

# Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template

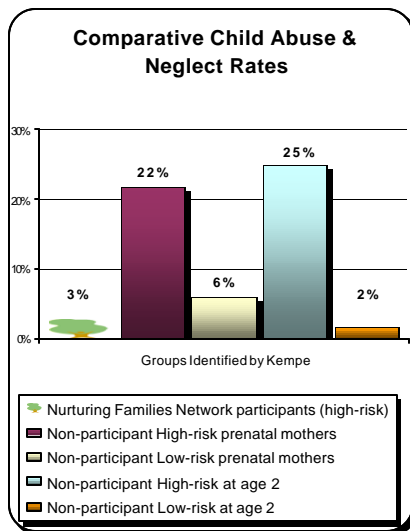
## Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability Summary

**Agency Purpose:** The purpose of the Children’s Trust Fund is to prevent child abuse and neglect and to ensure the positive growth and development of children.

**Program Purpose:** Nurturing Families Network (NFN) fosters strong bonds and healthy relationships between parents and their children.

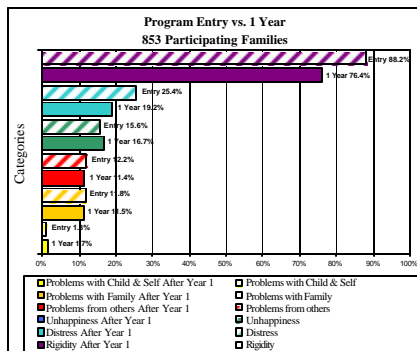
**Performance Measure 1:**

The rate of child abuse and neglect is lower for high risk NFN participants than for similar families not in this type of program.



**Performance Measure 2**

Among participants there is a significant decrease in parental frustration, sadness and loneliness and an increase in coping and stress management skills, more realistic expectations of their children, and fewer difficulties in relationships.



**Performance Measure 3**

Program participants made statistically significant gains in education and employment (See charts, page 8).

Key Budget Information	
Total Current Program Year Funding	10,434,562
Funding as Percent of All Funding for Population Result	
Program Funding As Percent of Total Agency Budget	71%
Funding Distribution	
Total Federal Funds	112,500
Total State Funds	10,208,062
Capital Projects Subtotal	
Other Funding	114,000
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third Parties	97%

**Story Behind the Baselines**

**Measure 1:** This finding is based on comparative data from 3 studies of the abuse and neglect rates for families identified at high risk using the Kempe Family Stress Checklist.

**Measure 2:** Pre and post tests show that parents make statistically significant gains on the Child Abuse Potential Inventory, the Parenting Stress Index, Adolescent Parenting Inventory -2, Community Life Skills Scale.

**Measure 3:** Pre and post measures of employment and education show gains in both areas.

**Turning The Curves: What do you propose to do over the next two years and why?**

**Low or no cost options:**

Continuous Quality Improvement team to focus on targeted issues and specific populations of families including those with developmental delays, immigrants and fathers.

The Children’s Trust Fund proposes expanding the program in order to reach the many more families who could benefit from this type of intervention and impact the overall population goal.

## Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

### **Agency Purpose:**

The purpose of the Children's Trust Fund is to prevent child abuse and neglect and to ensure the positive growth and development of children. As a result, our efforts have centered on finding the most effective means of assisting families who are at risk of abuse and neglect so that they have a chance for a better future for themselves and their children.

### **Program Purpose:**

The Trust Fund's efforts have included the development of the Nurturing Families Network. The Nurturing Families Network provides supportive services to new parents including parenting groups open to the community. The program offers intensive support for high risk and hard to reach families living in poverty.

In these situations, the Nurturing Families Network provides a program of intensive home visits. The program connects high-risk parents with a home visitor who meets with the family on a weekly basis - on average - for almost two years. The home visitors work against a backdrop of unwanted babies, domestic violence and the high potential for child abuse or neglect to assist the parents to address many issues and to help break the family's social isolation. Through ongoing contact a trusting and meaningful professional relationship is formed. This relationship is at the core of the program's success.

