Massachusetts

Mission: The Massachusetts Family Center Network connects Family Center programs across the Commonwealth to provide training and technical support, while also promoting peer learning, mutual support and best practices.

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The Children’s Trust invests and administers a statewide network of Family Centers. These Family Centers provide evidence-based/evidence-informed, parent-driven, family-centered services, supports and activities grounded in the Protective Factors Framework. The Family Centers work to enhance family functioning, promote individual and family strengths, build parenting skills and help address the challenges of raising children.

At a Glance

- 1996 Year Founded
- 7 Members
- 11,000 Individuals Served

Member Service Areas

- Parenting Support
- Access to Resources
- Child Development Activities
- Family Economic Success Activities
- Education Activities
- Health/Wellness Activities
- Intentional Multiple Family Member Engagement Activities
- Community Development Activities

Network Functions

- Connecting Members
- Training/Technical Assistance
- Systems Change/Policy or Advocacy
- Pass-Through Funding to Members
- Marketing/Public Awareness Activities
- Shared Data Management System

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Highlights

• For the past three years, the Children’s Trust has partnered with Tufts University to conduct a needs assessment to inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of Family Centers. The assessment has provided valuable information about the communities that currently host Family Centers and the families who utilized them.

• A universal intake (membership) form was drafted, piloted, and finalized along with a compendium of outcome evaluation tools to measure program impact that have been researched and reviewed.

• Staff from all Family Centers completed the Standards Certification Training and subsequently completed two sections of the Standards of Quality Self-Assessment tool, Family Centeredness and Family Strengthening. Family Centers then engaged in a peer review process, whereby they were paired together to facilitate the sharing of expertise and information. Peer review enable programs to own the evaluation process and promote the delivery of high-quality services for local families.

Outcomes

• Results from an overall survey of Family Center participants:
  ° 93% agreed that the Family Center had helped them to support their child’s learning through play.
  ° 86% agreed that the Family Center had helped them to think about their child’s development and age when parenting.

• Results from evaluation tool used by playgroup participants:
  ° 89% reported the playgroup helped them learn new parenting skills.
  ° 96% reported coming to playgroup helped them deal with the challenges of parenting
  ° 98% reported they got support from others through the playgroup.

Standards of Quality Implementation

2 Standards Trainers
4 Certification Trainings
103 Certified Individuals