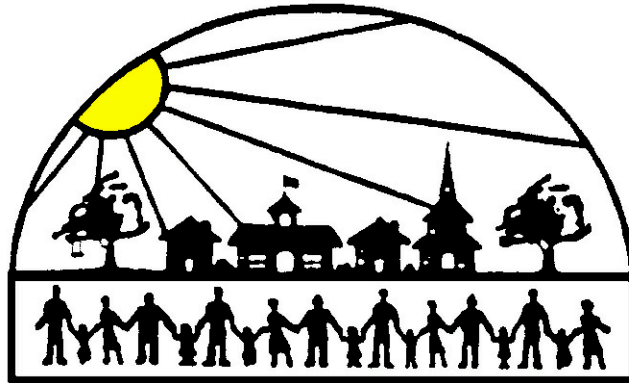


COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR PROTECTING CHILDREN



Community Partnership for Protecting Children
Louisville, Kentucky

A REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

1996-2006

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Keeping Children Safe is Everyone's Business: A report to the Louisville community

Executive Summary

In 10 years, Louisville's Community Partnership for Protecting Children (CPPC) brought about significant improvements for families and children at risk of abuse or neglect. Through the partnerships developed by CPPC, there have been changes in the way agencies serve and protect families and the openness with which child protective services discusses its work and involves families, residents and partners in decision making. With the assistance of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the Center for Community Partnerships in Child Welfare, Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the Neighborhood Place system, Louisville's families have benefited from increased access and coordination of services and supports offered to prevent child abuse and neglect. This report describes the progress made and future challenges to maintain improvements and sustain the collaboration.

Community Child Protection

In 1996, Louisville was introduced to "**Community Child Protection**," a structured approach to child abuse prevention based on a Theory of Change and four specific strategies:

- (1) Family Centered Practice:** Developing an Individualized Course of Action, including Family Team Meetings, for all families in which children are identified as being at risk of child abuse and neglect;
- (2) Building Neighborhood Networks of support** for families that include formal services and informal resources;
- (3) Changing Child Protective Services Policy, Practice and Culture** to better connect workers with the neighborhoods and residents they serve, increase effectiveness and improve accountability;
- (4) Shared Decision Making with the Community:** Establishing a local decision making body of agency representatives and community members to develop program priorities, review the effectiveness of their strategies and mobilize other citizens and resources to enhance child safety.

Today in Louisville, Children are safer

Through a partnership with University of Louisville's Kent School of Social Work and the Kentucky State Office of Technology, the Community Partnership evaluation committee received longitudinal data on child abuse and neglect by Neighborhood Place area. These data have been used to inform Child Protective services management, community partners and residents and involve them in planning. Some highlights include:

Reduced Abuse and Neglect – Substantiated abuse and neglect in the pilot CPPC site, Neighborhood Place Ujima, decreased from 2002 to 2003. In 2002 the number of substantiations was 193, and in 2003 the number of substantiations was 146.

Reduced Re-abuse - Re-abuse within a 12-month period decreased in all Neighborhood Places between 2002 and 2003. The total number of substantiated re-abuse cases in Jefferson County was 658 in 2001, 465 in 2002, and 243 in 2003. Substantiated re-abuse in the pilot site, Neighborhood Place Ujima, decreased the most dramatically. The number of substantiated re-abuse cases in the Neighborhood Place Ujima area was 48 in 2001, 44 in 2002, and 11 in 2003.

Reduced serious injury – Removals of children from their homes have been used as an indicator of serious injury. Data show that the pilot site had a significant reduction in the number of removals between 2002 and 2003. In 2002, 111 children were removed in the Neighborhood Place Ujima area. In 2003, only 40 children were removed from their home.

Reduced Child fatalities – Child fatalities decreased in Jefferson County between 2002 and 2003. In 2002, there were six (6) child fatalities in Jefferson County. In 2003, there was one (1) child fatality.

Today in Louisville, families are supported:

Today, when families need help, when their circumstances show potential signs of neglect or abuse, they are treated with respect. They know whom they can go to when they have problems. If a call is made to the Child Protective Services hotline, families may be connected with a Neighborhood Place community liaison who will work to meet their needs and keep them out of the child protective services and court systems. Regularly, Family Team Meetings are used to prevent situations from escalating or to find relatives or other placements if removal of children is required. Family members now have the ability to access parent education and skill building information through Louisville's Talkshops. If children are removed, efforts are made to keep them connected to their neighborhood, school, church and other supports. Flexible funds are provided to meet basic needs of food, clothing and shelter to prevent the removal of children.

Today in Louisville, agencies that serve and protect families have stronger working relationships:

During the past 10 years, Louisville used its Neighborhood Place system as the platform or foundation upon which system improvements were made for families. From the onset, the Neighborhood Place Managing Board and Operations Committee met regularly to plan and integrate Community Partnership work into the broader community. Today, 550 Neighborhood Place staff from Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville Metro's Health and Human Services departments, Seven Counties Services and Kentucky's Department of Community Based Services are oriented and trained together in a common curriculum used to engage families, called Family Solutions. Staff has the opportunity to collaborate in their work with families through Integrated Services meetings held regularly at Neighborhood Places. Starting in 2004, all Neighborhood Place staff was

oriented in the Family Team Meeting (FTM) process. This intervention method is used to prevent situations from escalating or, if the situation warrants, to coordinate the help of family, friends and agencies, based on the family's needs. Training together and working together fosters a better understanding of preventing child abuse and neglect and making available the necessary resources to families.