### **Contribution to Population Result**

The Nurturing Families Network reaches out to poor, single parents. This includes parents who have their first child at a very young age, have limited education, face multiple challenges and have often been abused themselves as children.

The children of the parents who are offered program services are at greater risk for developmental and behavioral problems, health issues, and learning disabilities. These children are more likely to do poorly in school and struggle to catch up. These children are also at greater risk for abuse and neglect.

The children are living in challenging circumstances that create real roadblocks to their well being. The Nurturing Families Network makes a difference.

Several studies show that children whose parents participated in a similar home visiting program are more likely to be ready by five and fine by nine.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted one of these studies. The study found that children enrolled in preschool - whose families participated in a home visiting program - scored significantly higher on all measures of intelligence, achievement, and language ability than children in the comparison group whose families did not receive home visiting services.

## CTF: Nurturing Families Network

The parents who participated in the home-visiting program were mostly young, poor, undereducated, single heads of household.

Their children shattered the conventional wisdom that they would perform poorly in school. The children did as well as the national norm for children their age - with roughly 15% exceeding the national norm. The children out performed a comparison group of children from wealthier and more stable families not considered at risk for poor outcomes.

In addition, research on home visiting shows that the early intervention can have long term benefits. Research shows reduced rates of tobacco and alcohol use, episodes of running away, behavioral problems, arrests, convictions, and sexual promiscuity among teenagers whose families were reached in this way (David Olds 15 year follow-up – Elmira Home Visiting Program 1998).

These studies demonstrate that home visiting services and early childhood education efforts should go hand and hand. Connecticut’s children will benefit in similar ways if home visiting becomes an integral component of the state’s early childhood education strategy.

<b>Key Budget Information (<i>Dollars reported in millions</i>)</b>	
Total Current Program Year Budget	\$10,434,562
Funding as Percent of All Funding for Quality of Life Result	
Program Funding as Percent of Total Agency Budget	71%
Budget Distribution:	
Federal	\$112,500
State	
General Fund	\$10,208,062
Capital Project Funds	
Other State Funding	
Other Funds (Not Federal or State)	\$114,000
Percent of Total Current Funding Spent on Direct Service	78%
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third parties	97%

## Basic Program Facts

The Nurturing Families Network is operating in 25 of the 29 birthing hospitals in the state. Services are offered at 33 locations with an expanded program in Hartford. An expansion is underway in New Haven and at the four remaining birthing hospitals.

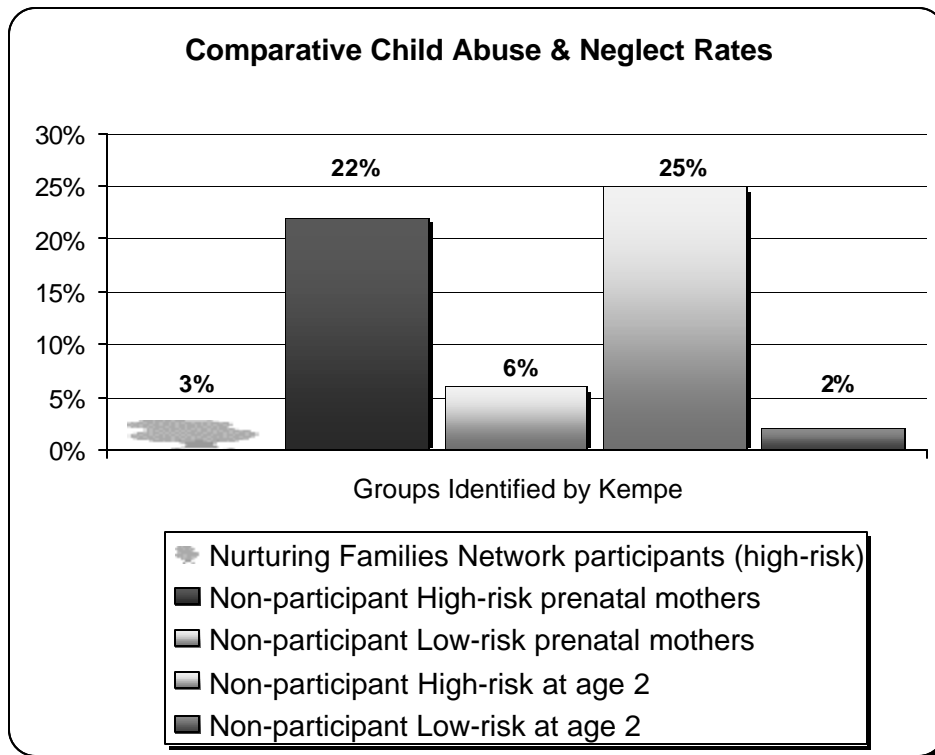
The Nurturing Families Network provides parent education and support for 5,000 new parents each year. The program efforts include screening and assessment, information and support for low risk parents, and intensive home visiting for high risk parents. Roughly 1,200 new parents are receiving home visits under this program.

