



## The Success of Our Youngest Citizens

Working together to achieve a Quality of Life Result  
All children in Norwich age birth to eight will be  
safe, healthy and ready to learn.

### Testimony in support of funding the Connecticut Parent Trust

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 initiative of its kind in the nation. The Fund was established through groundbreaking 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.

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 for all children.

Parent engagement programs supported by the Parent Trust Fund include the nationally recognized Parent Leadership Training Institute, the University of Connecticut-sponsored People Empowering People, Parents Supporting Educational Excellence, and Norwich Voices for Families parent leadership program.

Currently the Parent Trust Fund supports training in the following cities:

Bloomfield	Bridgeport	Bristol	Danbury	East Haven	Enfield
Greenwich	Hamden	Hartford	Meriden	Middletown	Milford
New Britain	New Haven	North Haven	Norwalk	Norwich	Stamford
Torrington	Waterbury	Windsor			

The first round of funding, in 2002-2003, awarded \$214,350 to 17 organizations, providing 340 parents with leadership training. These organizations, in turn, developed nearly \$1.3 million in community assets for parental involvement. The 2003-2004 funding allocated \$196,500 to 14 organizations and leveraged more than \$1 million dollars in community resources. A competitive grant application was issued in the fall of 2005, following the state's appropriation of \$250,000 in both the 2005 and 2006 fiscal years for the Parent Trust Fund.

The Parent Trust Fund serves an average of more than 1,100 parents annually across Connecticut. The continued funding for the Commission on Children is a wise investment in our brightest hope for tomorrow – the youngest citizens – our children. Norwich Children First as relied upon the Parent Trust as a key partner in providing high quality parent leadership training the makes a difference in our community.

Sincerely,

Sherry Filiatreault, Coordinator  
Children First Norwich  
80 Broadway, Norwich, CT 06360  
860-823-3782 office  
[sherryf@cityofnorwich.org](mailto:sherryf@cityofnorwich.org)

Ron Ward, Chairman  
Norwich Enhancement Plan Collaborative  
a Children First/School Readiness Initiative  
860-861-9100 cell  
[ron@snet.net](mailto:ron@snet.net)