

What is Croup?

Croup is a common respiratory problem in young children. It tends to occur in the fall and winter. Its main symptom is a harsh, barking cough. Croup causes swelling and narrowing in the voice box, windpipe, and breathing tubes that lead to the lungs. This can make it hard for your child to breathe. An attack of croup can be scary, but children usually get better in several days with rest and care.

What causes croup?

Croup usually occurs a few days after the start of a cold and is usually caused by the same viruses that cause the common cold. Croup is contagious. The germs that cause it can be passed from one person to another through coughing, sneezing, and through close contact. Regular hand-washing and limiting contact with others can help prevent the spread of croup.

As children grow older and their lungs and windpipes mature, they are less likely to get croup. Getting a flu vaccine each year may help your child fight off some of the viruses that can lead to croup.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of croup may include:

- A barking cough. (The cough is often compared to the sound of a barking seal.)
- A raspy, hoarse voice.
- A high-pitched, squeaky noise when a child breathes in.
- Sometimes children breathe fast and need to sit up to breathe better.

Symptoms of croup often improve during the day and get worse at night. Sometimes children have croup attacks that wake them up in the middle of the night for a



couple of nights in a row. Unless the illness is severe, a child with croup is usually alert and active. The child's temperature is usually normal or only slightly higher than normal. The illness usually improves in 2 to 5 days.

How to help your child if he or she has croup?

Croup can be uncomfortable and unsettling for your child. Here are four ways to make your child more comfortable if he or she has croup.

1. *Keep your child calm.* Even though your child's coughing and troubled breathing can be frightening, stay calm during an attack and soothe your child. The more your child cries and the more worked-up he or she gets, the worse the symptoms will become. Try to keep your little one as calm as possible. Sing, cuddle, and read stories together.
2. *Moisten the air.* Use a cool-mist humidifier to moisten dry air. If you don't have a humidifier, run a hot shower in your bathroom. Once the air is nice and steamy, sit in the bathroom with your baby for 10 minutes. It may help

quell the cough. If it's cool outside, open a door or window for a few minutes.

Fresh, cool air may calm your child's symptoms, too.

3. *Give your child fluids.* It is important to keep your child well hydrated. Warm, clear fluids can help loosen mucus and take pressure off the vocal cords. Offer water several times each hour. If your child is very young or really cranky, give him or her small amounts of fluid using a spoon or medicine dropper.
4. *Keep his or her head elevated.* Prop up your child's head with an extra pillow at night. Do NOT use pillows with babies under 12 months of age. You might also consider sleeping in the same room with your child so you can know right away if he or she starts having breathing problems.

When to Call the Doctor?

If your child's symptoms last more than 3 to 5 days or get worse, call your child's doctor. Some children — especially those who were born prematurely, or have asthma or other lung diseases — can be at risk for complications from croup. Seek medical help right away if your child:

- Starts drooling or has trouble swallowing.
- Is constantly cranky, irritable, or uncomfortable.
- Has very hard, labored breathing.
- Has neck or chest muscles that "pull in" when he or she breathes.
- Is very tired, sleepy, or hard to awaken.
- Is dehydrated with few wet diapers.

Call 911 if your child turns bluish or dark around the lips, nose, mouth, or fingernails.

Announcement of Hub Services Program

We are writing to inform you, as partners of the San Francisco Human Services Agency, Family and Children's Services (FCS), of a change in our practice that may impact your organization. As many of you know, as of March 20, 2019, FCS started phasing out use of our Child Protection Center (CPC) located at the Edgewood campus with the goal of closing the center completely by November 1, 2019. The new model for emergency placements for foster youth involves placing them immediately in a resource family home. Youth with complex needs will be placed immediately in a setting to provide them with services and support to meet their needs.

FCS is undergoing this change after careful consideration of alternatives and working with our partners. The shift in practice is a result of new statewide policies called Continuum of Care Reform (CCR). These mandates are based on research that shows better outcomes for youth who are placed in family-based settings at the earliest possible point. We are confident that the new model developed to provide short-term care for children entering or re-entering the foster care system is one that will better serve our youth and our community.

