifeLine.com or by mail with the required documentation.
- 5 The California LifeLine Administrator will send you a letter in the mail informing you whether or not your application was approved.

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