

# Children's Trust Fund

## Year End Report 2007-2008

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# Children's Trust Fund Year End Report

The year end report provides information on:

- The purpose of the Children's Trust Fund
  - Its programs and activities
  - Income and expenditures

For more information about the Children's Trust Fund and its programs please contact its office at 860-418-8765 or visit its web site; [www.ct.gov/ctf](http://www.ct.gov/ctf)

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## What is the Children's Trust Fund?

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Recognizing a need to establish coordinated efforts and funding for programs designed to prevent child abuse and neglect, the State of Connecticut General Assembly created the Children's Trust Fund in 1983. This proactive initiative was part of a national movement to establish such Funds in all 50 states.

Since 1997, when the Trust Fund became an independent state agency, the Trust Fund has developed or funded more than 250 family service programs and initiatives statewide.

### *Mission*

The mission of the Children's Trust Fund is to prevent child abuse and neglect, and to establish resources in communities statewide that support and strengthen families. We are responsible for supporting local efforts that help families and communities to be responsive to children and to ensure their positive growth and development.

### *Why it's Important*

Child abuse and neglect is among the most serious issues facing Connecticut and the nation. Approximately 40,000 cases of maltreatment are reported in Connecticut each year.

Research has shown that the effects of abuse and neglect are often devastating to a child. Not only can maltreatment cause developmental delays, serious injury or psychological problems, it also can contribute to high dropout rates, involvement in crime and poverty. Children with a history of abuse or neglect often end up on the caseloads of the Departments of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Corrections and Social Services as adults.

### *How the Children's Trust Fund Operates*

A 16-member interdisciplinary board known as the Children's Trust Fund Council governs the Children's Trust Fund. The council includes the Commissioners from the Departments of Children and Families, Public Health, Social Services and Education, as well as legislatively appointed individuals from the business community, the child abuse field, parents and a pediatrician.

Federal and state dollars, as well as private funding, sustain the Children's Trust Fund. The Trust Fund has maximized Connecticut's investment in prevention as Connecticut's lead agency for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families' Community-Based Grants for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect program.

Well-planned community-based programs have been shown to play an essential role in preventing child abuse and neglect. Children's Trust Fund programs:

- Are designed to engage families and others at risk for child abuse or neglect before a crisis occurs.
- Enlist new partners in community efforts to ensure the safety and protection of children.
- Reach "at risk" parents: teen parents and those involved in domestic violence and substance abuse; addressing mental health issues; raising children with disabilities; living in extreme poverty and social isolation; and those with a history of abuse.
- Are located in hospitals, clinics, shelters, prisons, housing projects and schools.
- Focus on fostering strong bonds and healthy relationships between parents and their children
- while addressing other parental needs
- Bolster the chances that children will experience a safe and healthy home, have a positive relationship with their parents and a stable family life, leading to success in school and healthy development through maturity.

### *Framework*

Children's Trust Fund programming is based on a five-tier framework to prevent child abuse and neglect:

1. Direct services
2. Systems-oriented collaborations
3. Training and development
4. Public awareness and education
5. Research and evaluation

### *Research*

The Trust Fund's major programs are researched and evaluated by the University of Hartford's Center for Social research. This research is a vital ingredient in the development of the Trust Fund programs.

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## Role of the Children's Trust Fund Council

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The Children's Trust Fund is led by a diverse council of state agency leaders, parents, and health and human services professionals. Members of the Council are public officials. The Council's enabling statute specifies that each appointed member must demonstrate a particular expertise.

The Council's main role is to solicit funds and make grants to programs aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect and providing resources for families.

In addition, the Council offers its leadership and advocacy skills to the Trust Fund and oversees its work to ensure the fulfillment of its mission and mandates.

The Council is actively involved in legislative, fundraising and communications activities.

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## Connecticut State Statute

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The Children's Trust Fund is an agency of the executive branch of the state government and is responsible to the Governor and the Connecticut General Assembly.

Public Act 17a-50 established the Children's Trust Fund. The act stipulated that:

- State and federal funds as well as grants and gifts from private donors would be solicited and accepted.
- The funds would be used to prevent child abuse and neglect and provide resources for families.
- The Trust Fund would be within the Department of Children and Families "for administrative purposes only" which allows the Council to perform its policy making functions independently and without the approval of the department.
- The House and Senate majority and minority leaders would appoint the Children's Trust Fund Council members.
- The Council membership would include the commissioners of the Departments of Children and Families, Public Health, Social Services, and Education or their designees, as well as twelve others representing business, the child abuse prevention field, parents and pediatricians.

Public Act 17a-56 authorizes the Children's Trust Fund to establish the structure for a state-wide system for a Nurturing Families Network. The act describes the Trust Fund's authority and responsibility for the program.

The Children's Trust Fund Council, established under the General Statutes of Connecticut section 17a-50, functions within the Department of Children and Families for administrative purposes only and is therefore monitored by the same budgetary and auditing requirements. Funding for the Trust Fund originates from the State of Connecticut, the Federal Government and private contributions. Both the Office of Fiscal Analysis and the Office of Policy and Management review the budget for the CTFC on a continuous basis based on the Governor's Annual Budget process. The Auditors of public Accounts perform financial and performance audits on an annual basis. The Office of the Comptroller/Accounts Payable Division randomly audits all accounts payable functions, including payments made to vendors and private providers. Contracts and Personal Service Agreements initiated by the Children's Trust Fund Council are reviewed and approved by the Attorney General's Office.

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## Federal Legislation - Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act

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The Children's Trust Fund receives federal funding under Title II of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

This program provides funds for grants that support community-based efforts to develop, operate, expand and enhance initiatives to prevent child abuse and neglect. Programs and activities operated by the recipients of these funds seek to strengthen and support families and reduce the likelihood of child abuse. The Governor has designated the Children's Trust Fund as Connecticut's lead agency for the CAPTA Title II program since 1983.