Today in Louisville, state child protection staff provides leadership in neighborhoods:

A primary aim of Community Partnership work is to change the face of Child Protective Services so CPS is seen by the community as helping families rather than “snatching babies.” To accomplish this work, Louisville placed their CPS ongoing teams in Neighborhood Places. There, staff get to know families in their neighborhoods, are more accessible than at the L&N building and are able to work in teams with other Neighborhood Place staff to coordinate services. Through integrated services and Family Team Meetings, the best possible decisions can be made with families to prevent child abuse and neglect and to close CPS cases with proper community agency follow up, when safety issues are resolved. An after-hours assessment team was created to improve responses to crises and to make the first placement the best placement, if children must be removed from their homes.

Today in Louisville, the broader community is engaged in preventing child abuse and neglect:

From the onset, community residents were engaged as neighborhood partners, community council members and members of the initial Steering Committee at Neighborhood Place Ujima. In 2002, Louisville moved its governance body from Neighborhood Place Ujima to form a county-wide Community Partnership Steering Committee. This team of people, composed of community residents, Neighborhood Place Community Council members and agencies interrelated to CPS work, focuses its attention on data (i.e. the rates of child abuse and neglect), raising public awareness, and the coordination of services to families in need, and it advocates for resources and systems changes to continually improve prevention child welfare services. Through the Steering Committee, stronger working relationships have been built with Jefferson County Public Schools, Family Court, Louisville Metro Police, Domestic Violence and other providers critical to the protection of children. Because of these relationships and their “ripple effect,” Louisville's child welfare culture is now one of collaboration and problem solving.

The progress made in 10 years bodes well for the future. Treating families as partners creates a solid foundation for change. With residents and community agencies actively involved, many of the improvements in Louisville will be sustained, and an even stronger community child protection approach will be possible.

The details of Louisville's community child protection progress are contained in the following pages along with a plan of action for the future.



Louisville's Community Partnership for Protecting Children, A Neighborhood Place Initiative

Louisville's children are safer when our community is actively involved in protecting them. We believe that, "keeping children safe is everyone's business."

After 10 years of work in establishing the Community Partnership for Protecting Children through the Neighborhood Place System, we are able to say that children are safer, families are supported, the agencies that serve and protect them are stronger, child protection staff provides leadership in neighborhoods and the broader Louisville community is engaged in preventing child abuse and neglect.

We all know that most parents want to provide the best for their children, but often many lack the resources and knowledge to do so easily. And we all agree that as a society, we have a responsibility to help parents surmount the challenges that inhibit effective parenting. Every child deserves to be free from abuse and neglect.

It is important to note that child maltreatment rarely stems from unloving or deliberately bad parenting, but rather from a lack of preparation for, or knowledge of, critical challenges surrounding parenting. Parents face an array of challenges in their efforts to provide the best possible situation for their children. Today, many parents are apart from the family and friends whom they could turn to for child-rearing help. Some young parents are wary of seeking assistance or advice out of fear that their lack of knowledge may reflect badly on them as caregivers. Moreover, parents may lack an understanding of childhood developmental stages and as a result, hold unreasonably high expectations for their children. They may also be unaware of disciplinary alternatives to corporal punishment, or how to effectively discipline and manage their child's behaviors in age-appropriate ways. Parents may also lack full knowledge of the health, hygiene, and nutritional needs of their children.

Often, parents who wish to take steps to improve their parenting skills are unaware of appropriate support services where they can get help. These barriers to support and knowledge, which are reinforced by the inherent challenges of caring for children, can lead to situations in which overwhelmed, upset or confused parents inflict physical or emotional abuse on their children or neglect their children's needs. These are the cases where abuse and neglect can be prevented by the community partnership for protecting children.

This report outlines the reasons why Louisville's Community Partnership for Protecting Children took up the challenge of changing how things were done to keep children safe, the steps we took to enact practice change, the results we see in Louisville today and how we can move forward in the future to protecting more children.

What was child protection like in 1995?

“Very little family involvement. System not set up to keep families together, but rather waiting for them to fail and then stepping in.” Dennis Enix, YMCA Safe Place

“Families were presumed guilty and community members did not have knowledge of the system. Along with this, CPS workers did not have extended knowledge in more specialized areas such as mental health and domestic violence. There was also not as great sharing or knowledge of all resources available.” Kristie Adams, Center for Women & Families

“CPS clients were not treated as a partner, no or very little opportunities to express their concerns and get as much help as possible. Family team meetings did not exist so the parent had to make many contact to get services or questions answered. I am sure parents felt very alone.” Phyllis Hildreth, Community Council member, Neighborhood Place 810 Barret

“Prior to CPPC families were treated in isolation with little explicit cooperation among services that were capable to addressing their needs. The Neighborhood Place System, fledging at the time the partnership started, provided a collaborative institutional basis for integrating the multiple needs-based responses to families. The partnership significantly contributed to the theory, practice, and evaluation of the collaborative

In 1995, Child Protective Services (CPS) was considered isolated; staff were often seen as authoritative experts who told parents what they needed to do to prevent removal, or to have their children returned to them. Families were expected to follow through with their case plans regardless of their priorities or the burdens placed upon them. They had virtually no voice in the process. There was no centralized communitywide group focused on Child Protective Services. No family team meetings were held. Most families traveled long distances, sometimes on public transportation, to the L&N building in downtown Louisville to receive child protective services, welfare and other services. Very little communication existed between CPS and domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health providers despite the fact that we are increasingly aware that these services are critical to child protection.

Why is change needed?

Even with our best efforts, too many children have been injured or neglected after the child protection system becomes aware that they are in danger. We think this is because:

- Recent research indicates that early prevention and early intervention are critical to lessening and/or remediation of damage to children.

