

FRIENDS Peer Learning Call

Preventing Child Neglect: Strategies and Resources

October 9, 2024





Financial Well-Being for Families in Colorado

CBCAP State Lead: Katelyn Lammie

Today's Objective



- Discuss three strategies Colorado is using to support and understand financial well-being for families

Project Background & Framing



- From 2014-2024, Colorado Community Response (CCR) provided intensive, short-term services to families who were referred to child welfare that did not result in an open case
- In 2024, CCR concluded and funding was increased for the family resource center (FRC) program
- The FRC program was established in Colorado in 1993 to increase FRC capacity to provide comprehensive resource and referral for families statewide
- CBCAP is primary funding source for education and research

Strategy 1: Flexible Funding for Families



- Flex funding is available to address a concrete economic need that has immediate implications for child and family well-being.
- Flex funding has been used for a broad range of needs
- Staff are required to collaborate with the family to set goals relevant to overall financial health

Strategy 1: Flexible Funding for Families



- Staff submit through a formal request process that tracks purpose, amounts, etc.
- Data so far this year (July - present)
 - Housing, transportation, and utilities are the top requests
 - More requests from rural and frontier counties
 - Average request is \$660

Strategy 2: Financial Education for Staff



- CO partners with nonprofit, Financial Health Institute (FHI), to provide education and skill building for family support staff
- FHI provides “Person-Centered Financial Education” an approach that incorporates basic finance and economics with a person’s psychological, cultural, and emotional relationship to their finances.

Strategy 2: Financial Education for Staff



Strategy 3: Research on Economic Volatility



- Partnering with Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab, Linked Information Network of Colorado
- Income volatility in child support and earnings has relationship to child welfare involvement
- Future research to consider protective factors, such as TANF and housing stability

Next Steps, Resources, and Questions



- Ongoing analysis of flex funding; formulate multi-year, iterative FHI training plan; and continue economic volatility research, including learning community
- Financial Health Institute:
<https://www.financialhealthinstitute.org/>
- Marika Padilla, FRC Program Administrator:
marika.padilla@state.co.us
- Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab: <https://coloradolab.org/>
- Questions?



Thank You!

**CBCAP State Lead: Katelyn Lammie,
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Kentucky's Journey and My Journey

- ▶ In June, 2020 there were 10,047 Children in the Custody of or Committed to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS)
- ▶ Shortly after these numbers were made available the CHFS Commissioner at the time, Eric Clark asked to meet with DCBS staff and community partners to discuss the cause for the rise in numbers. **I was invited to that meeting.**

That's where my story begins.

“

Poverty is a risk factor for neglect, but poverty does not equate neglect. The presence of poverty alone does not mean a child is unsafe, unloved, or that a parent lacks the capacity to care for his or her child.

”

Jerry Milner, Former Associate Commissioner of the Children's Bureau

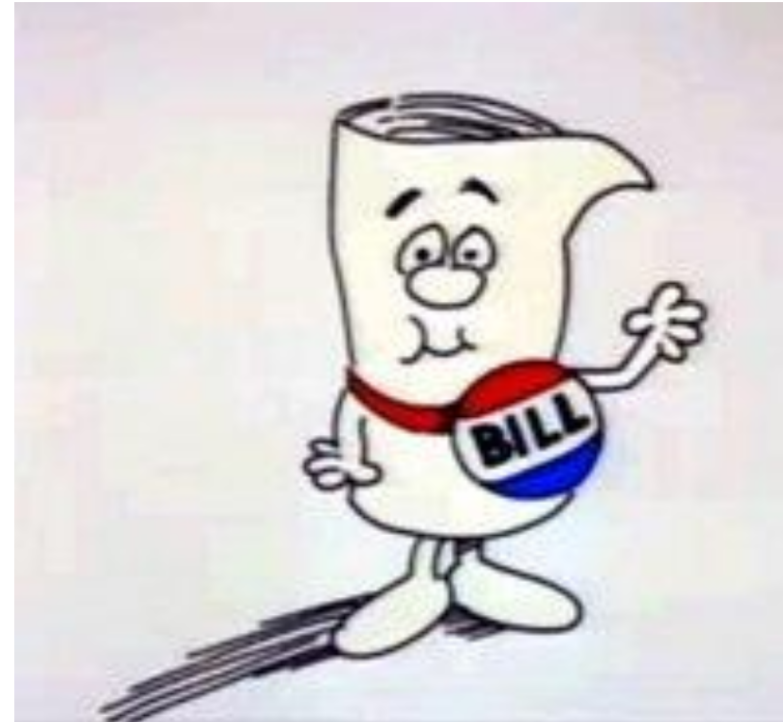
David Kelly, Special Assistant to the Associate Commissioner

Neglect vs Poverty

Neglect refers to the failure of a parent to provide for the development of the child - where the parent is in a position to do so - in one or more of the following areas: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions. Neglect is thus distinguished from circumstances of poverty in that neglect can occur only in cases where reasonable resources are available to the family or caregiver. (World Health Organization, n.d.)

