

## ABOUT SEED

The SEED Program holds that children and families are best served when professionals of different disciplines work together. Relationships are the foundation of SEED. We value team collaboration and strive to work with families from a place of respect. We work to strengthen and build relationships of children with their primary parent figures and foster healthy relationships among the child's caregiving network. We value the cultural context of community and family and work with an awareness of the impact of disproportionality and racism in our society and its institutions.



*Photograph by Laura Turbow for  
The Bay Area Heart Gallery*

### ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES:

- The child must have full scope Alameda County Medi-Cal.
- The child must initially be between the ages of 0-3 years, 11 months.
- The Social Services Agency recommendation is for out-of-home placement.

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# SEED

Services to Enhance  
Early Development

The **SEED** Program is a unique collaboration between Alameda County Social Services Agency Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland, Center for the Vulnerable Child (CVC), and Alameda County Public Health Department Nurses.



*Photograph by Robin Fryday for  
The Bay Area Heart Gallery*

SEED was established in 1998, initially having the capacity to serve 100 children. Currently, the program has the capacity to serve 220 children and their families.

The SEED team brings together professionals from multiple disciplines to support infants, toddlers, their families and caregivers involved in the child welfare system.

## Center for the Vulnerable Child

SEED clinicians include infant mental health clinicians and developmental specialists that understand the particular needs of the youngest children in the child welfare system. Research clearly demonstrates that these early years are paramount to human brain development and that attachment, relationships, environment and early intervention impact a child in all areas of development.

SEED clinicians provide:

- Collaborative services with a team of child welfare workers and public health nurses.
- Infant-parent psychotherapy.
- Parent and developmental guidance and support.
- Specialized developmental and social emotional assessments.
- Assessments of primary relationships.
- Home visiting.
- Consultation and education to child welfare and Juvenile Court staff.
- Referrals as needed.



*Photograph by Nina Winters for The Bay Area Heart Gallery*

## Child Welfare

The SEED Program utilizes vertical case management with one child welfare worker assigned for the duration of the case. This allows for continuity and relationship building.

Eligible children are identified for the SEED Program with a Social Services Agency out-of-home recommendation for Family Reunification services or an order to “by-pass” those services with a goal of establishing permanency.



*Photograph by Robin Fryday for The Bay Area Heart Gallery*

SEED Child Welfare Workers have the benefit of:

- Frequent collaboration and consultation with infant mental health specialists and public health nurses.
- Weekly team meetings that promote cross discipline discussion.
- On-going training on infant mental health principles, child development, transitions, and child protection concerns such as substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health.
- Focusing on concurrent planning in the event a child cannot be returned to a birth parent (placement with relatives and fictive kin is given priority).

## Public Health Nursing

Public Health Nursing provides information and support through home visits and frequent consultation to SEED staff and families.

SEED Public Health Nurses routinely:

- Collect and review medical and dental records for all children & maintain the Health & Education Passport.
- Provide referrals and follow up with medical and dental providers as well as problem solve when barriers to care exist.
- Provide in-home support and education to parents and caregivers to meet the needs of children in their care.
- Collect vital family medical history.
- Attend medical appointments as needed to enhance understanding of the child’s medical needs.
- Work directly with birth parents and caregivers to encourage that their own health needs are being met.



*Photograph by Sheila Menezes for The Bay Area Heart Gallery*