- Child Abuse is a public health issue that threatens the future stability of our society.
- Too many parents do not get the help they need until it is too late for them to safely care for their own children.
- Too many children who must be removed from their families are placed not in good foster families in their own communities, but in shelter facilities or distant institutional settings.
- Too many children are separated from their brothers and sisters during the critical time when they are removed from their homes. Also, relatives who love these children do not find out for weeks, months, or even years later what has happened to them.
- Children and youth spend years in foster care without being safely reunified or adopted by another family.
- Youth are moved from one place to another when in care and subsequently fall behind in school and too frequently fail to graduate from high school.
- Young people in foster care for years leave without the skills, resources and family connections that we all know are necessary for them to succeed.
- Finally, too many child welfare systems operate in isolation: divorced from the assets to assist, and communities willing to support, families in need.

The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (state Child Protective Services) has the legal responsibility to intervene when child abuse or neglect has occurred. Many times, that response is simply too late after abuse has occurred. Our community has the responsibility of keeping abuse from occurring in the first place (prevention and early intervention) and to keep families from getting to the point where child protective services and Family Court need to be involved.

Why do we care about the prevention of child abuse and neglect? Because children who grow up in stable homes are more likely to succeed at work, home and play. Children who grow up in abusive homes may have lifelong problems with school, work and increased emotional and medical problems. Child abuse not only ruins lives, its aftermath causes ripples throughout society, in increased costs of health care, mental health, housing and prisons. The total costs add up too in terms of actual dollars. Prevent Child Abuse America estimates that the United States spends \$258 million dollars a day as a direct or indirect cost of child abuse and neglect.

Louisville’s Neighborhood Place System

“The Neighborhood Place supports families by providing one stop shopping in a designated geographical area. Staff knows their area and can make the community connections. In the area of prevention of child abuse and neglect, they provide financial support and also education to the families they serve. They have brought in trainers and information to train the staff that is serving the community.” Kristie Adams, Center for Women and Families

Since the early 1990's, Jefferson County Kentucky (population approximately 700,000) has been recognized for its innovative, creative and groundbreaking work in community collaboration. Louisville's Neighborhood Place system of family service centers was envisioned and implemented by a committed group of leaders in health, education and social services who met every week, bringing to the table resources to support the vision and developing relationships of trust, genuineness and empathy. Neighborhood Place is an innovative and highly successful public sector collaboration effort which improves families' access to critically needed services in their community. In a ten-year period, Neighborhood Places in Jefferson County grew from one pilot site to eight sites and three satellite locations with 550 staff, covering the entire county.

Community resident "voices" and shared decision making have been core to Neighborhood Place since the early years. Early forums engaged community-based organizations and community leaders in identifying community needs and assets. The eight Neighborhood Place Community Councils were formed and nurtured to assist in the development of each site, signaling a new partnership between large public agencies, neighborhoods and residents. Finally, the establishment of a county wide Neighborhood Place Managing Board completed the governance structure to address county wide cross systems change.

Louisville's Community Partnership for Protecting Children Starts

In 1996, almost 10 years ago, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation approached Louisville's Neighborhood Place Partners about increasing awareness of the issue of child abuse in our community and most of all engaging the community in actively working to prevent child abuse and neglect. They introduced us to "Community Child Protection" a structured approach to child abuse prevention based on a Theory of Change and four specific strategies:

- **Family Centered Practice:** Developing an Individualized Course of Action, including Family Team Meetings, for all families in which children are identified as being at risk of child abuse and neglect;
- **Building Neighborhood Networks of support** for families that include formal services and informal resources;
- **Changing Child Protective Services Policy, Practice and Culture** to better connect workers with the neighborhoods and residents they serve, increase effectiveness and improve accountability;
- **Shared Decision Making with the Community:** Establishing a local decision making body of agency representatives and community members to develop program priorities, review the effectiveness of their strategies and mobilize other citizens and resources to enhance child safety.

The Foundation asked Louisville to utilize the theory of change to create a Community Partnership for Protecting Children (CPPC). The target area for the initiative was the

Park DuValle area where Neighborhood Place Ujima is located. Ujima was selected because it was the first full service Neighborhood Place and had not only higher numbers of abuse and neglect, but also many assets and a history of community involvement and activism.

Following a year of strategic planning, implementation grants were awarded between 1997 and 2000. National technical assistance was provided by the Center throughout this time. At the pilot site Neighborhood Place Ujima, the number of substantiated child abuse reports decreased, the number of children committed to state care decreased, there was substantial growth in kinship care, i.e. relatives caring for children, and the use of Integrated Services and Family Team Meetings has been incorporated into daily practice. Child Protection staff also routinely use the results of each Family Team Meeting to tailor services to the specific needs of the children and family. No fatalities occurred in ongoing child protection cases at NPU during this 3-year period (1999-2001).

In 2002, the best practices of community child protection were expanded to all of Louisville's 8 Neighborhood Places. Leadership teams composed of the Neighborhood Place Administrator, a Community Council member and the CPS supervisor of the out stationed team in the area were formed. They assessed their current capacity to promote child safety and created action plans to guide the rollout and help sustain innovations. Simultaneously, the Community Partnership began testing the community child protection approach in two rural areas, the Big Sandy and KY River regions in Kentucky.

In 2003, the Center for Community Partnerships in Child Welfare was created to guide the implementation of Community Child Protection nationally. Kentucky then expanded community partnership work into the Fayette and Barren River regions in 2004. Strong working relationships were developed with Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky and Louisville's CPS Citizen's Review Program to assist with sustaining prevention efforts.