## Performance Measures and Story Behind the Baselines

### Summary of Story Behind the Baselines:

#### Performance Measure 1

The incidence of child abuse and neglect in the high-risk families participating in the Nurturing Families Network is lower than that of similar families not participating in this type of program.



#### Story Behind Measure 1

This finding is based on comparative data from 3 studies of abuse and neglect rate for families identified at high risk using the Kempe Family Stress Checklist.

The Nurturing Families assesses families for risk of child abuse and neglect, and poor child outcomes using the Kempe Family Stress Checklist. Families with a score higher than 25 points are considered at high risk. All families participating in the home visiting component of the Nurturing Families Network score 25 points or higher on the Kempe.

At the time of program entry the greatest risk was within the three following subscales: Ninety percent of the mothers scored at moderate to severe risk in these categories.

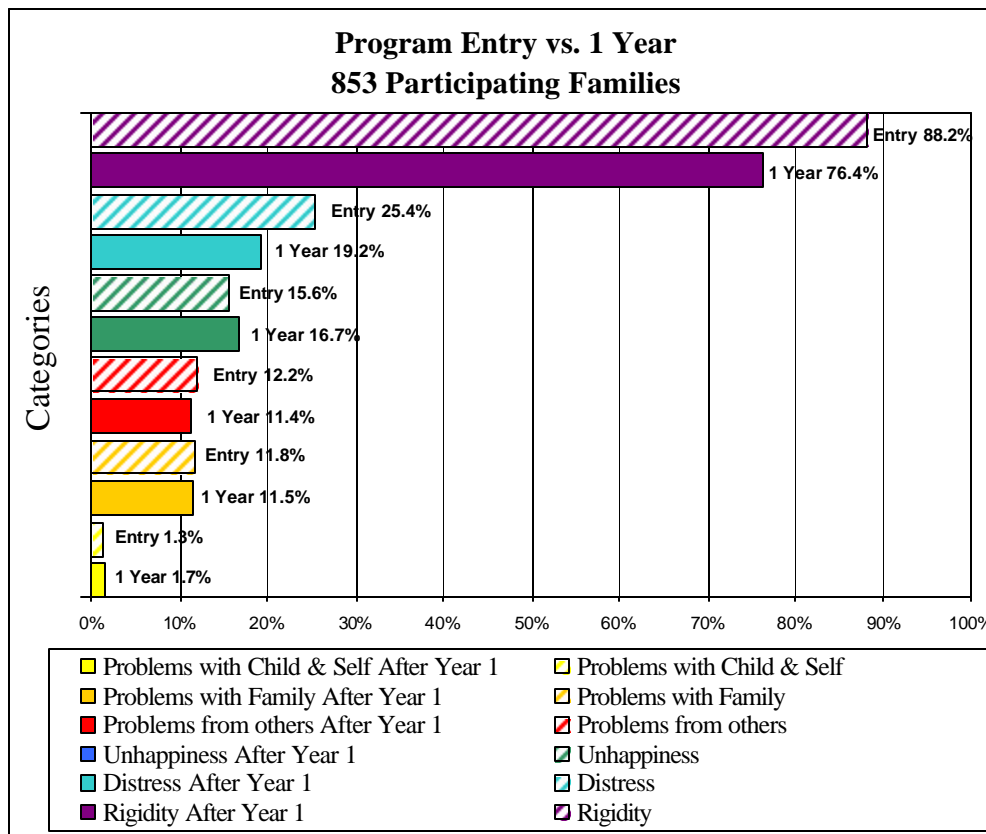
- Low Self Esteem, Depression and Social Isolation
- Child Unwanted/Poor Bonding
- Multiple Stressors

