



THE EXCHANGE CLUB PARENTING SKILLS CENTER

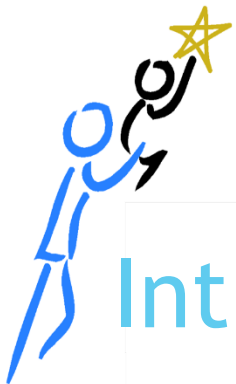
Teaching Safe Parenting

*The Exchange Club Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse of Southern, CT, Inc.
Sponsored by: Department of Children and Families • Conn. District Exchange Clubs*

Donna L. Miller M.S, Executive Director

A non-profit 501 (c)(3) Organization





Introduction



The Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center is a private non-profit agency serving the Fairfield County community in the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Our mission is to stop the cycle of child abuse by strengthening the family through home-based intervention programs designed to improve challenged communications and behaviors that lead to abuse.

We also provide access to basic needs and community resources, as 97% of our clients live below the poverty line.



Who are We?



- ▶ PSC was founded in 1989 through the collaboration of community members, State of CT agencies and the Exchange Clubs of Connecticut. These Exchange Clubs are chartered nationwide by the National Exchange Club, whose focus is to strengthen families and communities through child abuse prevention
- ▶ Our social work staff consists of six professionals and our Executive Director, Donna Miller. Donna has been with PSC from inception; since then we have worked with over 10,000 children and their families in our community.
- ▶ All programs and services are provided in English, Spanish and Creole, and we offer assistance 24/7.



Why are we needed?



- ▶ Child abuse and neglect is the number one health crisis facing our children in the United States, with 3.3 million reports of child abuse every year, involving up to 6 million children. An average of 5 children die daily at the hands of their caretakers.
- ▶ Every child needs and deserves to feel love and compassion from their parents or caretakers.
- ▶ Keeping the family intact through our 4-6 month interventions is much less expensive than potential alternatives, like Foster Care. Foster Care costs ~\$35,000 on annual basis versus the cost of our intervention of ~\$2,500. Tax payers save and healthier families and communities are produced.



Who do we help?



- ▶ PSC works with over 300 families with over 750 children per year in Fairfield County.
- ▶ We served a multicultural population with children ages 0-18 years old.
 - ▶ ~15% of the children we work with have been sexually abused
 - ▶ ~25% have been physically abused.
 - ▶ The vast majority are the victims of physical and psychological neglect, whether it be in the form of homelessness, not receiving proper medical care, or lacking educational opportunities.



How do we help?



- ▶ Our highly trained social work staff provides parenting skills instruction and access to community resources. We help previously destructive families become more functional, independent, supportive and loving.
- ▶ Key point of differentiation for PSC is our home-based intervention model. Very few agencies work directly with families in the home, yet it is the best social work model for understanding the unique family interactions and environmental influences that lead to abuse.
- ▶ Our two biggest programs are:
 - ▶ ‘Triple P’ (Positive Parenting Program): DCF sponsored, designed to treat and prevent behavioral and emotional problems in children and teenagers through working with parents on a curriculum-based program.
 - ▶ ‘HELP’ for Kids: focuses on the most intensive cases where the children are most at risk. In many of these families there have been instances of child abuse, neglect and/or domestic violence. Triple P is
- ▶ We use a variety of immediate and long-term solutions customized to treat very serious conditions among families in crisis.



Why do we need your help?



- ▶ We serve families in Fairfield County that often fall through the safety net of other social work agencies.
- ▶ Cuts to social service programs have had a detrimental impact on the families that are most in need of basic resources.
- ▶ We have an alarming average of 20 families on our waiting list, but we are financially constrained and have limited staff resources.



Supporting the healing process



- Meet the parent where he/she is – timing can be a crucial component
- Build relationship that honors they are worth your time and energy
- Stay engaged through difficulty and set backs
- Understand that small steps are leaps
- On-going discussions about how the invisible suitcase (trauma) impacts decisions
- Model emotional and self-regulation skills
- Help parents anticipate possible reactions and triggers
- Discuss empowerment, personal safety and child safety
- Focus on strengths and resilience



