



*....because a child cannot grow up twice.*

## **Transforming Lives in Los Angeles Since 1925**

El Nido Family Centers, one of Los Angeles's oldest and most respected social service nonprofit organizations, has come a long way from its modest beginnings in 1925 as a camp in Laurel Canyon for under-nourished children. El Nido, which means "the nest" in Spanish, was originally founded by the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), and has always been guided by the philosophy that "a child cannot grow up twice." While consistently remaining true to its mission of improving the lives of children and families, over the decades El Nido has deftly adapted to meeting the changing needs of different generations in the Los Angeles community.

Incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 1954, El Nido opened its first residential counseling center that same year in South Los Angeles. By the 1960s and 1970s, El Nido was expanding its programs to serve both boys and girls, and formally became independent of the NCJW. During this period, its pioneering programs included the first school-based group counseling programs in Los Angeles in collaboration with LAUSD. El Nido also collaborated with major universities to train social workers earning their Master's degrees, and partnered with USC's School of Social Work on the groundbreaking Family Life Education program at inner-city churches. Its residential centers were replaced by Family Centers, with a focus on family strengthening, and were established in communities of greatest need including Compton, Carson, Pacoima, and South Los Angeles.

During the 1980s and 1990s, El Nido continued to grow, collaborating with public and private organizations, and working with at-risk children, youth, and families across Los Angeles County. A diverse and growing staff began teaching parenting skills in Pacoima, offering crisis intervention in Santa Monica elementary schools, and providing pioneering home visits for families referred by the Department of Children and Family Services. El Nido also launched its Teen Family Services program providing case management for teen parents to help them to better care for their infants and toddlers, manage their healthcare, finish high school, become self-sufficient, and help prevent repeat pregnancies. In recognition of its outstanding outcomes the agency was awarded funding from the federal Adolescent Family Life Program as well as from Cal-Learn, the state's program for pregnant and parenting teens. Today El Nido is the largest provider of teen parent services in the state of California and has been a driving force in helping to reduce teen pregnancy in Los Angeles County.

In addition to its prenatal case management and parenting programs for teens, the agency continues to expand its focus on family strengthening and parent skills training through comprehensive programs including Early Head Start, offering early childhood development for parents and their infants and toddlers; family counseling and parent education as part of its child abuse prevention and treatment program; and youth development and gang prevention and intervention programs through the Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) program. El Nido runs two of the City's one-stop FamilySource Centers, one in Pacoima and one in South West Los Angeles, providing a broad range of services to families in need. Additionally, grants from First 5 LA support the agency's Welcome Baby, Select Home Visitation, and its Building Stronger Families / Compton Best Start programs.

Today El Nido is regarded as a nonprofit leader in Los Angeles – an integral part of the fabric of the communities it serves – providing critical social services in the most disadvantaged and under-resourced neighborhoods of LA County. With more than 90 years of experience and with programs that serve ethnically diverse clients of all ages – from newborns to toddlers to teens and into adulthood – El Nido transforms the lives of tens of thousands of vulnerable individuals across Los Angeles each year.