



Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis, Inc.

Promoting Safe, Stable and Nurturing Relationships in Families At-Risk for Child Abuse and Neglect

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Connections: Child Abuse and Neglect

and Domestic Violence

- Child abuse is a form of DV
- Witnessing DV leads to trauma
- Research shows that child exposure to stress can impact brain development.
- DV at home teaches children to resolve conflicts with violence > behavior problems, juvenile delinquency etc.
- When children become adults they are likely to continue the cycle with their partners

WHY prevention?

- We use prevention in all areas of life. It makes sense!
- Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis, Inc., was one of the pioneer prevention agencies in New Haven

Nurturing Families Network (NFN) - Overview

- NFN is a program of the CT Children's Trust Fund
- State-wide program for the prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Work with first-time parents at-risk for child abuse and neglect
- Provide parenting education, referrals and support

Goals

- Support the development of healthy and secure **attachment** by emphasizing
 - Positive parent-child interaction
 - Empathy for the baby
 - Age-appropriate expectations
 - Parental awareness of the effects of child's exposure to stressful or negative environment
- Empower families, help them develop skills and attitudes to become better parents
 - Help families to identify stressors in their environment and to address them
 - Help families advocate for their children and for themselves
- Connect families to community resources
- Break the cycle of abuse and neglect

HOW does it work?

Strategies:

- **Identifying patterns**, assessing risk factors:

WHO is at risk?

- **Strength-based approach**

Assessment and planning for the family is based on parents' and family's strengths

Strength-based thinking- demonstration and exercise

- **Holistic view of the family: relationship and environment**

'Parenting doesn't happen in a vacuum'

Environmental issues: Address the family's basic needs

Relationship issues: Focus on strengthening the father's role, address the family as a unit including extended family members that take an active role in caring for the baby

Prevention at work:

- **Home Visits**

- ~ Trained Home Visitors- certified by PAT and FDC

- ~ Evidence Based Curriculum (PAT and others)

- ~ **Stories from the field**

- **Involving fathers from the start**

- ~95% of men in prison grew up without a consistent father figure

- ~Engaging fathers

HOW do we know it works?

Research Findings

The Nurturing Families Network has proven outcomes, evaluated by the University of Hartford's Center for Social Research for the past fifteen years. They report that :

- In 2008 there were only 1.3% cases of neglect reported in the high-risk families participating in NFN. **There were NO reported cases of child abuse among participating families.**
- The rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect in high-risk families participating in Nurturing Families is, on average, only 3% compared to 20% for similar families not participating in this type of program.
- The immunization rate for two-year olds in NFN is 93% compared to 66% for two year olds with a similar demographic background on Medicaid.
- A significant percentage of parents in NFN complete high school, become employed and become more economically self-sufficient.