Family To Family Begins

From December 2000 to June 30, 2004, The Annie E Casey Foundation also awarded a grant to Jefferson County's Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (formerly Cabinet for Families and Children) to support foster care system reform. The foster care reform initiative, Family to Family, focused on developing neighborhood-based resources for both resource and birth families that allowed children to maintain connections to their communities, and families to receive the supports needed to safely care for children. *By investing in targeted communities, supporting relative placements and recruiting and providing resources* to foster and adoptive families in the neighborhoods where the most children were coming into state care, Family to Family sought to improve child welfare outcomes for children removed from their parents.

Family to Family Core Strategies

- Team Decision Making
- Building Community Partnerships
- Recruitment, training and Support of Resource Families
- Self Evaluation

The collaborative work of the Neighborhood Place system, the community mobilization efforts of the Community Partnership for Protecting Children and the restructuring of out of home care to reflect the value that all children deserve safety, permanency and the opportunity to grow up connected to families—in Louisville, all of these initiatives have built upon the strengths of, and addressed the needs identified by community partners, agencies and residents. The initiatives have helped Kentucky meet its requirements to the federal government under the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) in the areas of safety, permanency and well-being. During this same time period, Kentucky’s statewide child welfare agency received accreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA).

“State’s focus on foster care, kinship & family involvement is remarkable, even as big residential providers fought against them.” Dennis Enix, YMCA Safe Place

“Private Child Care agencies were encouraged to connect with neighborhoods that had the most removals of children, to lend their expertise to community organizations that increased those organizations capacity to serve families in their community. In turn, the community organizations were encouraged to assist with recruitment of families ”

Today, Louisville serves as a Peer Support Site, sharing successes and lessons learned and assisting representatives visiting from other states in their work to improve child welfare services.

What Beliefs Guide Our Community Child Protection Work?

Over the past few years, clear principles and values underlying Community Child Protection and Family to Family have emerged or become clearer through practical application in Louisville. These principles and values guide our work.

Our Principles

- Services for families with children at risk should be individualized to address their specific needs;
- Services need to be available to families at earlier problem stages, before a crisis occurs;
- The child protective services agency, working alone, cannot keep children safe from abuse and neglect;
- The mandated public agency at the center of child protection efforts has to change the way it operates;
- Ideally, citizens and community members should be directly involved in providing support to families in need and in shaping the types of service and support that are made available to families;
- Efforts to reduce child abuse and neglect must be nested within broader initiatives and priorities of individual communities;

- Localities have to shape their own strategies and develop a range of services based on their own resources, needs and cultures.

Our Values

- Preventing abuse and neglect from occurring helps build strong families and healthy communities;
- Children should be kept at home with their families whenever it is safe to do so;
- Children who must be removed will more likely be placed with relatives or in foster care within their own neighborhood, rather than residential care;
- Children who come into care will stay within zip codes/communities;
- Siblings will be kept together;
- Education placements will be stabilized;
- Children who must come into care who are medically fragile, adolescents, in sibling groups, and those who are Hispanic, African American, or from other cultures, will access foster homes in their neighborhoods.

Community Child Protection in Action Today

The four strategies that have worked in Louisville include Family Centered Practice, Building Neighborhood Networks, CPS Policy Practice and Culture change and Shared Decision Making. Each includes the following core components:



- ❖ **Strategy I: Family Centered Practice. Services for vulnerable families are individualized to address each child’s and each family’s specific needs and to build on strengths.**

Core Components

- Families have access to services early; families have supportive services that prevent the development of chronic patterns of abuse and neglect.
- When cases are referred to child protective services they receive a differential response based on the severity of the situation.
- Families are involved in identifying their needs and planning for services through family team meetings.
- Services are accessible in the communities where families live.
- Flexible funds are available to support families when no other resource is available.
- Domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health issues are tackled early before situations escalate.

Results of Family Centered Practice Strategy in Louisville

To accomplish this strategy, Louisville chose to actively involve the community through Neighborhood Places as follows: Over 550 Neighborhood Place staffers were trained in Family Solutions, Kentucky's practical way to work with families as partners from a strengths perspective. Family Solutions focused on specific causes and triggers, strategies for coping, and personal responsibilities and behaviors related to safety and well being of children.

Staff is also trained to participate or facilitate Family Team Meetings (FTM's) based on a Neighborhood Place policy issued in 2003. Over 1,500 families have been involved in

"The Individualized Course of Action concept and practice put the spotlight on the extent—scope and multi-faceted details—of families' actual experience and dynamics that are intimately related to child abuse and neglect. It focused on specific causes and triggers, strategies for coping, and personal responsibilities and behaviors related to safety and well-being. As a consequence, the array of support services—mental health, health, substance abuse treatment, Talkshops, etc.—were integrated into a comprehensible and monitored plan." John Bugbee, former consultant

Family Team Meetings in the first six months of 2005. FTM's are designed to keep children safe, prevent removals and help families stabilize and reunite. FTM's involve birth parents, family members and friends and community agency representatives in a structured planning and

problem solving process involving child safety. In recent years, Family Team Meetings have been used in concert with flexible (emergency) funds and to target children under three with more than one investigation. Neighborhood Place staff are also trained to come together in regularly scheduled Integrated Services Team meetings to coordinate the work of all that are involved with the family.

Progress to Date: Family Team Meetings

- The state CFSR Program Improvement Plan emphasizes the use of family team meetings to involve parents in case planning. This mandate is reflected in the Protection and Permanency, Standards of Practice.
- Neighborhood Place Family Team Meeting policy is being implemented at every site.
- Neighborhood Place Operations now requires monthly tracking and reporting of Family Team Meetings by all Neighborhood Place sites.
- By September 30, 2004, 130 Neighborhood Place staffers were oriented to Family Team Meeting by attending a half-day overview.
- By September 30th, five staffers representing DCBS and Jefferson County Public School Family Resource and Youth Service Centers received certification from the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group to facilitate meetings and coach other staff.
- The certified facilitators are also being trained to hold the facilitator trainings. They held one in March 2004 with Child Welfare Group coaching, and led the overview training in September 2004.

