

Neighbor to Family Sibling Foster Care Model

The *Neighbor to Family Sibling Foster Care Model* (NTF) was developed in 1994 by Gordon Johnson while he was President and CEO of The Jane Addams Hull House Association in Chicago, Ill.

Originally named *Neighbor To Neighbor*, the program began serving targeted communities in Chicago from which the majority of children came into foster care. The child-centered, family-focused foster care model is designed to keep sibling groups, including large sibling groups, together in stable foster care placements while work continues on reunification or permanency plans.

The model emphasizes staff and caregiver training, family team meetings, comprehensive services for birth families, and intensive permanency planning. Trained and supported foster caregivers are key to the model's success. The program professionalized this key role by placing foster caregivers on the payroll with salaries and benefits. Foster families receive 90 hours of initial training and then 50+ hours of training each year, significantly more than is typically required. Foster families, birth families, and children receive comprehensive services on a weekly basis, including individualized case management, advocacy, and clinical services.

In 2000, *Neighbor to Family Sibling Foster Care Model* was expanded into geographic locations beyond Illinois. Programs are currently operating in Florida, Georgia, Maryland, and South Carolina.

Evidence base

Evaluations of NTF were completed in 2003, 2007, and 2012. The most recent evaluation, which compared children who received NTF services with children who received other forms of foster care, found significant improvement in placement with siblings, stability of placement, safety during and after foster care, rate of reunification, and time and type of permanent placement. According to NTF performance measurements, children served by the program typically return to their own homes or alternative permanent placements, such as adoption, in about 9 months (the national average length of stay in care is 27.2 months).

NTF is listed in the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC) because the CEBC has determined that there is promising research evidence that supports a conclusion that NTF is an effective program.

For More Information

Neighbor to Family, Inc.

866.467.5733

info@ntf.org

www.neighbortofamily.org