As a grantee of this program the Children's Trust Fund is in a unique position of leadership as it assumes responsibility for direction, leading, and evaluating the network of public-private partnerships and the continuum of preventive services for children and families in Connecticut.

In keeping with the requirements of the CAPTA grant, the Children's Trust Fund maintains a strong commitment to parent leadership, including parents of children with disabilities, parents with disabilities, of racial and minority populations, and members of other underrepresented or underserved groups.

The Trust Fund funds programs that provide comprehensive support and direct service to high risk groups of parents and also supports primary prevention and community awareness activities.

The Trust Fund provides training for staff working in community programs on prevention strategies and approaches and supports other programs that teach personal safety to children and adolescents.

The Trust Fund is also involved in initiatives focused on changing systems to become more responsive to families and to ensure the positive growth and development of all children.

## CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND BUDGET FY2007

INCOME	PRIVATE SECTOR	FEDERAL	STATE
	2007	2007	2007
State of Connecticut			
<b>GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATION</b>			\$12,132,857
Private Sector			
<b>INTEREST - Estimated</b>	\$22,000		
<b>PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS (estimated)</b>			
Family Development Credentialing	\$25,000		
Dept of Public Health consent decrees	\$10,000		
Donations/Fund raisers	\$20,000		
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving	\$114,000		
Federal (based on 10/01/06 - 09/30/07 FY)			
<b>COMMUNITY-BASED FAMILY RESOURCE GRANT - Oct 2006</b>		\$659,993	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$191,000</b>	<b>\$659,993</b>	<b>\$12,132,857</b>
EXPENSES	PRIVATE SECTOR	FEDERAL	STATE
	2007	2007	2007
<b>PERSONNEL (17 employees)</b>		\$364,000	\$723,294
<b>PROGRAMS</b>			
Nurturing Families Network	\$114,000		\$8,264,759
Nurturing Families Network - New Haven Expansion			\$532,106
Family Empowerment Initiative			\$205,322
Kinship Fund			\$325,000
Grandparents Respite Fund			\$500,000
Help Me Grow			\$252,718
Hartford Community Partnership			\$0
Family School Connection			\$30,392
Volunteer Services		\$60,000	
Parent Trust Fund			\$250,000
Safe Harbor Respite			\$0
Indigent children			\$150,000
Child Sexual Abuse Prevention		\$100,000	
Nurturing Families Network Incentive Grants		\$3,000	
Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Project		\$20,000	
<b>EVALUATION/RESEARCH (all programs)</b>		\$10,000	\$412,000
<b>OTHER</b>			
Training expenses	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$10,000
General operating expenses	\$37,000	\$72,993	\$49,660
<b>PROGRAM DELAYS/Funds returned to State</b>			\$427,606
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$191,000</b>	<b>\$659,993</b>	<b>\$12,132,857</b>

July 2008

**CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND PROJECTED  
BUDGET FY2008**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>	<b>FEDERAL</b>	<b>STATE</b>
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2008</b>
State of Connecticut			
<b>GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATION</b>			\$14,899,648
Other State (SDE)			\$100,000
Other State (DSS)			\$100,000
Other State (DPH)			\$70,000
Private Sector			
INTEREST - Estimated	\$22,000		
<b>PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS (estimated)</b>			
Family Development Credentialing	\$25,000		
Dept of Public Health consent decrees	\$10,000		
Donations/Fund raisers	\$20,000		
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving	\$114,000		
Graustein Memorial Fund	\$100,000		
Kellogg Foundation	\$100,000		
Federal (based on 10/01/07 - 09/30/08 FY)			
COMMUNITY-BASED FAMILY RESOURCE GRANT - Oct 2007		\$736,198	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$391,000</b>	<b>\$736,198</b>	<b>\$15,169,648</b>
<b>PROJECTED EXPENSES</b>	<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>	<b>FEDERAL</b>	<b>STATE</b>
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2008</b>
PERSONNEL (17 employees)			\$1,294,529
<b>PROGRAMS</b>			
Nurturing Families Network	\$114,000		\$9,291,786
Nurturing Families Network - New Haven Expansion			\$1,266,600
Family Empowerment Initiative			\$239,198
Kinship Fund			\$425,000
Grandparents Respite Fund			\$625,000
Help Me Grow	\$100,000		\$406,582
Hartford Commmuity Partnership			\$0
Family School Connection			\$465,000
Volunteer Services		\$60,000	
Parent Trust Fund	\$100,000		\$350,000
Safe Harbor Respite			\$0
Indigent children			\$150,000
Literacy Program			\$100,000
Child Sexual Abuse Prevention		\$100,000	
Nurturing Families Network Incentive Grants		\$3,000	
Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Project		\$20,000	
EVALUATION/RESEARCH (all programs)		\$25,000	\$475,953
<b>OTHER</b>			
Community Awareness		\$100,000	
Training expenses	\$40,000	\$80,000	\$10,000
General operating expenses	\$37,000	\$80,000	\$70,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$391,000</b>	<b>\$468,000</b>	<b>\$15,169,648</b>

July 2008

**Program Name:** Nurturing Families Network- 2008 Summary Findings

## **Program Description:**

This year's evaluation report provided descriptive and outcome information on families who received services in 2007, including 1,727 families from the Nurturing Connections program, 1,342 from the Nurturing Home Visiting program, and 519 from the Nurturing Parenting Groups. These programs, funded and managed by the Connecticut Children's Trust Fund, are components of the Nurturing Families Network (NFN), which is designed to provide a system of continuous care to promote positive parenting and reduce incidences of child maltreatment.