"Re: FTM's – families and youth so have answers and can develop plans to be successful. FTM's helped these families see a solution using the resources they have to help

- 80 Neighborhood Place staffers have received Family Solutions training between January and June 2004.
- Training for new integrated services facilitators at each Neighborhood Place was held September 25, 2004. Each site has identified 2-3 facilitators from different partner agencies.
- Every Neighborhood Place reports an increase in Family Team Meetings that include at least three Neighborhood Place partners and family members.
- Family Resource and Youth Service Center (FRYSC) coordinators, located in schools, will receive a re-orientation to Neighborhood Place and Family Team Meetings on September 21, 2004. All coordinators will receive the overview to increase collaboration and to identify and connect families early to resources and support. The overview will be conducted by FRYSC and DCBS certified facilitators.

Substance abuse connected with CPS at each Neighborhood Place

Substance abuse case management, a key factor in existing or potential child abuse situations, is linked with CPS and provided at each Neighborhood Place. From a preventive or early intervention approach, University of Kentucky's Targeted Assessors or Seven Counties' JADAC staff helps to reduce parent's involvement with alcohol and other drugs and link them with other treatment and resources.

"Having a substance abuse case manager available has had an impact on a number of families, both active with P&P, and that self-identifying drug/alcohol abuse as an issue in their families. Believe this has prevented some families from coming into the system."
Nancy Lasky, SCNP

CPPC's Domestic Violence Task Force Strengthens the Common Ground, Provides Innovate Practices

Today, workers involved with families where domestic violence is present receive multidisciplinary consultation from a broadly based team composed of representatives from courts, police, shelters and DV treatment providers. In two Neighborhood Places, community residents and staff collaborated with a Domestic Violence expert to develop a 16 hour DV Mentor training program designed for community members to be trained in all aspects of DV and especially child witnesses exposed to DV. Community council members then sought additional funding to support this work.

For three years, communitywide domestic violence training sessions increased worker knowledge and skills and built more effective working relationships as workers from all facets of the domestic violence community trained together.

Talkshops: Parent Education and Support Groups Now at Each Neighborhood Place

Today, Talkshops provide parents with a forum for information and skill building focused on keeping children safe. Parents, caregivers and their supporters learn from one another, assist each other in changing behaviors and strengthen the bond between parents and the community. Over 700 parents have participated in Louisville’s unique parent education and support groups called Talkshops. Initiated at Neighborhood Place Ujima, this parent engagement approach expanded to all Neighborhood Places.

“Talkshops help parents not only learn but help them build their own support systems, or buddy systems, which gives them someone to talk to after the Talkshops are over. It also empowers families to seek services and help if the need it. I think Talkshops should go on forever.”
Phyllis Hildreth, NP 810 Barret

Emergency Funds Tied to Family Team Meetings

From flexible funds, over 260 families received financial support, clothing and school supplies to deal with short-term crises and help keep children in their home. Starting in 2005, based on a community resident recommendation, Family Team Meetings are now routinely used with flexible funds to help stabilize families and help them move toward self sufficiency.

“Flexible funds enable families to meet an emergency and hopefully get back on their feet again. Families can come for emergency food, CPS visits are supervised there. Babies are helped through WIC, parents through Talkshops.”
Phyllis Hildreth, NP 810 Barret

“Flexible funds have benefited families in several ways. The funds have been used for active P&P families to meet basic needs that must be addressed before child protection issues can be; it also has served as a prevention tool by supporting families in crisis who may have come to the attention of P&P due to homelessness, no utilities, etc.” Nancy Lasky, SCNP



❖ **Strategy II – Building Neighborhood Networks of Support-Formal and informal supports and services are available to families through a neighborhood- and community-based network.**

Core Components

- Community partners are engaged to provide preventive and after care services to families.
- Community Partners participate and facilitate family team meetings and offer resources to families.
- Partners collaborate to develop new resources to address gaps in service.

- Neighbors, residents, and faith-based organizations understand the stresses on families and offer informal supports to prevent abuse and increase community awareness.
- Community liaisons provide outreach to families referred by the Child Abuse Hotline and link them with services at Neighborhood Place and in the community.
- Foster parents are engaged and trained to mentor birth parents and provide ongoing support when appropriate.

Results of Building Neighborhood Networks in Louisville

Today at all Neighborhood Places, eight Community Liaisons routinely find neighborhood resources such as food, clothing, shelter or assistance from churches or other groups to help parents in their neighborhood. Community residents have learned about the availability of resources through liaison work with families and can help additional families when needed. Community Liaisons also connect with families if a resource linkage call requiring preventive assistance is referred from the child abuse hotline. This standard practice in Louisville provides families with help before the crisis escalates and investigations or court actions are required. Families with children under three are targeted for

special assistance including flexible funds and family team meetings. Community Liaisons also bring together staff from the Neighborhood Place or other agencies (Community Resource Teams) to work with families early on.

