

Alabama: State Initiative Profile



Overview

Alabama became involved in the Strengthening Families™ initiative in 2006 because the Protective Factors fit perfectly with the state's priority to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect. The Alabama Children's Trust Fund (CTF) has served as the lead agency since 2006 but has recently provided a \$30,000 grant to the Alabama Partnership for Children to take over the role as lead agency for this work. Other partners include the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers and the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning Group/State Blueprint committee, and early childhood providers across the state.

Building Strengthening Families Practice on the Ground

The CTF office has added a Strengthening Families Protective Factors survey to the evaluation of Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) programs. Through this process, parent-focused programs are now evaluating their work within the Protective Factors framework.

Key Aspects of the State's work

Alabama's efforts are focused on building Strengthening Families capacity within early learning sites across the state in partnership with the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers and on training for providers and identifying opportunities to advocate for policies to put the Protective Factors framework into practice across systems.

Policy / Systems Change

Alabama has been strategic about building the evaluation plans for CTF grantees to measure work around Protective Factors. Like many states, lack of funding is Alabama's biggest barrier to implementing Strengthening Families but with a recent grant award from CTF, the Alabama Partnership for Children will be spearheading implementation is several sites across the state.

Parent Partnerships

Alabama has been working to develop parent leadership groups. These groups are being trained to work as advocates within the state. In educating parent advocates, the Alabama Strengthening Families partners expect parents' voices to be heard in the policy arena regarding the use of Protective Factors as a framework for supporting families across the state.

Strengthening Families is a research-based, cost-effective strategy to increase family stability, enhance child development and reduce child abuse and neglect. It builds five protective factors:

Parental resilience

Social connections

Knowledge of parenting and child development

Concrete support in times of need

Social and emotional competence of children

Through the Strengthening Families Initiative, more than thirty states are shifting policy, funding and training to help programs working with children and families build protective factors with families. Many states are also using the Strengthening Families approach to integrate state prevention strategies, strengthen families in the child welfare system and engage parents and communities in building protective factors. For more information, visit www.strengtheningfamilies.net

Nationally, Strengthening Families is coordinated by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) and supported by a number of national partner organizations including:

The National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds

The BUILD Initiative

United Way Worldwide

Zero to Three

The FRIENDS National Resource Center



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2009 QUICK FACTS

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SF Investment: \$ 33,920

Programs reached: 10

Children reached: N/A

Professional Development:

of individuals trained: 295

Protective Factors used in
ECCS Planning: N/A

Protective Factors used in
CBCAP RFP Process: Yes

Protective Factors integrated
into state QRIS: No

CCR&R Network in state
supporting program
implementation in EC sector:
No

Professional Development

Training for early care and education providers will include information about maximizing the impact of parent partnerships within their programs.

Evaluating Strengthening Families

The CTF requires its grantees to measure progress on building the Protective Factors. The University of Alabama is evaluating the project and has asked all parent-focused programs to use the Protective Factor survey along with the selected CTF outcomes. Data on these programs will be available in 2011.

Evolving Work

Alabama will seek to identify and publicly recognize early care and education providers who are already building Protective Factors in order to provide training and technical assistance to support them and reach more programs. Alabama will also focus on building Protective Factors training into continuing education for providers, and will seek to identify and secure additional funding sources to continue the initiative.