Nurturing Connections provides telephone support and referral services for first-time mothers screened as low-risk for child maltreatment. High-risk families are enrolled in the home visiting program, which provides weekly home visitation and case management services. The Nurturing Parenting Groups are community-based parenting education and support groups for families at various risk levels. There are currently forty-two NFN program sites statewide, ten of which are located in Hartford, and eight of which are located in New Haven.

Because of the large Hartford and New Haven expansions, we highlight our evaluation with an urban focus. We do so by separating Hartford and New Haven sites from the other statewide sites in our outcome analyses.

## **Nurturing Connections**

### Screening

- Since 1999, 32,882 first-time mothers have been screened through the Nurturing Connections (NC) program.
- Of the 6,690 Revised Early Identification Screen (REID) screens completed in 2007, 67 percent of all first-time mothers screened negatively (low-risk) and were eligible for NC services.

### Nurturing Connections Services

- NC Coordinators and volunteers averaged eight phone call attempts to families, five of which were completed.

## **NFN Home Visiting: Statewide**

- 1,342 families received home visiting services in 2007.
- Forty-seven percent of all program exits were due to families moving out of the service area or to home visitors being unable to locate the mother, usually because she is not home during visits, has changed her phone number without notification, and/or changed residences.

### Social-Demographic Data

- At program entry, 89 percent of mothers had never married, while 45 percent were under the age of twenty when their child was born. NFN mothers are racially diverse with Hispanic families representing the largest racial/ethnic group (38%), followed by Whites (26%) and African-Americans (14%).
- A little less than two-thirds of fathers were living in the household with the mother at program entry, and 73 percent were at least somewhat involved with their children.
- Seventy-three percent of the young mothers (age 19 and younger) had less than a high school education at program entry and 52 percent were still enrolled in some type of school (mostly high school or a GED program). About one-third of the younger cohort had been employed prior to the pregnancy; only 13 percent employed around the time of birth.
- Twenty-four percent of the older mothers (age 20 and older) had not completed high school. For the older cohort, 72 percent had been employed before pregnancy, which dropped to a little more than one-fourth at program entry.

### Home Visiting Services

Families received an average of 2 visits per month.

### Program Outcomes

- In the past three years, mothers made statistically significant improvements on the Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAPI) Abuse Rigidity subscale. Positive, but non-significant changes were also made on the overall Abuse scale as well as the Distress and Problems from Others subscales-- at both the one year and two year data points. No significant changes were seen at the three year data point.
- After one year in the program, mothers show an increased awareness and use of resources in their community, as measured by the Community Life Skills Scale (CLS). These outcomes suggest that families in the program increased their awareness of and access to community services, and that parents were likely to budget their money more carefully and to have more social contacts with friends, family, and community organizations.
- Mothers' rates of employment increased significantly after one, two, and three years in the program. Similar increases in education were seen at the one and two year data points.
- Home visitors' perceived social isolation of mothers significantly decreased at both one, two, and three years.
- Father involvement decreased significantly after one year.

### **NFN Home Visiting: Urban Focus**

- In 2005, Hartford was targeted as the first city in Connecticut "to go to scale" – that is, to screen all first-time mothers for home visitation services in the city. Accordingly, the NFN home visitation program has been expanded from two to ten program sites

throughout the city. Six of the new NFN programs are located in agencies that are part of the Brighter Futures Initiative, funded by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

- In 2007, New Haven was the second city to go to scale. Five new sites were added to the three existing sites. The newer sites in New Haven began serving families in the last quarter of 2007.

#### Program Services- Hartford

- Families in Hartford received an average of 2 home visits per month.
- In 2007, staff has made 859 referrals to families -- 22 percent for housing needs, 16 percent for employment and educational needs, 9 percent for DSS. There was a 68 percent compliance rate for all referrals.

#### Program Outcomes- Hartford

- Mothers made statistically significant improvements on the overall Child Abuse Potential Inventory- Rigidity subscale (CAPI-R) at the six month, one year, and two year data points.
- Hartford mothers also demonstrated significant increases in their knowledge and use of community resources, as measured by the CLS.
- Hartford mothers also showed significantly lower levels of depression as measured by the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression scale at the six month and one year data points.
- Our analysis of mothers who completed the Conflict Tactics Scale- Parent Child Version (CTS-PC) indicated that families frequently used non-physical means of discipline. Virtually all physical means of discipline reported fell into the minor "corporal punishment" category.

### **Nurturing Parenting Groups**

- Most NFN sites used the Birth to Five or the Nurturing for Prenatal Families curriculum in 2007. Groups run for differing lengths of time, but all provide parenting information, support, and an opportunity for parents to learn how to nurture themselves and their children. In most groups, staff also provides meals and/or snacks and a structured program for children.

#### Social Demographic Data

- As in previous years, the majority (90%) of group participants were female.
- A little less than one-third of participants were employed, 13 percent full-time and 32 percent were enrolled in school (most were enrolled in high school).
- Thirteen percent of participants had enrolled in the group with their partner.

#### Program Services

- Graduation rates varied by type of curriculum from 49 percent (Birth to Five) to 90 percent (Community Based Education in Nurturing Parenting).

## Program Outcomes

- There was significant change in the desired direction on the Parenting Stress Index- Short Form (PSI-SF) indicating that parents had a greater sense of parenting competence and/or experienced less stress in their parental role.
- Participants also showed significant change on the AAPI-2 indicating that parents overall had healthier parenting attitudes and more age appropriate expectations for their children at the end of the program compared to the beginning.

