

ACCREDITATION MATTERS

Choosing the right accrediting body is essential.

Choose an accrediting body that is the best fit for your unique blend of services.

Choose an accrediting body that is internationally recognized for its independent, external peer review process and relevancy of standards in the field of health and human services.

Choose an accrediting body that will add real value by helping your organization achieve positive outcomes for the children, youth, and families served.

CARF annually accredits thousands of health and human service programs across the continuum of care, serving children to seniors.

Have Confidence in Your Choice
Choose CARF



What distinguishes CARF from other accreditors?

CARF accreditation is a partnership with the service provider. The survey process is consultative rather than prescriptive and is a valuable resource for providers.

In addition to interviewing staff members, persons served, and their families, the surveyors observe organizational practices, review appropriate documentation, answer questions, and suggest ways to improve operations and service delivery.

A designated resource specialist at CARF is continually available to provide consultation and assistance during the journey of accreditation. He/she will be glad to answer your questions, give ideas on how to meet the standards, and direct you to additional, relevant resources.

Who are the surveyors?

Surveyors are your peers in the field, often employed by organizations that have CARF accreditation, who have expertise in the types of programs and services accredited by CARF. We recruit and train the most highly qualified professionals to conduct surveys. As a result, the surveyors who come to your organization during an on-site survey are among the most knowledgeable and respected experts in your field.

What training is available?

CARF offers training sessions and presentations online and at regional events that cover a variety of information including details about the survey process, application of the standards, and industry or field-related topics.

CARF-accredited providers and their staff also have access to EditU, a consortium of public and private partners that includes Skillsoft — a market leader in on-demand e-learning that is designed to enhance business, professional, and information technology skills.

The Value of Accreditation

“ Transitions Children’s Services is a small-to-medium size foster family agency based out of Fresno County with a sub office in Tulare County. We opened in the summer of 2009 and just celebrated our sixth anniversary. We have been members of the California Alliance of Child and Family Services for the past several years, and our foster family agency was recently recognized by CARF with a Three-Year Accreditation seal. When we first decided to take on this accreditation, we knew we were in for a challenge. We felt we operated at a high level, but, as we prepared for the site survey, we realized that there were several things we needed to tighten up. For example, one of our organizational tenets is to be strength-based in our practice. We often viewed case planning through this lens, but didn’t always capture as much in our report writing. CARF introduced us to SNAP, which really took us to the next level with regard to the person served concept.

Although enhancing our practice was a very positive thing, the real value of the accreditation process was learning how to develop data collection tools. We created a strategic plan, a quality improvement plan (which has a practice data collection piece to it); and satisfaction surveys for our staff, board members, clients, and foster families. We use the feedback gathered from these data collection tools to improve and enhance our program. In addition, we have been able to demonstrate to our county partners that we are operating at the highest level of accountability and are in compliance ahead of AB403’s *Continuum of Care* initiative becoming law. This wasn’t an easy process, but, looking back on it, I feel we are a better organization for having undertaken the challenge. Now the trick is to maintain compliance and let the tools and implementation strategies do their thing. ”



Brian Van Anne, M.S.W.
CEO/Administrator
Transitions Children’s Services

Benefits of CARF accreditation:

Accountability to regulators and payers

- Evidence that you have applied a comprehensive set of standards to your business and service delivery practices.
- Confirmation of your commitment to quality and process improvement.

Risk management

- Application of the CARF standards to help improve safety and reduce risk to persons served and your staff.

Networking

- Access to an international network of accredited peer organizations with which you can collaborate and share ideas.

Consultation and guidance

- Access to educational seminars and information about the standards applied throughout the accreditation cycle.
- A consultative rather than inspective survey philosophy that guides you through the survey process.
- Experienced surveyors, who are your peers, share best practices they have seen at similar organizations.

What our customers say:

95% said that the on-site consultative survey was a beneficial process for their organization.

95% said the surveyors were well matched to their organization in terms of their background and expertise.

94% said the standards were relevant to their programs and services.

Organizations report that involvement with CARF has improved their performance in the following areas:

- Documentation/policies and procedures
- Performance improvement practices
- Delivery of quality services
- Health and safety
- Risk management
- Person-centered approaches