

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Children's Advocacy Center Serving Bastrop, Lee and Fayette Counties requests funding in the amount of \$8,600 to establish The Nurturing Parenting Program to teach abusive and neglectful parents appropriate parent interactions through a process called "re-parenting."

The Children's Advocacy Center serving Bastrop, Lee and Fayette Counties, is a nationally accredited children's advocacy center, where children go for recorded forensic interviews, medical exams, counseling and intervention during the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases. The Center is part of multi-disciplinary team (MDT) which includes: CPS (Child Protective Services), local law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney's office. The MDT team is responsible for reviewing current child abuse cases and trends that are occurring with the children and families within our counties, and has seen an increasing number of parents and families that are repeat non-criminal offenders (i.e. have been investigated and received services through CPS and law enforcement on more than one occasion). These families have previously participated in parenting programs available in the community as part of their service package, but the team is discovering these families need more intensive services than what the introductory parenting programs offer.

Research has shown positive results from more intensive parenting services that include both the parent and the child, and that include accountability for demonstrated skills gained. The Nurturing Parenting Program is an intensive parenting program which provides for demonstrated outcomes and goes beyond child development to focus on teaching parents and children how to interact with one another in a healthy way.

The expected outcomes include a decrease in the behavior problems that parents, school administrators, teachers, and peers are observing, along with improvement in the reported quality of the parent-child relationship.

IMPACT GRANT PROPOSAL

Section I: Contact Information

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- b. The Children's Advocacy Center Serving Bastrop, Lee and Fayette Counties

Section II: Organizational Description

- a. The Children's Advocacy Center of Bastrop, Lee and Fayette Counties was formed as a non-profit agency in 1992. Initially, the Center served only Bastrop County. Services were extended to Lee County in January 2003 and to Fayette County in April 2003. The Center facilitates victim restoration by responding to the emotional and physical needs of victims of child sexual and physical abuse. Forensic interviewing, advocacy and therapy are the core activities of the program. The Children's Advocacy Center is a safe and child-friendly venue in which to collect forensic evidence needed by the multi-disciplinary Child Protective teams. Victims and their non-offending family members also receive therapy by trained professional staff. All services are provided to children and their protective caregivers at no charge and are available in English and Spanish.

Section III: Program Description

- a. *What community and/or constituency needs will your program meet? How did you identify the need?*

Child abuse and neglect is a public health epidemic. Child Abuse and Neglect has been cited by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as a priority health problem. HHS has called violence toward children a public health crisis, while the U.S. General Accounting Office has recently issued a report emphasizing the need for child abuse prevention programs. Child abuse rates in Bastrop, Lee and Fayette Counties exceed the state average.

Child abuse and neglect extorts an enormous toll on children, families and the citizens of these three rural counties and greatly impacts the victims in numerous ways. The stress, trauma and persistent fear that occur at an early age from the result of child abuse leads to lifelong health, psychological, and behavioral consequences.

Abused children are:

- 6 Times more likely to commit suicide
- 24 Times more likely to commit sexual assaults
- 6 Times more likely to abuse their own children, perpetuating the cycle of violence

- 25% more likely to experience teen pregnancy
- 25% more likely to abuse drugs or alcohol
- 59% more likely to be arrested as a juvenile
- 28% more likely to be arrested as an adult
- 30% more like to commit violent crime

Abused children are also more likely than the general population to suffer from additional forms of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as exposure to parental substance abuse, mental illness, parental discord, or crime in the home.

Over the past 15 years, many studies have examined the relationship between ACEs and a variety of known risk factors for disease, disability, and early mortality. These studies have revealed marked long-term physical, psychological and behavioral consequences from exposure to adverse childhood experiences, with the risk increasing with each additional adverse childhood experience.

As the number of adverse childhood experiences goes up, so do rates of: alcoholism and alcohol abuse; depression; illicit drug use; risk for intimate partner violence; sexually transmitted diseases (STDs); smoking; suicide attempts; early initiation of sexual activity; and adolescent pregnancy.

The Children's Advocacy Center is the only facility that provides forensic interviews for child abuse in Bastrop, Lee, and Fayette counties. The Center is the first stop for children who are suspected victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse and for children who have witnessed a violent crime. We offer therapy services in conjunction with Forensic Interviews of children who come to us through law enforcement and social services.

Participants of the newly established Nurturing Parenting Program will be families that have been investigated for child abuse or neglect and received services through CPS and law enforcement on more than one occasion. These families have participated in introductory community-based parenting programs before, but have demonstrated need for more intensive parenting services. These families will be referred from Child Protective Services, Local Law Enforcement Agencies and local District Attorney's offices.

- b. *Give a brief description of your program. What are its primary goals? How will you accomplish them?*

The Nurturing Parenting Program is a family-centered treatment approach effectively proven through research based evidence to teach abusive and neglectful parents appropriate parent interactions through a process called "re-parenting." It is through this process parents increase their knowledge and understanding of the abuse their child has experienced and how their own childhood experiences formulated their inappropriate parenting beliefs and patterns. The primary goal will be to provide

parents of abused and neglected children with knowledge, skills and the ability to lovingly, empathically parent their children with more successful techniques.