“These are the intrinsic value lessons that are drawn from community liaison and agency collaboration within communities. It helps dispel the myth of ‘take a seat, take a number,’ so to speak.” Quintilla Weathers, NP Northwest Community Council

“The role of community liaisons is key. With their knowledge of the neighborhoods, of the families and of the services at hand in the Neighborhood Places, they function as advocates for children and families, as recruiters of foster families and children’s’ champions, and as conveners of meetings that both highlight the community need to be aware and ground the practical actions that must be taken daily to ensure that children are safe.” John Bugbee, former consultant

To address prevention, child abuse reporting, issues of children in foster

care and to establish better relationships with Louisville’s 100+ Family Resource and Youth Service Centers (FRYSC’s), quarterly meetings were set with Jefferson County Public Schools. Through this community partnership, countywide issues of educational neglect, transportation, educational records and troubleshooting CPS cases were resolved.

Parent Advocates (community residents) are linked with families as mentors to coach families about safety and connect them with resources. Churches and other faith-based organizations identify how they can help families on a daily basis through worship, direct services, outreach, advocacy and

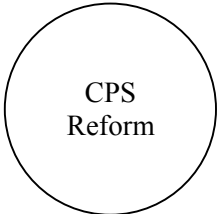
“Many babies’ lives have been helped by Safe to Sleep campaign. Because almost all services are at NP’s, families are more likely to get the help they need

training. Community mini-grants reach deeper into communities and help neighborhood organizations meet the needs of children and keep them safe. Hospitals, CPS and other health care organizations came together to form a Drug Affected Infants work team. Standard protocols for screening and follow up of all infants born drug affected are in place at all Louisville hospitals. To reduce SIDS related child fatalities, the Safe to Sleep team, working with the medical community, created a county and statewide public awareness campaign, consistent with the American Academy of Pediatrics, to promote safe sleep habits in infants.

Today, Neighborhood Places are routinely used as sites for foster parent recruitment and information sessions. Faith-based organizations assist with recruitment and provide family visitation in two neutral settings. Radio talk shows are used in one area to deal with issues of child safety, permanency and wellbeing. All Neighborhood places became Safe Place sites through Community Partnership work. Back to school events are used to meet families need for school supplies and link them with other community resources. Each Neighborhood Place created a Baby Store, designed to meet parent’s needs for diapers, clothes, strollers and other baby supplies.

“Regarding the process of designating Neighborhood Place buildings as Safe Place sites: “The current process of making each of the area Neighborhood Place sites one of our Safe Place sites is in large part due to the relationships we have formed through CPPC and speaks to a uniform and collaborative outreach approach all of us share. Because we believe our Safe Place program, CPPC, and Neighborhood Place are all vital parts of the community’s overall outreach effort, we feel this partnership will only enhance a youth’s or family’s ability to receive crisis and shelter support in a professional and comprehensive manner.” Matt Reed, YMCA, Safe Place

“SC has benefited from the support of several churches of our Baby Store. This initiative has supported the work of P&P workers, but primarily used for HANDS program that is specifically targeted to young parents at high risk for child abuse and/or neglect.” Nancy Lasky, SCNP



❖ **Strategy III: Child Protective Services Reform.** The public child welfare agency adapted its policies and practices to support the community partnership approach—including providing intervention and support services to families earlier, before crises occur.

Results of changes in child protection policy, practice and culture in Louisville.

Jefferson County’s CPS ongoing teams are located at all 8 Neighborhood Places to:

- Facilitate keeping families together and safe;
- Divert them from entering the CPS and Family Court system;
- Build strong relationships with helpful community residents and involved agencies;
- Increase face to face communication and reduce miscommunication; and
- Create aftercare plans with appropriate community follow up, when cases are closed.

Prevention is a function of out stationing of staff because of early awareness of pre-abuse situation information. Intake and Investigations staff are located at two Neighborhood Places to date. Integrated services team meetings and Family Team Meetings are regularly used as forums to problem solve complex cases involving child protection.

In 2000, Kentucky’s Cabinet for Health and Family Services, DCBS leadership, promoted a state law which now allows for multiple responses to child abuse reports and allows families to receive assessments and services if the situation warrants it, rather than an investigation. In 2004, Kentucky’s DCBS also issued a statewide policy requiring Family Team Meetings as part of the family case planning process.

Successfully Reducing the Number of Children in State Care

Child Protective Services staff, working collaboratively with Neighborhood Place partners and emphasizing Kinship Care, have had a dramatic influence on reducing the number of children who are actually committed into the state’s care. In August 1999, there were 514 children under 12 years of age who were committed. In

“The shift from protection and permanency to family reunification is huge.” Dennis Enix, YMCA Safe Place

“Direct referral to family intervention when CPS case is closed but families have expressed desire for additional services. Resource linkage has helped obtain Daycare for families without getting CPS involved.” Debbie Cox, First NP

“The stationing of staff has helped in the delivery of services and knowledge of the community. Families come to know the workers in their area and thus in turn, the workers come to know the services available for a better working relationship. By bringing the partners to the table whether it is service providers or for the support of a family, there is a wealth of knowledge shared instead of decisions being made in a vacuum.” Kristie Adams @CWF

“The out stationing of P&P staff has provided an additional support system for workers as they address protection issues. Workers have more resources readily at hand, and the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues to support families and keep children safe. This environment opens many opportunities for P&P staff.” Nancy Lasky, SCNP

“Easier access, more opportunities for face to face communication, less opportunity for miscommunication, more opportunities to learn about immediate services. Open conversations & ability to brainstorm, families are more apt to participate when not part of the system.” Robin Zapp, CPCC

“Family Court has benefited from the improved services available to families, i.e. Neighborhood Place locations, FTM’s, Family to Family initiatives. These

October of 2005, that number declined to 332 children. More children are being kept safely in their homes or with relatives. Of those who come into care, staff is able to provide needed services to families.