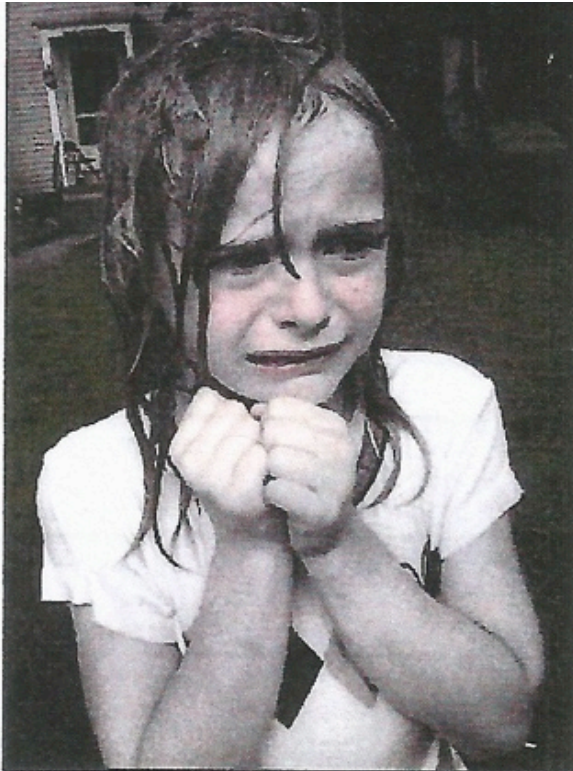
Capacity of parent - Potential outcomes



- ❖ Parents have the opportunity for a change moment; the experience of feeling seen, understood, and accepted by another
- ❖ Parents know the power of their past experiences and how their child's experiences could impact their long term health.
- ❖ Parents have a chance to talk about how trauma and toxic stress have affected their lives and to develop compassion for themselves.
- ❖ Parents have the opportunity to identify and build on their strength and resilience
- ❖ Parents make decisions and are able to take action in their lives to protect their children
- ❖ Parents can engage in available community and professional supports to continue the healing process
- ❖ Parents can take steps to enhance capacity to be more sensitive and responsive to their child's needs.



Stress response to trauma and abuse



- Surge in adrenaline, epinephrine, & cortisol
- Increased metabolism
- Faster heart rate
- Faster respiration
- Increased blood sugar
- Increased blood pressure
- Suppression of other systems



Long-term impact, changes in brain





Fatherhood Program





Fatherhood Program

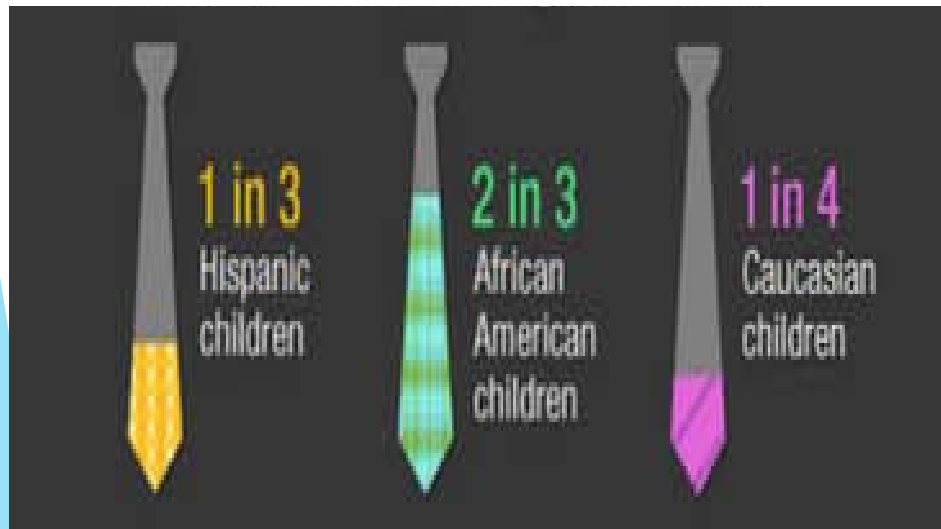




Responsible Fatherhood

24 Million Children

Live without their biological father



- ▶ Not living with both biological parents **quadruples** the risk of having an affective disorder, such as depression.



Responsible Fatherhood

Children living in a two-parent household with poor relationship with their father are

68%

More likely to smoke, drink and use drugs.

Children in father-absent homes are



5 times more likely to be poor.

Did you know?

Teens in single mother households are

30%

More likely to smoke, drink and use drugs

Co-Parenting



Fatherhood Hood





How can you help?



- ▶ Connect us to local legislators, other agencies with a complementary focus, community activists, local business leaders and other stakeholders that may wish to partner with us or help us raise funding and awareness of PSC.
- ▶ Give us feedback on how we can best serve our client base given the trends you are seeing in our community.
- ▶ Become a Board Member, or recommend Board Member candidates to us.
- ▶ Donate!