

## Support the Nurturing Families Network

March 2011

Dear Connecticut State Legislators,

My name is Tamia M. Bird and I am writing as a Home Visitor for the Nurturing Families Network at the Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis, Inc. The Nurturing Families Network is one of the many programs under the Children's Trust Fund and has been for many years. This program is known for its home visiting services to first time parents and families who are identified as being high risk for child abuse and neglect through research based screening tools. I have only worked in this role as a Home Visitor for nine months, but have had the great experience of seeing just how much this program and job role impacts many families.

The non- hospital Nurturing Families Network sites, which are all in New Haven and Hartford, are being considered in our state's budget cuts. New Haven and Hartford are cities with high poverty rates which in correlation means that the children living in these cities are at high risk for child abuse and neglect. These cuts can result in 350 additional cases of child abuse and neglect next year at a cost to the state of nearly \$11 million in new DCF cases. Families who participate in NFN have a 3% rate of DCF involvement, whereas those of a similar population without NFN services have a 20% DCF involvement.

Eliminating non- hospital NFN home visiting services as proposed would cause \$12 million loss in funding. Providing home visiting services to families only cost about \$3,000 per family, where as a DCF case costs roughly \$30,000 per family/case a year. The Nurturing Families Network has shown high success rates through research such as, drops in parental rigidity, higher rates in parental success, higher rates of school readiness, low incidents of DCF involvement, and a higher percentage of parents becoming more economically self- sufficient.

Please honor the long standing work of this successful prevention program and oppose the budget cuts for the non- hospital NFN programs. Prevention works to save families and financial resources for the long term.

Thank you,

Tamia Bird  
Home Visitor  
Nurturing Families Network, Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis, New Haven