



A non-profit 501(c)(3) organization

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to The Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center in Stamford, and respectfully request that you consider supporting our efforts to promote the educational, emotional, physical and intellectual development of children suffering from abuse and neglect in lower Fairfield County.

We begin this proposal with a few startling statistics:

- One out of every 25 children has been physically, or emotionally abused by the time he/she reaches adulthood,
- One out of every **three** children has been sexually abused by the time he/she reaches adulthood,
- Child abuse and neglect is considered the nation's number one health crisis facing our children today,
- Over 40,000 cases of child abuse in Connecticut are reported to the Department of Children and Family Services every year,
- Each year in our nation, more children die at the hands of their caregivers than of natural causes,
- An estimated 1300 children nationally die of child abuse **each year**,
- An estimated 88% of violent criminals were abused children, 95% of violent detained youth are victims of child abuse.

The mission of The Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center is to stop the cycle of child abuse by providing remedial and preventative intervention to abused and/or neglected children, or those considered to be "at risk", and their families. Our programs promote the educational and scholastic development of children in lower Fairfield County by ensuring that they have a safe place to live, are up to date on immunizations and health screenings, and have the basic social, emotional and intellectual skills needed to be successful in school.

The Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center, located on Franklin Street in Stamford, was founded in 1989 with the goal of preventing and treating child abuse and neglect in lower Fairfield County. Since our founding, we've served over 1,750 families and 5,000 children in the home-based Parent Aide program, and another 800 families in parenting groups, affecting another 2,000 children. We receive over 15 referrals per month for our Parent Aide program, and have a waiting list of 50 families.

Child abuse is the number one leading cause of death for children, and every ten seconds a child is abused. **Home-based parent aide services like ours are recognized nationally as the number one treatment of choice for this population.**

Breaking the Cycle of Child Abuse and Neglect

Without intervention and treatment, the scars of child abuse and neglect last a lifetime. To combat these kinds of abuse in our five-town region, The Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center provides a wide variety of comprehensive services in both English and Spanish. These services include:

- **Assessment Services** - Upon referral, the social work staff immediately begins a multi-dimensional Initial Needs Assessment. Based on the results, a short-term treatment plan is developed with the family, which is reviewed every other month.
- **Weekly Home Visits** - Parent Aides visit their assigned families weekly and spend an average of two - six hours per week with them. They may spend more time with the family if there is a crisis situation.
- **Parent Aide Services** - Several types of parent aide services are provided:
- **Emergency Services** such as arranging for basic needs like food, clothing, shelter, housing, medical and dental care is arranged, along with transportation when needed.

- **Skill Enhancement Services**, including communication skills, anger management, positive parenting, budgeting, domestic violence education, and child development education.
- **Substance Abuse Services** - Specially-trained Parent Aides provide a more intensive relationship with their families and work closely with LMG Substance Abuse Facilities and the Families in Recovery Program to develop a more collaborative effort to help parents achieve sobriety.
- **Services for Families With Special Needs** - These services are provided to clients with diagnosed mental illnesses; physical illnesses; circumstances such as the developmental disabilities of a parent or child; families with immigration or cultural isolation issues; families where sexual abuse has occurred; families where children are being returned from foster care; adolescent parents; and families where domestic violence issues create a danger to children.
- **Crisis Response Services** – Parent Aides provide immediate services to newly referred families to stabilize the crisis situation, and to prepare the family for self-sufficiency and continuing Parent Aide Services. These services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in English, Spanish and Creole.
- **Waiting List Support Services** - Emergency services are available for families waiting for a parent aide. Because of the recent expansion, waiting families attend one of the Center's parenting education groups.
- **Referral/Case Management Services** - The Center's location at Franklin Commons in Stamford, as well as its participation in a collaborative model of service provision, allows the Center to facilitate the referral process for its families, between many agencies.
- **Supervised Visitation Services** - This is the **only** program of its kind in the greater Stamford area. This program provides supervised visitation for families where a child has been removed from a family due to abuse/neglect, and the family is undergoing treatment, hoping to have the child returned from foster care.
- **Nurturing Parenting Groups** - This program uses a variety of tools to help parents and children increase empathy for each other, build family morals and values, praise desirable behavior, teach appropriate discipline without violence, explore choices and consequences, and encourage positive family learning experiences. We currently serve between 48-65 families in these groups.
- **Masters Level Internship Training and Volunteer Program** – We receive Master's Level Social Work Interns from Columbia University, UCONN, Fordham University, Sacred Heart University and Springfield College. We also have a pool of volunteers who serve as parent aides.

Since its founding, The Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center has helped over 7,000 children and their families, and case studies show a greater than 80% success rate among families served! We would be delighted to tell you more about our successful programs, either by phone or in person. Please call us at (203) 327-9419 if we can provide any additional information.

Thank you for your time, and we hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Donna

Donna Miller
Executive Director