- ❖ **Strategy IV: Shared Decision Making. Community members, especially parents, and other agencies related to child protection are actively involved in shaping the strategies and the network of services provided for families, based on the Louisville’s own resources, needs, and cultures.**

Core Components:

- Neighborhood residents, birth parents, consumers and grass roots community partners are “community connectors” and decision makers on the NP Community Council, countywide child welfare Steering Committee (CPPC) and Neighborhood Place Managing Board. They also serve on various county and state boards and councils providing resident input.
- The governing board receives child welfare data by neighborhood and uses the data to make recommendations, develop public awareness campaigns and make decisions on resources and services needed.
- Self evaluation process: Develops analyzes and presents data about child abuse and neglect in an easily understood format.
- Provides data to child welfare management, frontline staff and community partners to inform decision making.
- Utilizes instruments and interviews to assess the quality of practice and the strength of the network of supports.
- Formal and informal public awareness methods are used to provide information to help individual families and educate the community at large.

Results of Shared Decision Making with the Community

From the onset, community residents were engaged as neighborhood partners, community council members and members of the initial Steering Committee at Neighborhood Place Ujima. Today, a 37 person, countywide CPPC Steering Committee focuses attention on child abuse and neglect and makes decisions about community child protection. A community resident and a community partner agency representative chair the Steering Committee rather than a Child Protective services staff person. Members include 2 community council members from each Neighborhood Place, three community at large members and 17 CPS related community partner agencies.

“Having community residents at the table helps residents take home ideas that may work in their own communities.”
Quintilla Weathers, NP Northwest

Work teams composed of staff and residents help implement the 4 major CPPC strategies. Committee meetings focus on CPS related issues such as housing, child fatalities, emergency financial assistance, kinship care and domestic violence. A recently formed “integrated” evaluation team focuses on both prevention and early intervention.

“Data collected has been shared with different service providers and community members. This allows those staff to share the information with their colleges. The creation of the CPPC and the sub committees; along with creation of the Neighborhood Places has allowed for the combination of community partners and residents to take ownership and accountability for their community as well as holding CPS more accountable. It has also has allowed (as stated above) for the broadening of information to be circulated. The wheel was not recreated but has grown.” Kristie Adams, CWF

“Many agencies, including such critical ones as the school system, have come to see their role in both prevention and support of families with child protection issues. Churches and other community organizations have learned more about the child protection system, the needs of families and their role in supporting families and children. Community Councils have become active participants and supporters of the concept of community child protection. Data has been used by councils to identify child protection and safety issues and to communicate the scope of the problem in our neighborhood. SCNP Community Council used both data and their knowledge of the community to facilitate the production of a child abuse prevention video in Spanish. This tool is in use in our neighborhood as well as in agencies across the community.” Nancy Lasky, SCNP

“CPPC goes back to the It takes a village philosophy that has kept many oppressed people afloat in this world. It pays homage to old school thinking and our ancestors while maintaining policy. It shows community that we respect them and their opinion, when it comes to their families.” Robyn Zapp, CPPC

“Shared decision making presupposes mutual acknowledgement of decision makers, the ability to communicate a clear message, a message that is persuasive, and one that engages decision makers in practical action whose value is apparent and on going. The partnership, in recognizing that a theory of change was needed, that it could have broad appeal, and that it could enroll a variety of persons in a governance structure focused on child safety practices that could be evaluated, provided legitimate leadership that was vital to it success locally. Only where there are local forms of involvement that engage genuine stakeholders, can sustained behavioral change authentically occur. Lacking that dimension and the continual reinforcement of relevant data that yields a picture of the cooperative work’s effectiveness, the partnership would soon revert to the bureaucratic isolation that antedated the partnership initiative in 1995.” John Bugbee, former consultant

“Networking benefit of like minded people committed to protecting youth. Informed ideas put into place, relationships built, which foster greater collaboration.” Dennis Enix, YMCA Safe Place

Communicating with the Community

“Louisville’s CPPC has brought together several agencies and community members to a table to

For several years, communications team members conducted educational forums and community building events to increase community awareness. Public awareness materials, such as Children’s Champions yard signs, Family Team Meeting posters, the CPPC primer, a prevention video in Spanish, the ABC’s of Court, events such as Safe Kids, Loving Families forum, Metro Council proclamations and the Neighborhood Place annual meetings, were routinely used to raise public awareness and promote best practices in child welfare.

“Data collected has been shared with different service providers and community members. This allows those staff to share the information with their colleges. The creation of the CPPC and the sub committees; along with creation of the Neighborhood Places has allowed for the combination of community partners and residents to take ownership and accountability for their community as well as holding CPS more accountable. It has also has allowed (as stated above) for the broadening of information to be circulated. The wheel was not recreated but has grown.” Kristie Adams, CWF

“One area for growth is to strengthen the capacity of the Partnership to collect data on the work of community residents. Whether meeting with individual families or participating in family team meetings, resident involvement must be documented and used for improvements as well as agency practice.” Quintilla Weathers, NP
Northwest Community Council

Evaluating Progress: And How are the Children?

The CPPC Steering Committee regularly uses child abuse & neglect and program evaluation data (developed in partnership with the University of Louisville Kent School and the KY Department For Community Based Services) to improve decision making about services to families and advocate for additional resources. Reports on child fatalities, Family Team Meetings, injury prevention, SIDS, school suspensions, family violence and other CPS related matters strengthen the capacity of the Community Partnership to make recommendations for the child welfare system. Each Steering Committee meeting begins with the question, “And how are the children?” This focuses on their real reason for meeting, the welfare of our children.