CTF: Nurturing Families Network

- The incidence of child abuse and neglect in the high-risk families identified by the Kempe participating in the Nurturing Families Network is 3%. *University of Hartford, 2006.*
- A two year study of prenatal mothers categorized into low and high-risk groups based on the Kempe found that 22 %of the high-risk mothers had abused or neglected their children versus 6 %of the low-risk parents. *Steven-Simon, Child Abuse and Neglect, 2001.*
- A two year study comparing medical charts two years after the children’s birth to families defined at-risk on the Kempe and those defined as no risk found that 25 % of the children in the at-risk group had been victims of abuse, neglect, or failure to thrive. The rate was 2 % for the no-risk group. *Murphy, Child Abuse and Neglect, 1985.*

**Performance Measure 2**

Among participants there is a significant decrease in parental frustration, sadness and loneliness and an increase in coping and stress management skills, more realistic expectations of their children, and fewer difficulties in relationships.



## Story Behind Measure 2

The Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAPI) is a standardized instrument designed to measure someone's potential to abuse or neglect children. The CAPI is widely used and well researched.

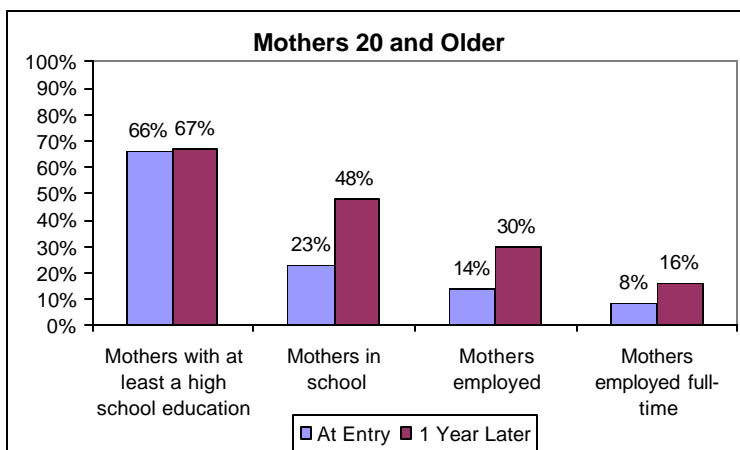
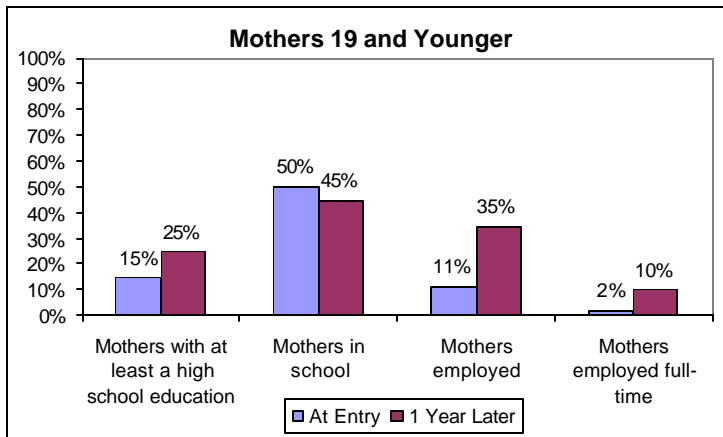
The Community Life Skills Scale (CLS) is a standardized instrument designed to measure someone's knowledge and use of community resources and support.