**Program Name:** Family School Connection

**Program Description:**

In 2001, the Children's Trust Fund piloted, in collaboration with Hands on Hartford, and the Junior League of Greater Hartford the first *Family School Connection* program in the state. The goals of the *Family School Connection* program are to improve parenting skills and help families become more involved with their children's educational experiences. The Family School Connection program provides home visitation and support services for families of children who have been identified as having truancy, academic, and/or behavior issues as these are indicators of educational neglect in the home. The program works to improve parenting skills, address basic needs and improve family's stabilization through individualized weekly scheduled home visits and participation in groups. In 2007, the Connecticut General Assembly authorized the expansion of the Family School Connection (FSC) program to Middletown, New Haven, Norwich, and Windham with a continued focus on helping parents and guardians of elementary school aged children (roughly 5 to 12 years old).

*Family School Connection - Hartford*

The *Family School Connection* program operated by Hands on Hartford continues to provide services for the families of children enrolled at Ramon E. Betances School. Program staff works in partnership with the school to coordinate and facilitate for the families access to school and community services and activities. Program expectations are that families are to be seen in the home a minimum of two visits per month and as much as one time weekly. Twenty-seven (27) families were served this year through the intensive home visiting model. The Family/School Connection program at Betances has been successful in engaging and retaining families in the program over time. Moreover, program participants show significant change on both the Parenting Stress Index-Short Form and the Parent/School Involvement Survey after six months and one year of program involvement, indicating that parents show less stress around their parental role as well as more involvement with their children's academic lives. Three measures were used to assess change among Family School Connection participants. All outcome measures were administered when families entered the program, and after six months and one year of program involvement.

*Program Outcomes*

- Parenting Stress Index-Short Form (PSI-SF): The PSI-SF has significantly correlated with measures of parental neglect and abuse, and attempts to identify parents who are at risk of dysfunctional parenting. A self-report, standardized instrument that measures parenting and family characteristics related to child development and functioning through three subscales (Parental Distress, Parent-Child Dysfunctional Interaction, and Difficult Child). While all subscales and Total Stress Scale show changed in the desired direction, the Total Stress Scale and Parent-Child Dysfunctional Interaction scores showed significant change after the first six months, and the Parental Distress score showed significant change after the first year.

- Parent-School Involvement Survey: A self-report instrument used to examine both the parents' and teachers' perception of family/school involvement. The sections designed to measure parents' perceptions of their child's school, and the time they spend with their child doing school-based activities such as reading, helping with homework, or volunteering at the school were utilized to evaluate the program. Twenty-one (21) parents completed the Parent-School Involvement Survey at program entry and six months and twelve (12) parents at program entry and one year. There was a significant change in the desired direction at six months and one year, indicating that as parents participated in the program, they become more involved in their children's education, both in the out of school.

**Program Name:** Family Empowerment Initiatives

**Program Description:**

Family Empowerment Initiatives include 7 prevention programs that assist high-risk groups of parents with children of various ages. The programs are located in various settings where families may be addressing other issues, including a school, a substance abuse center, a prison, a domestic violence shelter, a child guidance center and a public housing project.

These programs help families to address a whole range of issues including parenting and family relationships. The program fills a gap in services.

**Number of children and families served:**

Nearly 700 children and families were served during the 2007– 2008 year

The Family Empowerment Initiatives are nationally recognized prevention programs that assist high-risk groups of parents. The Trust Fund is currently providing funding for seven of these community-based programs that offer education and support to diverse communities. Roughly 700 families were served this year, thus estimating that since October of 1998, over 2400 families have been served by these seven curriculum approved program models mentioned below.

**The MELD for Growing Families Program, Family Services of Greater Waterbury** serves parents of preschoolers. The program is designed to assist parents with improving family/sibling relationships while preparing for school readiness. Roughly 96 families and 195 children were served this year.

**The MOM'S Program in New Britain** offers ongoing groups for pregnant and young mothers age 21 and under. The group is designed to assist in strengthening the young women's self image and to increase effective parenting. Roughly 46 young mothers and 41 children were served this year.

**The Real Men Make Better Dads Program** in Norwich provides support and educational services to young fathers to enhance parenting skills and increase parenting involvement. Referrals are made to child support enforcement and for paternity testing. Neighborhood forums, groups and case management services are offered. Roughly 42 fathers were served this year.

**The Focus on Fathers Program** provides parent education and support groups to incarcerated fathers at Osborne Correctional Facility. The goals of the program are to help break the cycle of violence from one generation to the next, and to help parents manage anger and stress while learning new parenting skills. Roughly 53 fathers served this year.

**The Mothershare Program** provides group support to mothers who reside in the Interval House Domestic Violence Shelter, or mothers living in the community that have experienced domestic violence. The goal is to provide mutual support, promote non-violence, personal growth of the mothers, increase awareness of the effects of domestic violence on their children, and to develop effective communication and parenting techniques. Roughly 173 families were served this year.

**The Parenting Academy and ABCD Program** provides community-based workshops in Bridgeport to predominately Spanish-speaking parents of children with disabilities. The goal of the program is to increase the knowledge of parents in the areas of child development, age appropriate expectations, and good parenting practices. This year 67 families were served.

**The Nurturing Program** provides two programs to families in Middletown. The Nurturing Skills Program services parents and children at Farmhill Elementary School. This program focuses on discipline, decision-making, morals and values, nutrition and self-awareness. The parents and children each have their own sessions of the same topic. The second program is an in-house program for parents in substance abuse treatment at Rushford Center. The Nurturing Program for Families in Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery program goals are to provide strategies to: strengthen family functioning, increase family resiliency, improve self esteem, identify destructive/enabling behaviors, identify and express feelings constructively, learn and practice healthy coping skills, provide peer support, and improve anger management and parenting skills. This program has resulted in an increase in parents' knowledge of appropriate parenting techniques. A total of 20 families were served this year.