CPPC Promotes Statewide Changes in Child Welfare

As the Community Partnership approach evolved over the 10 years, it served as the catalyst for community wide change and long term change in the way in which Kentucky’s children are protected. In the 2000 session of the General Assembly, Kentucky passed Multiple Response legislation, which for the first time in Kentucky, provided help to a family in the form of assistance rather than investigating the family for child abuse. In 2004, Kentucky’s Child Protection agency (DCBS) issued statewide policy for child protection workers to conduct Family Team meetings. These meetings are a fundamental part of the new way in which workers engage families in a respectful

problem solving and planning process. Statewide training in FTM's is currently being provided.

In 2005 approval was received to expand an integrated model of Community Child Protection and Family to Family into three additional regions, Northern Kentucky, Purchase and Lincoln Trail. A Louisville community resident, skilled in CPPC, is providing consultation in Kentucky's rollout sites, assisting with parent engagement and faith based work.

Conclusion

The Clark Foundation and the Center for the Study of Social Policy were here long enough and helped us know what worked, but now they are reducing their involvement and challenging our local community to carry on this child abuse prevention work throughout Louisville and Kentucky.

It's up to us to take up that challenge, because we know our kids are better off by preventing child abuse & neglect.

Looking to the Future

Here's what we need to sustain our community partnership work in all neighborhoods in Louisville and throughout Kentucky. Much of our community child protection work will continue with direction and technical assistance from the new national Center for Community Partnerships in Child Welfare and the involvement of Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services staff and Neighborhood Place partners, however:

HERE IS WHAT OUR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN NEED TO PREVENT ABUSE

- ❖ Funds are needed to continue to train new staff and retrain community staff in the positive and practical "Family Solutions" method of working with families as partners.
- ❖ Families need access to emergency funds to help prevent eviction, loss of utilities, work or transportation—all factors, which keep children safe and keep them from entering into the child protective services system.
- ❖ Workers who help families with the complex and disabling effects of domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health problems need specialized training and access to additional services in their neighborhoods.
- ❖ Families need the group support and education that comes from Louisville's unique approach to helping parents called Talkshops.
- ❖ Community liaison workers are needed at each Neighborhood Place to coordinate child abuse prevention work, handle prevention calls from the hotline and recruit, support and retain foster and adoptive parents.

- ❖ Residents are needed to serve as mentors called “Parent Advocates” who personally assist families in crises and with obtaining needed resources.
- ❖ Families need assistance with child care, transportation, materials and food to actively participate in Family Team meetings.
- ❖ Faith-based organizations need materials and training to help prevent child abuse and neglect through worship, education, direct services to children and families and advocacy and outreach.
- ❖ Louisville’s child welfare system needs to examine its approaches to children of color and address the disproportional placement of minority children in out of home care.
- ❖ Fathers need to be more extensively involved in their children’s lives, and services and supports are needed to make that happen.
- ❖ Federal, state and private funds are needed for the continuation of each aspect of Community Partnership work at all eight Neighborhood Places and in all regions of Kentucky.

Louisville’s Community Partnership Steering Committee:

“In summary, The Community Partnership work has made the community more involved in a system that has so much power. Knowledge is power and many people are now working towards a common goal, instead of in little pockets. Not one person has the capacity to contain all the answers, but a community in members and partners comes closer to the goal.” Kristie Adams, CWF

“This Partnership is about the children, not the system. Tackled areas related to safety & protection of children and continues to do so.” Dennis Enix, YMCA Safe Place

“By clearly articulating and situating child abuse and neglect in the context of community – neighborhoods and specific census tracts – it became more and more of a community responsibility issue, recognized by community leaders—mayor, police, school system, mental health, health department, domestic violence and other advocacy groups. Once again, the Neighborhood Place System was both a pre-cursor and a beneficiary of the community responsibility theory. A common language emerged to articulate and enroll previously separate and functionally isolated neighborhood helpers, professionals, service providers, and advocates.” John Bugbee, former consultant

For more information contact: Service Region Administrator, Jackie Stamps, 595-4732, Larry Michalczyk, Consultant, 595-5647.

CPPC STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<u>AGENCY/ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>VOTING MEMBER</u>	<u>ALTERNATE MEMBER</u>
CHFS	Marsha Roberts-Blethen	Daphne McCord
KOSAIR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL	Brenda Boyd	Amy Medley
LM COMM ACTION PARTNERSHIP	Kimberly Burton	VACANT
L M HEALTH DEPARTMENT	Barbara Reck	Louan Martin
L M HOUSING AUTHORITY	Tim Barry	Anthony Williams
L M HUMAN SERVICES	Mary Bryan	Sheila Nelson
LM POLICE DEPARTMENT	Lt. Thomas Dreher	VACANT
L M OFFICE OF YOUTH DEV	Ben Johnson	Darrell Aniton
SEVEN COS SERVICES, INC.	Sue Landenwich	VACANT
YMCA SAFE PLACE SERVICES	Matt Reed	Dennis Enix/Eric Tatatda
CTR FOR WOMEN & FAMILIES	Jennifer Hancock	Pam Johnson
FAMILY COURT	Jim Birmingham	Minette Adams
JEFF COUNTY PUBLIC SCHS	Jane Charmoli	Martin L. Bell
UJIMA	Natalie Johnston	Diane Holmes
810 BARRET	Anthony Smith	VACANT
NORTHWEST	Jennifer Harris	Quintilla Weathers
CANE RUN	Thelma Rigdon	VACANT
BRIDGES OF HOPE	David B. Peterson	VACANT
SOUTH JEFFERSON	Renee Bryant	Debbie Tinker
FIRST	Shedrick Jones, Sr.	VACANT
SOUTH CENTRAL	Christopher Locke	Randy Heady/Carole Wallace
COMMUNITY-AT-LARGE	Frances L. Thomas	VACANT

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