The outcome data on program participants is positive. The data suggest that the mothers are developing strategies to better cope with stress, are developing less rigid attitudes and expectations about their children, and are taking more responsibility for their lives.

The results of the Community Life Skills Scale are also positive. Mothers showed an increased awareness and use of resources in their community. Specifically the mothers had greater access to public and private transportation, more supportive relationships with friends and families and a decrease in social isolation.

## Performance Measure 3

Program participants made statistically significant gains in education and employment.



### **Story Behind Measure 3**

The University of Hartford examined mother's employment and education data by age cohort, analyzing data for mothers who were 19 or younger when they had their child and those who were 20 and older.

Among the younger cohort 83% enter the program without a high school diploma. Roughly 50% of this group were in high school or a GED program during their first year of parenthood to receive their diploma.

Among the older cohort 50% more mothers were enrolled in school after year in the program than at the time of program entry - including high school, college, vocational and other schools.

Among both cohorts the number of mother enrolled in and completing school continues to increase with each of program involvement.

Among the younger cohort the percentage of the mothers in the workforce increases from 11% to 35% and from 12% to 55%.

### **Partners and Their Roles**

The Children's Trust Fund partners with more than thirty community based organizations to develop and administer the program. These organizations also make, on average, a 20% in-kind contribution to defer program costs. Partners also include several organizations – including Parents as Teachers – to provide training and needed curriculum. The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the United Way and several local funding sources contribute to the Nurturing Families Network. The University of Hartford Center for Social Research evaluates the program.

Chief among the Nurturing Families Network collaborative efforts is the Continuous Quality Improvement Team (CQI). The Team was established to guide program development. The Team examines research findings and makes recommendations for ways to improve services to the families, training for the program staff, and management of the program. Regional representatives of each of the NFN staff roles serve on the Team. Other team members include the researchers from the University of Hartford and Trust Fund staff.

The Children's Trust Fund has also worked with the Department of Social Services to establish a process to claim Medicaid Reimbursement for the Nurturing Families Network. We expect to begin claiming federal funds this fiscal year, 2007, at about 40% of total program expenditures – netting roughly 4 million for the state.

## **What do you propose to do to improve performance in the next 3-5 years and why?**

### **Enhancements:**

We plan to enhance program services through the NFN Continuous Quality Improvement team by focusing on targeted issues and specific populations of families including those with developmental delays, immigrants and fathers. We are also moving forward with efforts to recruit, train and enlist the support of more volunteers.

### **Expansion:**

The Children's Trust Fund proposes expanding the program in order to reach the many more families who could benefit from this type of intervention and impact the overall population goal.

We have taken significant steps in Connecticut through the Nurturing Families Network to provide intensive home visiting services to our most vulnerable families. Yet despite these efforts the Nurturing Families Network is only able to reach a fraction of the children born into families that are at risk of serious difficulties each year.

Data collected from three different sources in Connecticut indicate that roughly 10,000 babies are born to high-risk parents each year. Approximately 3,500 of these are first time births.

The Nurturing Families Network will reach about 15% of all families at risk in 2007 – and less than half of all the first time families at risk.

Over the next 3 to 5 years we propose:

1. Expanding services in Bridgeport, New Britain and Waterbury.
2. Doubling the capacity at each of the current sites. Because of the administrative infrastructure is already in place this could be accomplished at 40% of the current cost.
3. Expanding the program to families with multiple children and opening additional points of access. The Trust Fund has piloted a program based on the Nurturing Families Network home visiting model for families of school age children called the Family School Connection. The results of the pilot are promising and could be expanded for this purpose.

### **Appendix A, Data Development Agenda**

Three data areas: the Children's Trust Fund will be pursuing strategies to track DCF involvement after families have left the program, compare the impact of recent policies changes on program outcomes, and determine what, if any, impact the community in which the program is located has on program outcomes.

