



Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis, Inc.

**Testimony in support of the Nurturing Families Network and Teen Pregnancy Prevention
CT Department of Social Services**

March 11, 2010

Honorable Committee Members:

I urge you to oppose Governor Rell's proposed budget cuts to the CT Department of Social Services teen pregnancy prevention and Nurturing Families Network Programs. These combined cuts will result in job losses for at least 118 Connecticut residents. Even more importantly, they will remove a safety net that is saving Connecticut millions of dollars through the prevention of child abuse and neglect and a reduction in births to teen parents. Here is where I get confused about the direction our State is taking.

I have been told that Connecticut is head and shoulders above other states when it comes to using scientific models for prevention. In fact, the Department of Social Services should be applauded for agreeing to fund only those teen pregnancy prevention models that are validated and evidence-based. The Teen Outreach Program has been part of a national study that shows that participants in the program have a 60% lower rate of school dropout, 14% lower rate of school suspension, 11% lower rate of school course failure and 33% lower rate of teen pregnancy. The Nurturing Families Network is part of an ongoing statewide evaluation that has demonstrated a rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect in participating high-risk families of only 3% compared to 20% for similar families not participating in this type of program. With our government's focus on results-based accountability, I don't understand how or why programs that demonstrate successful outcomes have been selected for elimination.

I am grateful for your efforts up to now to keep teen pregnancy prevention and nurturing families network programs fully funded, and I ask you to continue to fight for these services.

Thank you.

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