**Program Name:** Help Me Grow

**Program Description:**

*Help Me Grow* is a comprehensive, statewide, coordinated system of early identification and referral for children at risk for developmental or behavioral problems. Parents, pediatricians and other providers are given information and training in how to recognize the early signs of developmental problems and how to contact *Help Me Grow* when they have a concern or need help.

The Children's Trust Fund contracts with the Child Development Infoline to provide the telephone access for *Help Me Grow*. This access serves as a single entry point for HMG services and support. Callers are screened by professionally trained care coordinators who triage, refer and provide care management for children and their families. At the same time, Primary Prevention Services Coordinators of the Trust Fund cultivate relationships with community providers and agencies enhancing the network of resources available to the children and families HMG serves.

This partnership is facilitated by the Primary Prevention Services Coordinators through regional network breakfast meetings held bimonthly in each region. During the past year, there have been 48 network breakfasts held. These breakfasts bring together providers and other program partners to: share information and to develop solutions to challenging cases; widen their connections to a broader group of service providers; and collaborate to better support each other's organizations. In addition, the breakfasts help identify broader service system gaps. Discussion topics, which are generated by networking participants, focus on current issues of concern to families, new or changing community resources, and broader policy issues such as updates on immigration and special education laws. As an example of the popularity of these breakfasts, in the Hartford region alone, over seventy community-based programs and resources have been represented at the breakfasts.

**Number of children and families served:**

The *Help Me Grow* program has trained pediatricians and family physicians statewide as part of the EPIC module in an effort to promote universal monitoring of development by parents that begins at the earliest age possible. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that development surveillance be incorporated at every well child visit. In addition, standardized developmental screening tests should be administered regularly at the 9, 18, and 24 (30) month visits. The EPIC program is designed to educate and motivate physicians and other health care providers to use the information and change practice. There have been nearly 100 outreaches made to offices and there have been nearly 35 physician presentations conducted this year. The number of actual physicians trained is higher given that physician practices many times include more than one primary care physician.

From 7/1/07-6/15/08, 3,050 children were referred to Help Me Grow for a variety of issues including:

- basic needs
- behavioral/social emotional and mental health issues
- education issues
- family issues
- health/disability Issues
- adaptive issues, and
- socialization/recreational Issues.

These families were provided with information, education and referrals to a variety of services throughout the state.

In addition, 892 children were referred to Preschool Special Education services, 650 were referred to CYSHCN, and 2,813 families whose children had been referred to Birth to Three and were not eligible were contacted about their experience and to see if they were in need of additional resources through Help Me Grow or ASQ.

### **Ages and Stages:**

More than 70% of children who have delays are not identified until *after* they start school, meaning a critical missed window of opportunity for early intervention. ASQ is a developmental surveillance tool made up of a series of questionnaires used to screen and monitor a child's development between 4 months and 5 years of age. The results determine if the child is on track or if he or she should receive a more in-depth assessment to determine the need for specialized services. This comprehensive developmental screening tool was designed to help professionals identify infants and young children who may need further evaluation for developmental delays. Research has shown that the sooner children are identified as having delays and the sooner they get help, the better their chances of making significant developmental strides.

During this past year, over 1,150 new children were referred to the Ages and Stages (ASQ) Child Monitoring Program. Of these children, 233 families heard about the service through training for child health providers regarding screening and use of ASQ as a developmental surveillance tool, 611 after being found not eligible for Birth to Three services, 289 through calls to CDI for the Help Me Grow program and 20 through the NICU's. As of June 15, 2008, 2,363 children are actively being followed in the ASQ Child Monitoring Program. CDI has an overall questionnaire return rate of about 35%.

**Program Name:** Parent Trust Fund

**Program Description:**

The Parent Trust Fund is a program of the Children's Trust Fund administered in collaboration with the Connecticut Commission on Children. The Parent Trust supports parent engagement and leadership training to improve the health, safety and education of children across Connecticut.

The Children's Trust Fund received a state appropriation to fund the Parent Trust Fund grant program. Programming began January 1, 2006 and continued this past year with 37 contracts for parent leadership training courses during January through June 2008.

**Number of Children and families served:**

Nearly 600 parents have been trained in parent leadership this past year.

Parent leadership strengthens families and communities by creating positive change in the systems and policies designed to serve and support children. A variety of Parent Leadership Models were funded, including:

People Empowering People (PEP): Meets 2-hour a week for four to six months and can be targeted to "high need" populations. The PEP curriculum was developed by the UConn Extension Program and is available for use in English and Spanish

The Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI): A twenty-week leadership training developed by the Commission on Children that uses an assets-based community development and social policy change framework

Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (Parents SEE): A twelve-week training curriculum developed by the Commission on Children and the Center for School Change focused on parent leadership in a school setting

Voices for Families: A fifteen-week training developed by Children First Norwich focused on parent involvement and leadership with a community-to-state perspective

Leadership for Adolescent Parents: A curriculum developed by Prevent Child Abuse CT at Wheeler Clinic and offered weekly during school to adolescent parents attending Prince Tech in Hartford

AFCAMP Parent Leadership Training: A series of integrated workshops targeted to minority parents and focused on developing a better understanding of the Juvenile Justice, Special Education and DCF systems

All programs offer on-site child care, meals and transportation as needed to support parents attending training. Many communities offer a continuum of parent leadership activities as research shows that parent engagement has a significant and positive impact on child outcomes, particularly in education and learning.

What follows is a sampling of accomplishments identified by Parent Trust Grantees:

Meriden Child First has been running PLTI for twelve years now to total more than 150 parents being trained in Meriden. A former Meriden PLTI graduate, Cathy Lewis, was recognized by the Meriden Mayor with his 'Spirit of Meriden' award during June 2008. Cathy's class project was to create a program linking seniors and young kids who need ready help. Five years later, Senior Buddy Readers operates in 4 elementary schools with 75 senior 'Buddies' and more than 200 first- and second-grade children served!