**Appendix C, Information and Research Agenda**

Assess the impact of the program on school readiness by extending the evaluation through the first few years of school for the children whose families have participated in the program.

## Addendum

### Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability Summary

<p><b>Agency Purpose</b></p> <p>The purpose of the Children’s Trust Fund is to prevent child abuse and neglect and ensure the positive growth and development of children.</p> <p><b>Program</b></p> <p>The Family/School Connection (FSC) is a pilot program based at Betances Elementary School in Hartford. The program provides home visiting and support services to families whose children are struggling with truancy, behavioral or academic issues at school – and are likely to be struggling at home.</p> <p>Family School Connection is modeled after the highly successful Nurturing Families home visiting program. Family School Connection extends the Nurturing Families model to families with elementary school children (ages 5-12).</p> <p><b>Performance Measure 1</b></p> <p>Parents have healthier parenting attitudes and experience less parenting stress.</p> <p><b>Performance Measure 2</b></p> <p>Parents are more accepting and have more realistic expectations of their children.</p> <p><b>Performance Measure 3</b></p> <p>Parents are more involved in the child’s academic life.</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="2"><b>Key Budget Information</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Current Program Year Funding</td> <td style="text-align: right;">40,015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Funding as Percent of All Funding for Population Result</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Program Funding As Percent of Total Agency Budget</td> <td style="text-align: right;">.27%</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><b>Funding Distribution</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Federal Funds</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total State Funds</td> <td style="text-align: right;">40,015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Capital Projects Subtotal</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Funding</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third Parties</td> <td style="text-align: right;">76%</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Story Behind the Baselines</b></p> <p>The University of Hartford s conducting research on the pilot program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Parenting Stress Index is used to measure parenting and family characteristics that fail to promote normal development and functioning in children.</li> <li>• The Parenting Stress Index also identifies parents who are at risk for dysfunctional parenting.</li> <li>• The Parent-School Involvement Survey is used to examine parents’ perception their school involvement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Turning The Curves: What do you propose to do over the next two years and why?</b></p> <p>We propose increasing the pilot to 240 participants in eight elementary schools in the city of Hartford in order to test the model.</p> <p><b>Low cost or no cost option: continue to develop and evaluate the program model in Betances School.</b></p>	<b>Key Budget Information</b>		Total Current Program Year Funding	40,015	Funding as Percent of All Funding for Population Result		Program Funding As Percent of Total Agency Budget	.27%	<b>Funding Distribution</b>		Total Federal Funds		Total State Funds	40,015	Capital Projects Subtotal		Other Funding		Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third Parties	76%
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## Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

### **Agency Purpose**

The purpose of the Children's Trust Fund is to prevent child abuse and neglect and to ensure the positive growth and development of children. As a result, our efforts have centered on finding the most effective means of assisting families whose children are at risk of abuse and neglect so that they have a chance for a better future for themselves and their children.

### **Program**

The Family/School Connection (FSC) has been serving families and children at Betances Elementary School in Hartford since 2000.

The program provides home visiting and support services to families whose children are struggling with truancy, behavioral or academic issues at school – and are likely to be struggling at home.

Family School Connection is modeled after the highly successful Nurturing Families home visiting program. Family School Connection extends the Nurturing Families model to families with elementary school children (ages 5-12).

The home visitors concentrate on promoting healthy parenting attitudes, parental involvement in their child's academic life and improving living conditions.

Home visitors meet with families regularly to accomplish these goals. Specifically, home visitors establish trusting relationships with families in order to teach and model new skills and transfer family development knowledge. By having access to families in their homes, staff is able to conduct ongoing assessments of parenting techniques and needs, and provide the most relevant services to families including parenting information, family support, links to community resources, and tutoring.

### **Contribution to Population Result**

The Family/School Connection identifies families that are disconnected from their school. This may include a student's chronic tardiness, absenteeism, academic or behavioral problems – and the parent's failure to address them.