The goals of this parenting program will be accomplished by addressing the negative parent-child interaction patterns that contribute to the abuse and neglect being experienced in the home. While most treatment approaches target either the parent or the child, the Nurturing Parenting Program focuses on changing the behaviors of both the parent and the child together. The program provides parents and their children a 15 week course where they participate in separate groups concurrently and then will join as one group later in the course. Parents and children will utilize role play and expressive art activities to assist them in learning how to live with each other, learn how to play together, to communicate respectfully and to be a positive healthy family. Goals are more likely to be accomplished with this parent-training model due to the way skills are taught by using live coaching. This provides immediate prompts to parents while they interact their children. The benefits of a parenting model like this are:

- a. Parents are able to practice and demonstrate the newly taught skills
- b. Therapists or group leaders can correct errors on misunderstandings immediately
- c. Immediate feedback both positive and constructive
- d. Family is offered immediate support, guidance and encouragement as they learn these new skills
- e. Positive changes are recognized by the parent and child “in the moment” which will support continued use of the effect parenting and relational skills the family is learning.

- c. *Describe the program participants or beneficiaries. Are you planning to serve people of a particular age group, ethnic background or income level? How many people will your program serve?*

The Nurturing Parenting Program is targeted to families that have been investigated for child abuse or neglect, received services through Child Protective Services and law enforcement on more than one occasion, and who have been referred from CPS, Local Law Enforcement Agencies and local District Attorney’s offices. Existing parenting in these homes focuses much more on the negative than the positive. Parents and their children ages 5 to 18 will be served in this program. Parents in these families most often:

- Interact negatively
- Utilize ineffective and inconsistent discipline
- Rely on punishment rather than rewarding positive behavior

The children who have experienced abuse or neglect are more likely to be:

- Aggressive
- Defiant
- Non-compliant
- Resistant to parental direction or any authority figure

This is an intensive program and will be limited in the first year to no more than 12 to 15 families. However, this request is for the initial staff training, start-up and materials, which will allow us to continue providing this program annually thereafter. We anticipate the ability to fund ongoing material costs and hope to serve 18 to 25 families on an annual basis after the first year.

- d. *If you are requesting an impact grant, please describe aspects of your program that are unique or innovative. Is your program a model for other communities? How will you communicate your program's success to other communities?*

We are requesting an impact grant. The Children's Advocacy Center Serving Bastrop, Lee and Fayette Counties is part of a network of advocacy centers throughout Texas. The Nurturing Parenting Program would be a unique and innovative addition to the array of services typically provided by advocacy centers. The Children's Advocacy Center Serving Bastrop, Lee and Fayette Counties will utilize this state network of advocacy centers to distribute findings, lessons learned, outcomes and other relevant information. Additionally, after the first year, we plan to make presentations at universities and professional association meetings and conferences.

- e. *Include a proposed budget for your program, including the total budget for each line item and how TRC funds would be used. Are you requesting a recognition grant or an impact grant? If TRC were unable to fund the total amount you have requested, would you accept a smaller grant?*

3 day accredited training for CAC staff who will be leading the classes	\$4,500
One-year on-site, weekly consultation/training from accredited Nurturing Parenting Program trainer for staff who received initial 3 day training	\$1,500
Manuals (Implementation manuals, activity manuals, handbooks) Resource Materials (multicultural parenting guide, Red, White and Bruises pamphlet), DVD's and CD's, Assessments and Evaluations	\$2,600
Total Cost	\$8,600

If TRC were unable to fund the total amount requested, we could start off with less than a full year supply of materials as we would look for other funding for the

manuals, resource materials, DVDs, Assessments and Evaluations. This would reduce the total funding to \$6,000 but would still enable us to get this off the ground. We feel confident we could find funding for materials for a class of 6 to 8 families in time to get the initial course completed within the first six months of our initial 3 day training. We feel confident we could find funding for additional materials as additional classes are convened, however the initial one-year supply from TRC would be greatly appreciated if possible.

- f. *Describe the expected outcomes or accomplishments for your program. How will you measure these outcomes?*

The goals of this parenting program will be accomplished by addressing the negative parent-child interaction patterns that contribute to the abuse and neglect being experienced in the home. The expected outcomes include a decrease in the behavior problems that parents, school administrators, teachers, and peers are observing, along with improvement in the reported quality of the parent-child relationship. These will be measured by pre and post tests for each participant. Subsequent re-involvement with Child Protective Services will also be tracked annually.

- g. *Give a timeline for your project or program and expenditure of proposed grant funds.*

With the assumption that the grant award would come in April or early May 2014, we would work toward scheduling the initial three day training no later than June 2014. We would then plan to have the initial group of parents begin classes in September, ending by December 2014. The second group of parents would begin in February 2015 and end by May 2015. The following year and each year thereafter, we would offer at least two and perhaps three 15 week classes. Outreach and public awareness to make other communities aware of the Nurturing Parenting Program would begin upon completion of the first year of classes.

- h. *If the organization has received a grant award from TRC in the two preceding years, report the timeline, outcomes and financial expenditures related to the award.*

N/A