The Milford Health Department's Parent Leadership Training Institute resulted in 19 graduates and completed wonderful community projects. Several class members spoke at Board of Education Budget meetings and presented their opinions to the Board of Alderman. One class member is already working with the United Way of Milford as a result of a speaker who presented to the class and another graduate recently coordinated a Walk for Juvenile Diabetes through the school system which raised a record amount of contributions.

The highlight of Wheeler Clinic's Parent Adolescent Leadership class was their trip to the Legislative Office Building and The State Capitol including a discussion with Senator Coleman. The seven teenage mothers were able to articulate their concern with the lack of reliable day care for teenage parents to be able to finish their education.

The Network Against Domestic Violence program was pleased to report that two of the parent participants expressed an interest in serving as a co-facilitator of their course, People Empowering People.

The Family Life Education's People Empowering People course graduates are in the planning stages of a summer reading fair. The Youth PEP class completed their project by assisting the City of Hartford Mayor's Office for Young Children with the "Family Fair" held this past spring.

The Special Education Network of New Canaan's Families as Partners classes had wonderful results. The coordinator remarked that, since attending training, parents have arrived at IEP Team meetings insisting that their children's IEP goals and objectives be written in a measurable way! This is an indication that Families as Partners training has resulted in parents acting as stronger and more informed advocates for their children's education.

UConn's Pappanikou Center reports a touching situation. "We had one parent, non English speaking, who went through the training and was advised on how to keep the notices and documentation relating to her child's PPT/IEP meetings. She went to the school for the meeting, and as had been the case in the past, they told her they had changed the time and she needed to come back another day. This mother has cancer, is very sick, and needed to have the meeting. She pulled out her notice and said that they needed to let her know in writing if there was a change. Her PPT was held that day, and, unlike past years, she was able to add supports for her child's educational program. She went back to the training the next day; right after she had received

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chemotherapy just to let the class know of her success and that you can really make a difference!! It was quite emotional, but highlights the level of impact parents can have, and how much they can support each other."

The Stamford Exchange Club reports "the parents enjoyed the program so much they decided to continue meeting monthly. Each group elected a President and Vice President and will continue meeting monthly with the parents, PTO and representatives from the schools and School Board to continue the conversations and communication."

Waterbury Hospital reports "this was our 9<sup>th</sup> year using the PLTI program. Senator Joan Hartley was our graduation keynote speaker and Senator Sam Caligiuri attended the How does a state work session."

Education Connection reports "two graduates of PEP testified on behalf of the Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative's request from the City for \$5000 at the Board of Finance budget hearing. TECC was just notified - we received the funds!!! Two PEP students have been trained and will be facilitating the next classes.

United Way of Greenwich parent states "when I first took part in the PLTI, I felt that I was extra sensitive and too insecure/unable to communicate my ideas and desires. With my experience in the PLTI, I have changed as a leader and person. Although I do remain somewhat sensitive, I now have the courage and confidence to voice my opinions, wants and expectations as a true, strong leader would. Thank you PLTI; you've turned from Parent Leadership Training Institute into Powerful Leaders (with) Tolerant Identities."

- Luz

Bridgeport's Regional Youth/Adult Substance Abuse Program noted special recognition to parent graduates which was given by U.S. Congressman Christopher Shays Office and Bridgeport Mayor William Finch.

AFCAMP reports that its graduate parents are now actively participating in several state and local initiatives including the DCF Differential Response/Citizen review committee, the DMHAS Transformation Initiative, the Juvenile Justice Alliance Committee, the Regional Mental Health Board/YAS and the Hartford Public School PTO Council. Twenty-five parents participated in the Legislative session by providing testimonies, contacting legislators, attending legislative hearings, community education and many others.

**Program Name:** The Kinship and Grandparents Respite Fund

**Program Description:**

The Kinship and Grandparents Respite Fund awards small grants to orphaned or abandoned children and their court-appointed relative guardians who are often times struggling financially. The Trust Fund provides funding to eleven probate courts to administer the program. The grants provide for a range of activities including tutoring, camp, fees for a variety of programs and extra-curricular experiences as well as clothing, eyeglasses and other basic necessities and respite for the caregivers.

**Number of children and families served:**

Approximately 3,000 children and families were serviced through the Kinship Fund this year. This is an increase from last year.

Approximately 2,000 children and families were serviced through the Grandparent Respite Fund this year. This is an increase from last year.

The Kinship Fund and the Grandparent Respite Fund are administered by the Connecticut Children's Trust Fund. Both funds help support legal guardians through the Office of the Probate Court Administrator who distributes the funds to selected probate courts in the state.

The Kinship Fund makes possible small grants to children in the amount of \$50 to \$250 dollars per child or up to \$1,000 per family per calendar year. Kinship Fund grants intend to help children face the difficult adjustment to new circumstances.

The child or children may receive a Kinship Fund grant to:

- Improve the child or children's health, e.g. eyeglasses, dental care, hearing
- Enrich the lives of the child by allowing them to pay for school trips, clubs, sport fees, sports equipment, educational classes, field trips, art supplies and materials.
- Purchase clothing, photographs and other memorabilia for important social functions
- Lessons such as; karate, driver education classes, school uniforms, summer camps, vacations, vocational or trade school supplies.

The Respite Fund makes possible grants up to \$2,000 per family per calendar year. Funds available through the Respite Fund provide a direct benefit for grandparents and other adults who have been appointed as a guardian for relative children by the probate court.

Grandparents and relative guardians may receive Respite Fund grants for the following:

- Housing expenses such as cost of shelter, furnishings, utilities and food
- Transportation expenses such as purchase of a new or used vehicle, insurance, gasoline, maintenance, and public transportation.
- Child care and other expenses such as day care tuition and supplies, baby-sitting, entertainment, personal care items.