The FSC works to prevent these problems and improve academic performance. The program also seeks to improve parenting skills, make education a top priority for parents, reduce child abuse and neglect, and empower parents to make informed choices in their lives and the lives of their children.

## CTF: Nurturing Families Network

All of these objectives underscore an even larger program goal of creating a closer bond between parents and their children and helping parents to become better and more responsible parents.

The Family School Connection is a promising approach to ensuring that children who are at risk in the early grades are *fine by nine*.

<b>Key Budget Information (<i>Dollars reported in millions</i>)</b>	
Total Current Program Year Budget	\$40,015
Funding as Percent of All Funding for Quality of Life Result	
Program Funding as Percent of Total Agency Budget	.27%
Budget Distribution:	
Federal	
State	
General Fund	\$40,015
Capital Project Funds	
Other State Funding	
Other Funds (Not Federal or State)	
Percent of Total Current Funding Spent on Direct Service	61%
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third parties	76%

### **Basic Program Facts**

24 families are participating in the program. The children are in first through sixth grade. Mothers are primary care givers; however, fathers are the primary caregivers in 25% of the families. Maternal grandmothers and step-parents are the primary caregivers 8% of the time.

65% percent of mothers had at least a high school education, 23% percent had attended college and 21% percent of mothers were enrolled in school at program entry.

Household income is modest, with almost 75 % of households having an income of less than \$25,000. Data on the participants indicates that, although most mothers were working, the families still struggled financially and more than 50% relied on government assistance.

### **Performance Measures and Story Behind the Baselines**

#### **Summary of Story Behind the Baselines:**

##### **Performance Measure 1**

Parents have healthier parenting attitudes experience less parenting stress.

### **Story Behind Measure 1**

The University of Hartford Center for Social Research is using the Parenting Stress Index- Short Form<sup>1</sup> (PSI-SF) to measure parenting and family characteristics that fail to promote normal development and functioning in children.

The Parenting Stress Index is significantly correlated with measures of neglectful parenting and other measures of abusive parenting.

Outcome data from the families participating in the program at entry and six months show a significant ( $p < .05$ ) change in the desired direction indicating healthier parenting attitudes.

### **Performance Measure 2**

Parents are more accepting and have more realistic expectations of their children.

### **Story Behind Measure 2**

The PSI-SF also identifies parents who are at risk for dysfunctional parenting. The Parent-Child Dysfunctional Interaction subscale measures parents' perceptions of whether their child meets their expectations and the degree to which parents feel their children are a negative aspect of their lives. Higher scores on this subscale indicate an inadequate parent-child bond.

Outcome data from the families participating in the program at entry and six months show a significant ( $p < .05$ ) change in the desired direction indicating that parents are more accepting and have more realistic expectations of their children.

### **Performance Measure 3**

Increased parent involvement in the child's academic life.

### **Story Behind Measure 3**

The researchers used the Parent-School Involvement Survey to examine parent's perception of their school involvement. The survey assessed the parents' perceptions of their child's school, the time they spend with their child doing school-based activities such as reading, helping with homework or volunteering at the school.

The outcome measures were administered when families entered the program and then after six months of program involvement. There was change in the desired direction indicating that parents had become more involved in their child's academic life.

Partners and Their Roles

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CTF: Nurturing Families Network

Family/School Connection is a joint effort between the Junior League of Hartford, which has provided volunteers and helped to secure private funding, the Children's Trust Fund has offered state funding and assistance with program development, and Center City Churches has administered the program at Betances School.

**What do you propose to do to improve performance in the next 3-5 years and why?**

We propose increasing the pilot to 240 families at eight elementary schools in the city of Hartford in order to better develop and test the model.

**Low or no cost options:** The Trust fund will continue to work with its partners to develop and research the model at Betances School.

**Appendix A, Data Development Agenda**

Progress reports on absenteeism and truancy as well school report cards would be useful for tracking the progress of individual students and the overall impact of the program.

**Appendix C, Information and Research Agenda**

Implement a research project focused on implementation, process and outcome measures over a three year period involving 240 families.