How this impacts you

The CPC has been in existence in various locations for the past 30 years. Due to its longevity, many of our partners have developed practices of dropping off youth there who need to enter or re-enter foster care. We have been piloting a new model for emergency placements since March 20, 2019 and are working towards a full phase out of the CPC by the beginning of November. During this pilot period, the CPC will remain open, but we will be testing out new procedures. If you need our services, we

ask that you call our hotline at 800-856-5553.

Pilot of Emergency Resource Family Homes

For the past four months, we have been piloting a new system whereby most of our children and youth are placed directly into resource family homes. Alternative Family Services (AFS) has several of these homes available in San Francisco on an emergency basis. So far, the pilot is off to a great start. We have steadily increased the capacity of the pilot since March, successfully placing 40 children and youth directly in emergency placement homes rather than the temporary shelter setting at the CPC. Our staff is adjusting well, and we are particularly impressed with the response time and resourcefulness of AFS in order to best address the needs of each child we place.

Hub Services for High-Needs Youth

Starting in September, we will begin piloting the other aspect of this new model of emergency placements, designed for children and youth with high behavioral health needs. Through a partnership with Seneca Family of Agencies, we will launch what we are calling the "Hub Services" program. Within Hub Services are three components designed to help address immediate needs of children and youth with high behavioral needs.

- Mobile Response: A team of professional staff available 24/7 to prevent placement disruptions by stabilizing current living arrangements, preventing repeated hospitalizations, or addressing behavioral health needs to improve functioning within the youth's current living situation. It is available to all children and youth age 0-17 with open child welfare cases, including in-home cases, and their caregivers or parents. Eligible participants must live

within 90 miles of San Francisco.

- Intensive Care Coordination (ICC): Available to all children and youth in placement designated by Juvenile Probation Department and FCS with very high behavioral needs, ICC coordinates and engages all possible natural supports in the life of the child. This can include clinical case management services, mental health assessments, CFT facilitation, development of a shared family care plan, and structure linkage to additional services as needed. This coordination can follow the youth throughout the life of their case.
- Emergency Short-Term Stabilization Placements: Four highly individualized placement beds, which will provide the stability of family-based care on a short-term basis to support effective crisis stabilization and linkage to community-based supports, including support from Seneca staff at all hours of the day.

The Hub Services model will start piloting September 3, with full implementation scheduled for the start of November. Importantly, the Mobile Response Team can be utilized by caregivers, therapists, doctors, FCS staff, or anyone in the life of a youth who is in the care of San Francisco FCS. As we near the start date, we will send more information with how to access this resource to placement providers.

For questions about this, please contact Liz Crudo at Liz.Crudo@sfgov.org or Melissa Connelly at Melissa.Connelly@sfgov.org.

Sincerely,
Joan Miller, MSW
Deputy Director City and County of San Francisco
Human Services Agency
Family and Children's Services Division

Our January Champions for Children

Lisa Newstrom

As a former grade school teacher, Lisa regularly interacted with children in the foster care system. She knew that there were children in the system that needed loving homes. At the same time, Lisa also had experience working with adults who had children in the system and understood their situation. Therefore, Lisa not only wanted to open her home to foster children but she also sought to have positive interactions with children's biological family.

In becoming a foster parent, Lisa explains that she enjoys all of the rewards of parenting any child — getting to be there for the milestones and reveling in those memories. "I also get to share the things I love with my child," Lisa says. "For example, I love broccoli and I love to see my child love broccoli." Lisa has worked with social workers to develop a plan to maintain healthy, appropriate contact with the child's birth family through regular updates and photos. "Being able to give the child's family peace of mind that she's safe and taken care of while also allowing them to maintain that connection — that's very rewarding."

Lisa understands that it can be painful to both children and the children's family when that connection is lost, so she tries to do what she can to help support the relationship. "My child's birth family is an important part of her and a part of the story of who she is," Lisa adds.

One of the biggest challenges of being a foster parent is staying on top of the communications with the different systems in place



that help make sure foster children have everything they need. "It's all of the challenges of parenting plus then following up and following up and following up and making sure everyone has copies of everything they need," mentions Lisa.

At the same time, Lisa appreciates the communications she has had with social workers who take the time to know what's going on with each family. While the system is large, Lisa sees that there are people who are personally invested in and care for her success.