The Kinship and Respite Funds provide necessary support to grandparents and other relatives who selflessly step in to care for children when their parents are unable to provide this care. The Kinship and Respite Fund program continues to expand statewide, along with the Regional Children's Probate Courts, which together are serving the needs of hundreds of children and guardians each year.

### **Family Stories:**

A sixteen year old minor child resides with the maternal grandmother, who is the guardian. The minor child is actively involved in the church choir, doing very well academically, and plans on attending college. The guardian needed financial assistance to send the child on a trip with the church choir to perform in Washington, D.C. The guardian also wished to obtain a new computer to assist the minor child in completing school work. A grant from the respite fund provided the financial support for both of these important needs.

A nine year old minor child resides with the paternal aunt, who is the guardian. The birth mother has extensive mental health issues which have prevented her from appropriately caring for the minor child for several months at a time. Due to the trauma which occurred while living with the birth mother, the minor child is seeing a therapist out of state but close in proximity to the guardian, who lives in a neighboring town. The therapy was previously paid for by the birth mother's state insurance. Because the minor child is not currently in the birth mother's care, the minor child no longer qualifies to receive state paid health insurance under the birth mother in the neighboring state. Although the minor child is eligible for Connecticut-funded HUSKY health insurance, it will not cover the out of state therapist's fees.

Because of the trauma the minor child has already experienced, it would be detrimental to the child's emotional well-being to disengage the child from the therapeutic relationship at this time. The child is making great progress in therapy with the current therapist. Because the guardian appreciates this, the guardian is willing to pay out of pocket for the therapy sessions, however it is a financial burden.

The guardian was able to use grants from the kinship and respite funds to offset the cost of the therapy and benefit the child by maintaining a consistent therapeutic relationship.

**Program Name:** Family Development Credential and Training Program (FDC)

**Program Description:**

The FDC program offers family serving agencies with training for their staff so that they have the skills needed to help the families they serve attain healthy self-reliance within their communities. A key component in this training is a curriculum developed by Cornell University, which is strength-based and family-focused, and covers home visiting, collaboration, communications, cultural competence, and community outreach.

FDC offers two training courses:

- An 80-hour community based, *Empowerment Skills for Family Worker* is a comprehensive skill building training for ALL professionals who work with families. Participants who complete this course, a skill based portfolio and pass the competency-based exam are eligible for a FDC credential from the University of Connecticut and 6 undergraduate college credits from Charter Oak College.
- A 35-hour certified *Empowerment Skills for Leaders* for leaders to develop practical ways to build their organizational capacity in areas of empowerment based supervision, interagency collaboration, strength based assessment, multicultural competence and professional development.

**In the last year:**

- 88 participants completed the 80-hour course.
- More than 30 participants completed the 35-hour FDC for Leaders course.
- FDC courses were offered across Connecticut with participants from family serving agencies statewide.
- Two FDC courses were at Capital Community College as part of their continuing education program. 37 participants completed the course. Tuition includes staff time, all materials, parking, credential and six undergraduate college credits.
- New Opportunities Waterbury, Inc. continues their implementation of a system-wide change in how they deliver services. Approximately 30 workers completed the 80-hour course for family workers and 20 staff participated in the *Empowerment Skills for Leaders* program.
- The Children's Trust Fund sponsored 3 community based classes where the participants received their FDC credential at a reduced rate, were provided with manuals and supplies free of charge.
- Collaboration with CT Association for Community Action (CAFCA), which consists of 12 partnering agencies throughout the state has been formalized. CTF staff will facilitate a Training of Trainers Institute, in the fall of 2008, for statewide CAFCA staff. CAFCA agencies are committed to train all front line workers in the 80-hour course and all supervisors and management staff in the 35-hour course. In total CAFCA's plan is to train more than 300 individuals over the next three years.

**Program Name:** Shaken Baby Prevention Project

**Program Description:**

Shaken Baby Syndrome can cause brain damage, fractures, and death from the violence shaking of infants and young children. The Shaken Baby Prevention project trains hospital staff, medical professionals and community service providers throughout Connecticut on methods to prevent shaken baby syndrome. Three regional trainers, Primary Prevention Services Coordinators of the Children's Trust Fund, provide outreach, education and support to the community on preventing shaken baby syndrome.

**Number of children and families served:**

A total of 675 participants have been trained in Shaken Baby Syndrome education during the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 years.

The CT Shaken Baby Prevention Project is offered in communities and at birthing hospitals across the state. The goal of this project is to build champions for the prevention of shaken baby syndrome (SBS). Efforts include the following:

- Community-based initiatives which focus on influencing providers and parents from a wide variety of disciplines to inform and educate others on the effects of shaken baby syndrome and ways to prevent this form of child abuse
- Hospital based presentations which consist of a presentation on shaken baby syndrome prevention and a discussion on available tools and methods to implement parent education and awareness
- Shaken baby syndrome information incorporated in the EPIC module for Child Abuse and Neglect for healthcare providers
- SBS materials such as brochures, videos and posters provided to nursing students, police departments, EMTs, middle schools, high schools, technical schools and alternative schools for pregnant and teenage parents.
- SBS highlighted at health fairs
- Shaken Baby Prevention workshop held at regional Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative conference for childcare providers in the Greater Hartford area.
- Training provided to Parent Aide Educators, DCF investigators and on-going services workers, at-risk offenders through the family courts in Hartford, and women in residential substance abuse programs
- Presentations provided for parents at family resource centers, child care centers and residential placement settings
- Children's Trust Fund participation in the annual Shaken Baby Prevention Candlelight Vigil at Naugatuck Valley Community College by providing information and materials
- Letters mailed to all 260 Connecticut middle school principals to solicit opportunities for SBS training for students

Connecticut Children's Medical Center's, Dr. Nina Livingston, has trained 100 neonatal intensive care nurses and medical staff on the SBS prevention message, uses the *Portait of Promise* video, Children's Trust Fund brochure and has the parents sign a commitment statement. Dr. Livingston would like to create "certified crying educator" positions in the hospital emergency department and other areas.

