

Eastern Connecticut Health Network: Manchester
Memorial Hospital
Rockville General Hospital
Nurturing Families Network
71 Haynes Street Manchester, Ct 06040
(860) 646-1222 ext 3825

February 11, 2010

Re: **Saving the Nurturing Families Network Program**

Dear Legislator,

I am a clinical supervisor for the Nurturing Families program run out of Manchester and Rockville Hospital. I am asking you SAVE the **Nurturing Families Network** program and the Trust Fund. Nurturing Families is a cost-effective program designed to prevent child abuse, promote positive parenting, foster school readiness, and enhances family wellbeing and functioning with at-risk parents, many who are teens. There are many **FINANCIAL** incentives to saving the program.

- **CHILD WELFARE:** NFN has 14 years of research proving its reduction of child abuse and increasing positive parenting skills with at-risk parents. Families in the program have a low rate of child abuse of 3% compared to the rate of 20% for the state overall. Without NFN the state will undoubtedly see a rise in child abuse reports. The DCF and foster care system will be greatly overburdened and taxpayer and children ultimately pay the price.
- **SCHOOL READINESS:** NFN promotes literacy and school readiness through education, ongoing developmental screening, preschool enrollment, and early socialization. Without NFN many children will not be prepared for kindergarten, developmental delays will go undetected till kindergarten which can be costly to treat.
- **ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE:** NFN parents are linked with HUSKY insurance and medical care. They are educated about using primary care providers, keeping well child visits, and immunization schedules. Without NFN low income families eligible for HUSKY will use the Emergency Room inappropriately and tax the health care system even more.
- **REDUCTION OF STATE WELFARE ROLLS;** Families are taught essential life skills including basic budgeting. They are also linked with higher education and job training. Without their education, job skills, and employment these families, will continue to rely on state welfare thereby continuing a dependency the state cannot afford. More children will grow up in poverty. We already have one of the highest child poverty rates in the country.

Eliminating NFN and many of the CTF service will result in over 300 new layoffs. I understand the dire budget crisis but I personally cannot afford to be out of work nor do I want to lay off valuable staff. I have two small children and husband who has been out of work 18 months forcing us to nearly exhaust our savings as a result. There are many people in NFN who like me, love what they do and want to work for the betterment of the community. **NFN is an inexpensive, effective, and valuable asset to the state. Please make every effort to continue funding it.**

Thank you for your time.

Elizabeth Conklin B.S. M.P.H.
Clinical Supervisor
Manchester NFN site