DCYF Awarded Funding for Primary Child Maltreatment Prevention

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) was selected as one of nine recipients of the Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families grant, administered by the Children’s Bureau within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration on Children, Youth and Families.

DCYF’s proposal was selected to receive more than $540,000 annually over the next five years to focus on prevention of maltreatment and reduction of entry into foster care.

The proposal focuses on four locales (out of 23) with the highest rates of child maltreatment within the state. Within those four locales, DCYF will use geospatial analysis to hone in on neighborhoods for targeted prevention support. These supports will be strengths-based, working with communities to tailor strategies based on data, community wisdom and the experiences of families.

“We are excited for this opportunity to partner with and build on the strengths in communities and to evaluate the success of this effort,” said Erinn Havig, the Primary and Community Prevention Lead for Strengthening Families Washington.

Strengthening Families Washington is a program within DCYF that will oversee the work of this grant. The goals of Washington’s Strengthen Families Locally Initiative are to:
• Substantially reduce child maltreatment
• Reduce entry into foster care in communities that suffer from disproportionately high rates of child maltreatment
• Develop a tested community-driven model for reduction of child maltreatment at the local level that can be replicated in other communities around the state

This five-year project will begin by building and/or strengthening multi-system collaborations in local communities while partnering with parents and providers in the

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four pilot communities and will be evaluated for effectiveness as the program progresses.

“When we listen to the youth and parents who have experience in our child welfare system, they speak about the importance of communities to their overall well-being,” said Jerry Milner, Associate Commissioner of the Children’s Bureau. “Our goal here is to act on what they tell us and create cross-cutting systems in communities where children and families can get what they need when they need it before formal child welfare services are needed. We appreciate the openness of the families and all of our community partnerships. Together, we can help families become more resilient and build community-based programs that are effective, sustainable and prevention-focused.”

To read the full release or to learn about the other projects selected, visit the Administration For Children & Families website.

Safe Sleep

October is SIDS Awareness Month. Safe sleep is an important component of preventing sudden infant deaths. SFWA offers these safe sleep cards free of charge. You can download them directly from our website, or order them by emailing strengtheningfamilies@dcyf.wa.gov.

You can also find more information on safe sleep practices and SIDS Awareness month here. Or check #SafeSleepSnap on twitter for inspiration.
New SFWA Webpage

We are very excited to announce that Strengthening Families Washington has a new webpage for families looking for child development services.

We will continue to post more technical information on our community engagement page.

Our new pages features easy to find information on programs, supports for families and ways to help or get involved.

We hope you enjoy and please share freely.

Child Development Supports

- Early Support for Infants & Toddlers
- Home Visiting for Families
- Strengthening Families Washington

Strengthening Families Washington

Strengthening Families Washington is a program within the Department of Children, Youth & Families whose main focus is helping families become stronger together through a variety of tactics, including:

- Home visiting
- Community outreach and partnerships
- Funding opportunities with local organizations

In addition, we assist with several public awareness campaigns including, Speak Up When You’re Down and Have A Plan: Shaken Baby Syndrome and Safe Sleep.

There are five protective factors known to help reduce child abuse and neglect:

- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Social connections
- Parental resiliency
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children

By providing information to parents, child care professionals and others who work with children, we help build these protective factors in families with young children and build family strength and a family environment that promotes optimal child and youth development.

We believe in partnering with parents and caregivers and encourage leadership and collaboration in all our work. If you are interested in opportunities or would like to partner with Strengthening Families Washington, please email strengtheningfamilies@dcyf.wa.gov.

Brochures & Publications

- Strengthening Families Washington (SFWA) Overview
- Ways to Promote the Protective Factors
- Prevent Child Abuse Washington and the Children’s Trust of Washington
- Annual Public Awareness Happenings

Easy to access information on all services provided by SFWA

Find past newsletters here!

Drop down menu includes information on our programs, upcoming events, ways to participate and links to brochures, Heirloom Birth Certificates and Keep Kids Safe license plates
Domestic Violence Awareness

October is Domestic Violence Awareness month and our partners at Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence have some great resources including a Friends and Family Guide, social media posting suggestions and Halloween themed graphics.

Everybody warns about red flags in a relationship
We wanna hear about GREEN flags.
So, here's some. Add your own!

- Listens to you when you have issues and supports you through them.
- Stops doing things you tell them make you uncomfortable.
- Compromises when necessary.
- Never puts you down deliberately, especially not publicly.
- Supports your ambitions.
- Use a calm rational tone during arguments.
- Is able to apologize when wrong.
- Aids your growth process.

Check out DCYF happenings
This summer, Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) Secretary Ross Hunter began distributing a monthly newsletter sharing news about the work of the agency as well as creating a feedback resource for our external partners. We invite you to subscribe to the monthly stakeholder newsletter and share this resource with others.

Read the previous messages from Secretary Hunter:
- August 5 issue
- September 3 issue

If you have any questions or comments, please contact DCYF’s Office of Communications.

Resource to Share

Are you interested in hosting a viewing of the documentary Broken Places in your community?

Broken Places revisits abused and neglected children previously profiled to illustrate how trauma shaped their lives and why some are severely damaged by early adversity and others are able to thrive.

SFWA has purchased several copies to share with communities. If you are interested in setting up a viewing in your community, contact SFWA at strengtheningfamilies@dcyf.wa.gov.

Unsung Hero

February is Parent Recognition month and each year we celebrate by honoring individuals around the state with an Unsung Hero Award.

Since 2011 we have honored 224 men and women in Washington for the roles they have taken with their families, school and communities. They have shown strength, courage and empathy in their communities and beyond.

If you know someone who deserves to be honored contact SFWA at strengtheningfamilies@dcyf.wa.gov for a form, or download one from our webpage.