Kentucky Senate Bill 8

- SB 8 amended the definition of “abused or neglected child” to specify that a parent or caregiver’s inability to provide for their child due to lack of finances or financial assistance is not neglect.
- To be poverty stricken is more complex than having an isolated financial crisis or low income. Poverty by definition is a pattern of not being able to provide sustenance and chronic lack of resources.



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Unpacking Tools & Resources from FRIENDS

<https://friendsnrc.org/friends-resources/neglect-toolkit/>





Neglect Toolkit



Using This Toolkit

The purpose of this toolkit is to assist CBCAP state lead agencies (SLAs) and their partners in understanding neglect and the complexity of this issue, as well as promising approaches and strategies to address it. More public awareness is necessary to strengthen prevention initiatives and better protect children from the harm that neglect can cause.

Each section includes information, specific examples, and links to resources. We hope you find this toolkit helpful to your work and look forward to your feedback, including suggestions and additions to make it more useful. If you have any questions or feedback, please feel free to admin@friendsnrc.org.



RESOURCES

- Media Library
- Guide to Storytelling
- Historical Trauma Among African Americans
- Navigating the Unknowns: Family Support Podcasts
- Sharing the Journey: Voices from the Field
- Collaboration Toolkit
- Neglect Toolkit**
- Listserves
- Online Learning Center



[Neglect Toolkit](#)

[Listserve](#)

[Online Learning Center](#)

Understanding Neglect



Preventing Neglect



Effective Neglect Prevention Programs



Policies, Public Systems & Partnerships



Public Awareness & Engagement



Effective Strategies to Prevent Neglect

STRATEGY	PROTECTIVE FACTOR	SOCIAL ECOLOGY LEVEL
Strengthen economic supports to families - Improving housing opportunities and household financial security - Family-friendly work policies	Concrete Support in Times of Need	Community Societal
Enhance parenting skills to promote healthy child development: - Early childhood home visitation - Parenting skills and family relationship approaches	Parental Resilience Nurturing & Attachment Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development Social and Emotional Competence of Children	Individual Relationship
Change social norms to support parents and positive parenting - Public engagement and education campaigns - Legislative policies to support parents and positive parenting initiatives	Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development Social and Emotional Competence of Children	Community Societal
Provide quality care and education early in life - Preschool enrichment with family engagement - Improved quality of child care through licensing and accreditation - Legislative approaches/policies to support quality early care and education	Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development Social Connections Social and Emotional Competence of Children	Individual Relationship Community Societal



Effective Neglect Prevention Programs

The FRIENDS Crosswalk of Evidence-Based Programs is designed to provide information to CBCAP State Lead Agencies to assist in identifying programs they may want to consider funding. It is meant to be used as a starting point and is not an exhaustive list of available programs.

Programs listed in the Crosswalk were selected based on their relevancy to child abuse and neglect prevention and their presence on at least one of six nationally recognized registries for EI/EB programs and practices.

<https://friendsnrc.org/evaluation/evidence-based-practice/ebp-crosswalk/>



How can Communities Help Prevent Neglect?



Purpose of Guide

This conversation guide is designed to help community stakeholders (service providers, legislators, parents, educators, clergy, housing coordinators and others in contact with families) have meaningful conversations about preventing child neglect. Child neglect is the most widespread type of child maltreatment and requires a comprehensive strategy to address the causes. Preventing child neglect requires changes at the society, community and family levels.

Neglect counts for over 3/4 of confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect in the U.S.

(Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2018)

Guided discussions that address the contextual issues that impact child neglect can:

- Increase awareness about the underlying causes of child neglect as well as develop effective strategies to prevent it.
- Build capacity for collaboration between families, service providers and policy makers.
- Identify resources that are available in the community to support families and mitigate risk.
- Engage community leaders in partnering to prevent child neglect.



YOU Can Help Prevent Child Neglect in Your Community

Child Neglect is Preventable!

We all have a role to play in ensuring that families can meet their children's needs.

In Your Own Family

1. Learn about your own strengths and protective factors and build on them. Protective factors are characteristics or conditions that reduce or buffer the effects of risk, stress or trauma. A protective factor is an asset of some kind. They include a person's skills, strengths, resources, supports and coping strategies. For information: <http://www.friendsnrc.org/protective-factors> <http://www.ctfalliance.org/onlinetraining.htm>
2. Recognize you are doing your best as a parent and that everyone experiences parenting challenges at some time. Don't be too hard on yourself or afraid to seek help or additional resources and supports.
3. Learn about your own community resources so you can access supports to help you cope effectively when stressful situations challenge your parenting confidence or make it difficult for you to meet your children's needs.

With Families You Know

1. Build social connections by getting to know your neighbors and parents in your child's child care center or school.
2. Support families in your community in learning about and building protective factors.
3. Reach out to a family that is under stress – offer to watch the kids, drop off a meal, or whatever else might help them get through a difficult time.
4. Listen, empathize and instill hope whenever you speak with families confronting challenges.
5. Form a playgroup where parents can come together and support one another while their children play with peers.
6. Share information about the importance of child neglect prevention with your neighbors and others and ask them to help.

