



The Parent Trust Fund

A Statewide Parent Involvement Initiative



What is the Parent Trust Fund?

The Parent Trust Fund helps communities improve the health, safety, and learning of their children by providing the funding needed to train parents in civic leadership. This is the first state-sponsored family civics initiative of its kind in the nation.

The Parent Trust Fund was established through ground-breaking legislation passed by the Connecticut General Assembly in June, 2001. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation seeded the Trust with \$250,000. The William Casper Graustein Memorial Fund followed as the first Connecticut foundation to contribute and continues to provide matching funds.

With seven years of success behind it, the Fund has earned strong bipartisan support from the Governor, the Legislature, local elected officials.

Why is the Parent Trust important?

Research shows that parent engagement has a significant and positive impact on child outcomes, particularly in education and health. The Parent Trust Fund supports programs and activities that prepare parents, grandparents, and other adult caregivers to work with school, community and state leaders to improve health, safety and learning outcomes for all children.

How do communities access the Fund?

Communities apply for funding and contracts are awarded through a highly competitive statewide bidding process. Funds are allocated to non-profit agencies that offer training to promote parental involvement and leadership by increasing the technical and civic skills needed to share an active role in decision-making as a tool for improving the health, safety, and learning of Connecticut's children.

What communities use the Fund?

Parent engagement programs supported by the Parent Trust Fund include the nationally recognized Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTISM) and Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (PSEE) sponsored by the Commission on Children, and the University of Connecticut-sponsored People Empowering People (PEP), VOICES for Families, AFCAMP Parent Leadership Training and ASPIRA/APEX, among others.

The Parent Trust Fund supports family civics training in Bloomfield, Bridgeport, Bristol, Danbury, East Hartford, Enfield, Greenwich, Hamden, Hartford, Meriden, Middletown, Milford, New Britain, New Haven, North Haven, Norwalk, Norwich, Stamford, Torrington, Waterbury, Willimantic and Windsor.

What are some notable outcomes?

In 2002, The Parent Trust Fund provided \$214,350 to seventeen organizations, providing 340 parents with leadership training. These organizations, in turn, developed nearly \$1.3 million in community assets for parental involvement. In 2003, \$196,500 leveraged more than \$1 million dollars in community resources through fourteen organizations.

A competitive grant application was issued in the fall of 2005, following the state's annual appropriation of \$250,000 for the Parent Trust Fund. Twenty-seven applications were funded with programming beginning January, 2006 and more than 40 were funded in January, 2007.

The Parent Trust Fund serves more than 1100 parents on average each year across Connecticut. Each of these training graduates leaves better prepared to advocate for children, volunteer in their community, serve on non-profit boards, and lead parent-teacher associations.

What is parent leadership?

Parent leadership emerges when parents gain the knowledge and skill needed to successfully function in meaningful leadership roles that help shape the future for their families, schools and communities.



A sample of training models that currently receive Parent Trust Funds:

People Empowering People (PEP): Meets two hours a week for up to six months and can be targeted to “high need” populations, with curriculum available in English and Spanish.

The Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTIsm): A twenty-week training that uses an assets-based community development and social policy change framework to increase parental involvement.

Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (Parents SEE): A twelve-week training focused on parent leadership in schools and developing school-family partnerships.

VOICES for Families: A fifteen week training that focuses on parent involvement and leadership with a community-to-state perspective.

AFCAMP Parent Leadership Training: A series of integrated workshops targeted to minority parents and focused on developing a better understanding of the juvenile justice, special education, and Department of Children and Families systems.



For more information on the Parent Trust Fund, contact:

The Children's Trust Fund, the administrative entity for the Parent Trust at (860) 418-8768 or visit www.ct.gov/ctf

How does parent leadership make a difference?

Parent leadership strengthens families and communities by creating positive change in the systems and policies designed to serve and support children.

A comprehensive 2004 evaluation of one parent leadership model, the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)sm, revealed the following outcomes:

- Seventy-three percent of the graduates engaged in advocacy work – a 34% increase;
- Fifty-two percent participated in community organizing – a 29% increase;
- Fifty-eight percent engaged in public speaking – another 29% increase;
- Forty-nine percent participated in new community activities; and
- Voter participation increased by 9%.



“I have become an effective leader. I have confidence to pursue my goals. I can be an effective, nurturing mother. I can change my community. I can advocate for children and families.”

Excerpt of a 2006 letter received from a Danbury PLTIsm grad whose training was funded by the Parent Trust Fund

For more information on PLTI or PSEE, contact:

The Commission on Children
(860) 240-0290 or visit
www.plti-ct.org