



Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education



Center for Schools and Communities



What is this all about?

- Family support to family strengthening
- Role of early care and education centers
- Role of prevention programs
- Children's Trust Fund (CTF) role



What is Strengthening Families?

- Cost effective, do-able strategy to prevent child abuse and neglect
- Involves early childhood centers working with families to build protective factors



Why early care and education programs?

- Systematic way to reach a large number of very young children and their families
- Support healthy child development
- Establish relationships with families
- Can act as an early warning system and intervene before abuse occurs



Which Protective Factors?

- For adults:

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need

- For children:

- Healthy social and emotional development



What are the goals of the initiative?

- Increase awareness that strengthening families is central to prevention
- Increase the number of early childhood programs building protective factors
- Improve working relationships in system
- Support integrated prevention planning among state agencies



What are the program elements?

- Family Support
 - Family Support Workers
 - Parenting Supports
 - Home Visiting
- Social Emotional Strategies
 - Conflict resolution curricula
 - Arts programs
 - Diversity affirmation
- Mental Health Consultation



How relationships develop

- Use of Space to welcome parents
 - Observation Areas
 - Dedicated Parent Space
- Outreach to Men
- Strong relationship with child protection agency
- Relationships with other agencies and services
 - Networks, Collaboratives, partnerships



What are CTF's doing?

- Making grants to early childhood programs & state efforts
- Providing leadership at the state level
- Collaborating with early childhood programs
- Reframing the prevention of child abuse and neglect to a focus on child development



Summary

- Strengthening Families
- Prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Children's Trust Fund



Resources

- Center for the Study of Social Policy

www.cssp.org

- Annie E. Casey Foundation

www.aecf.org/initiatives/mc/sf/policy.htm



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