For Families in Your Community

1. Plan a neighborhood meeting with family, friends and agency representatives to share information about resources to meet families' needs.
2. Become a board member or volunteer at a family strengthening organization and ask how you can help expand the conversation about the importance of child neglect prevention.
3. Write a letter to the editor about what families in your community need and how meeting family needs can reduce the likelihood of child neglect.

The whole community benefits when children grow up to be healthy productive adults.

Together We Can Do More!

For more information, contact:

What is Neglect?

It's More than a Family Matter

Child neglect is a failure to meet children's basic needs (e.g. food, clothing, medical care, supervision, shelter) whether the failure is the responsibility of parents, communities or society – and this void, places children in harm's way.

(National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds)

For All Families

1. Help others to understand how neglect can happen.
2. Help to change the dialogue from blaming parents to exploring ways to empower parents to raise their children safely.
3. Talk to your legislators about:
 - Developing new resources if there are gaps or
 - Expanding resources for families when needed.

YOUR ORGANIZATION Can Help Prevent Child Neglect in Your Community

Good News—It's Preventable!

We all have a role to play in ensuring that families can meet their children's needs.

It's everyone's responsibility. Together We Can Do More.

Communities are ultimately responsible for the welfare of children.



Ways Prevention Programs Can Provide Support:

Support families in learning about and building protective factors. For more information about the protective factors framework, visit:

<http://www.friendsnrc.org/protective-factors>
<http://www.ctfalliance.org/onlinetraining.htm>

1. Remind parents of what they do well when stressful situations challenge their parenting confidence.
2. Listen, empathize and instill hope whenever you speak with families confronting challenges.
3. Support parents in developing playgroups where they can come together and support one another while their children play with peers.
4. Become knowledgeable about your community resources and how to help families access them.
5. Help organizations and policymakers change the dialogue among family strengthening organizations and community-based resources from blaming parents to recognizing that sometimes parents are doing the best they can, and with adequate resources the "neglectful" situation could be eliminated.



Developing Collaborative Relationships to Strengthen Communities:

1. Partner with family strengthening organizations and other community agencies to develop a community-wide plan to support healthy families and prevent child neglect.
2. Provide training, resources and supports to board members or volunteers in your organization to engage others in order to expand the conversation about the importance of child neglect prevention.
3. Participate in neighborhood meetings with families and other community agency representatives to learn about needs and gaps in services and to share information about available resources.



Addressing Policy and Public Awareness:

1. Increase the awareness of board members, legislators and other policymakers about the benefits of shifting funding to programs identified as effective in strengthening families and preventing child neglect.
2. Identify, engage and support parents to talk with family strengthening organizations and other community agencies about how neglect can happen and ways to prevent it.
3. Write a letter to the editor about what families in your community need and how meeting family needs can reduce the likelihood of child neglect.
4. Talk to your legislators about:
 - developing new resources if there are gaps or
 - expanding resources for families when needed.

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The whole community benefits when children grow up to be healthy productive adults. Together We Can Do More!

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FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention
A service of the Children's Bureau



Additional FRIENDS Resources

- **Collaboration Toolkit:**
<https://friendsnrc.org/friends-resources/collaboration-toolkit/>
- **Parent and Practitioner Newsletter (English & Spanish):**
<https://friendsnrc.org/parent-leadership/parent-and-practitioner-newsletter/>
- **Sharing the Journey: Voices from the Field:**
<https://friendsnrc.org/friends-resources/sharing-the-journey-voices-from-the-field/>
- **Culturally Effective Organization Framework:**
<https://friendsnrc.org/prevention/cultural-effectiveness/>
- **Prevention Mindset Institute – Information and Podcasts:**
<https://friendsnrc.org/cbcap/prevention-mindset-institute/>
- **Free Online Learning Center:**
<https://friendsnrc.org/friends-resources/online-learning-center/>



Children's Bureau Updates

FRIENDS National Center Podcasts

Find us wherever you listen to your favorite podcasts

Or scan one of the QR codes below:

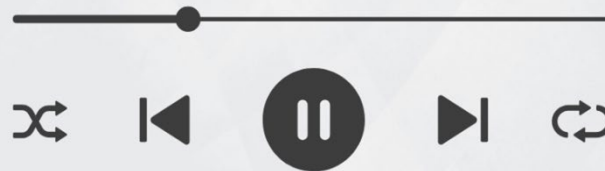
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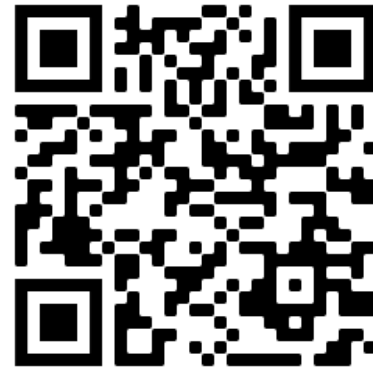


Opportunity to Provide Feedback



Please take a moment to scan the QR code and fill out our short evaluation.

Your participation in the evaluation will help us to improve our future Peer Learning Calls.



SCAN ME