Lisa found that having a strong support network of family and friends is also really important. Meet-up groups and a large three-hole punch binder with information on almost everything related to her child's care has been part of her secret to success.

"And keeping track of who offers to babysit and taking them up on it," says Lisa.

Lisa's advice for other parents is to trust your instincts, especially when your gut tells you to advocate for your child. Learning how to trust yourself is an important part of the parenting process as well as seeking a reality check from someone you trust for a second opinion.

San Francisco Family and Children's Services along with the Parenting for Permanency College applaud Lisa's dedication and nurturing spirit. She approaches her work armed with information and with grace and resilience as she continues to be an awesome mom. Congratulations to Lisa, our Champion for Children!

K.I.D.S.

Published bimonthly for San Francisco County foster parents, resource families, NREFMs and kin care providers. To suggest a topic, submit an article, promote an event, or provide feedback, email Sharon.Walchak@sfgov.org.

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Newsletter Website: <https://sfcaresforkids.org/kids-newsletter/>

Helpful Phone Numbers

HSA Operator	(415) 557-5000
CPS Child Abuse Hotline	(800) 856-5553 or (415) 558-2650
Foster Care Ombudsman	(415) 558-2828
Transportation Duty Line	(415) 557-5376
Licensing/RFA/Recruitment Hotline	(415) 558-2200
San Francisco Families Making a Difference	
Mentor Program for Care Providers	(415) 557-5400
Free Foster Parenting Respite Service	(415) 861-4060 x 3035
Community Services	211
Non-emergency Government Services	311

FCS Agency Directory: www.sfhsa.org/174.htm

Happy New Year! As we look towards 2020, I'd like to take a moment to thank everyone who came out for the "Shinning Stars Annual FCS Recourse Family Holiday Training Event" a Saturday brunch filled with fun for our Foster Youth and Recourse Families. The event is truly a collaboration of partners, donors and volunteers, we thank you for all that you do!

Newest Caregivers to complete RFA PreService:

Join me us in welcoming the October English and November English and Spanish 2019, RFA Preservice graduates! Thank you for participation and dedication.



HSA Caregiver Convening Meeting
Will be going to every other month (in between quarterly)
Quarterly Caregiver Meeting
Occur the 2nd Tuesday 6-8 p.m. once per quarter
QPI Meetings
Occur the 4th Thursday of each month at 170 Otis 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Recruitment Meeting
3rd Wednesday of each month 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. 170 Otis St. San Francisco Born Auditorium — lunch is provided
RFA Orientations
4th Thursday of each month at 170 Otis Street 5th floor Multi Media Room 5:30-7:30 p.m. <i>For more RFA Care Provider Meeting information please contact Arlene Hylton at 415-557-5067.</i>

Special Announcements

SA/HIV Infant Program Support Group

English: 3rd Tuesday of the month (Except December) 6-8 p.m. **Spanish:** 3rd Thursday of the month (Except December) from 6-8 p.m. To attend SA/HIV Support Group, please contact Sharon at: (510) 282-4658.

SA/HIV Program Infant Massage Series

Tuesdays, January 7, 14, 28, & February 4, 2020 - 5:30-7 p.m.
Saturday, February 1, 2020 10-11:30 a.m.

RFA Pre-Service Approval Training	
English RFA Pre-Service Training	January 11 & 18, 2020 (Saturdays) 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Spanish RFA Pre-Service Training	Jan. 11 & 18, 2020 (Saturdays) 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
English RFA Pre-Service Training	February 11-20, 2020 (Tues/Thurs) 5:30-9 p.m.
Placement Training	
SA/HIV 36-hour Cycle	January 1-Feb. 4, 2020 (Tues/Thurs) 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
CPR (English)	January 25, 2020 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
ABC's of Baby Care	February 12, 2020 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
CPR (Spanish)	February 8, 2020 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
CPR (English)	February 29, 2020 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Ongoing Training	
RFA Advanced Training: Reproductive Rights SB 89	February 7, 2020 5:30-8:30 p.m.
Spanish RFA Advanced Training: Parenting in Oz	February 15, 2020 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
To register for training please contact: Alternative Family Services (AFS) PPC@afs4kids.org Or through your RFA Worker	