A Memorandum of Agreement between the Trust Fund and the University of Connecticut's A.J. Pappanikou Center for Developmental Disabilities has been implemented. In collaboration with the Trust Fund the Pappanikou Center will continue to assist in framing and writing research proposals, continue to conduct a literature review of SBS and assist in the development of assessment/evaluation tools for the CT Shaken Baby Prevention Project. The present project will evaluate the effectiveness of the current SBS parent education intervention being used with Nurturing Families Network home visiting families and the new *Period of P.U.R.P.L.E Crying* intervention. The survey of Connecticut hospitals revealed that most hospital offer some type of information related to SBS, some with printed materials and/or verbal messages about SBS, and the Children's Trust Fund's "Never Shake a Baby" brochure. Many hospitals have requested materials such as videos, brochures and posters.

**Program Name:** The Children's Law Center

**Program Description:**

The mission of the Children's Law Center is to protect the interest of poor children in family court and to advocate policies, which advance their well-being and best interest. Through its programs and services, CLC strives to create safe, stable environments for children whose parents are in chronic conflict. Services provided include legal representation of children by court appointment, a statewide legal help-line, and a parenting education and mediation program.

**Number of children and families served:** The Legal Representation Program served 237 families representing 371 children. The Families in Transition Program has served 56 Families. The Children's Law Line assisted 1,320 callers affecting 1,790 children.

**Legal Representation Program:** This program provides attorneys to indigent children in family court. In the Judicial Districts where this program operates (Hartford, New Britain, Waterbury, Windham and Tolland), the Children's Law Center is appointed by a judge to act as Attorney or Guardian *Ad Litem* for the minor child. The program is free to qualifying families. Each case is as unique as the family involved, but all of them are highly contentious, protracted, and difficult for the children who are caught in the middle. In addition to the requirement of indigence, cases must also be exacerbated by accusations of domestic violence, substance abuse, mental illness, child abuse/neglect, or other chronic conflict. In those judicial districts not served by the program, there is no alternative service available to the children. The program frequently operates at full capacity.

**Children's Law Line:** This is a free, statewide legal help-line that answers legal questions, gives advice, information and referrals to those with concerns about children or to children themselves. It is an ongoing program that originated out of the need to advise families, caretakers, and others about children's legal rights in an accessible fashion.

**Families in Transition:** This program has enabled the organization to practice some "preventive medicine," as well as expand our reach through volunteer trainings. Families In Transition mediators help to resolve conflicts, and build a functioning relationship between parents so that children are not burdened with continued conflict. Studies have shown that the mediated agreements are better for children because they are longer lasting and more often honored by parents, thus adding stability to children's lives. Couples can be seen before any court action is taken but most often referred by Family Relations Officers in the courts.

All of the CLC staff is housed at 30 Arbor Street in Hartford and the attorneys are always in contact with each other, the mental health professional and the executive director to discuss issues pertinent to their cases. Half of the law line calls are referred by Infoline-211.

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**Program Name:** *The Stranger You Know....* A Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Program

*The Stranger You Know...* began as a pilot program at ChildPlan, Inc. in East Hartford. The program, which grew out of the work of the Trust Fund's Childhood Sexual Abuse Prevention Coalition in 2003, trained hundreds of parents and teachers to keep children safe from childhood sexual abuse.

**Program Description:** Most current child sexual abuse prevention programs place the burden of sexual safety on children and they promote **fear** and encourage **avoidance** as useful strategies for a child's sexual safety. These "scare tactics" programs have roots back as far as 1953, and we at the Children's Trust Fund believe it's time to transfer the responsibility for child sexual safety to the adults. The program encourages parents and professional providers to teach children skills and confidence as they relate to sexual wellbeing.

The program doesn't place demands on parents. It gives them precise and up to date information on how child molesters successfully offend against children. It offers insight into how the molester thinks, acts and operates. It explains how the fixated molester (pedophile) has a flexible plan in place to suit his compulsive behavior and we cover the situational molester (regressed) who offends impulsively. Throughout the hour and a half presentation are interspersed many tips on how to have significant conversations about sexual safety with children which stress the nurturing of **skills** and **confidence**. Our goal is to avert the offender through the tutoring of responsible adults.

**Number of families/children served since Jul 2007:**

We have presented the program over 50 times since July 2007 reaching over 1,100 parents/providers in our local communities.

**Other Information:** Our instructor is retired Police Commander Robert F. Kenary. Cmndr. Kenary spent 33 Years in the East Hartford Police Department, 30 of those years in the detective division. He was assigned to the FBI for 2 years investigating sexual offenses against children and is a graduate of the prestigious FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. In addition to the law enforcement approach to the molester Cmnddr. Kenary maintains professional affiliations with Hartford Hospital's Institute of Living and the School of Psychiatry, at UConn. Cmndr. Kenary is the recipient of the Martin A. Burnham award for child abuse prevention and Two Official citations from the Connecticut General Assembly for child sexual abuse prevention. (2006, 2007). In August Cmndr. Kenary along with researcher Dr. Eleanor Lyons, of the University of Connecticut, School of Social Work, will present *The Stranger You Know: A Community-Focused Prevention Program and It's Evaluation* at The National Children's Advocacy Center's 9<sup>th</sup> National Prevention Conference on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention.

The Children's Trust Fund offers this program without cost to groups of parents and professional providers throughout the State of Connecticut.

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