



District Office of Family Education Services
Kim Lawther Jackson, Facilitator
Lincoln School
145 Steele St. New Britain CT 06052
(860) 223-2716
Jackson@cstdnb.org

CT has 62 Family Resource Centers (FRC) in 41 communities funded by grants through SDE. In the past 2 years our previously flat funded amount of \$100,000 was cut by a total of 10%. This reduces our service to families by 2 months and leaves our staff underemployed. We are still charged with providing service in all seven of our components which collectively cover the lifespan of a family's education in a strength-based manner. We provide a system of service delivery that is integrated within our school districts and communities, strengthening the bond one family at a time. Our services are open to all families in our districts but we focus on the hardest to reach and most vulnerable. In these tough economic times, there are more families than ever before trying to make ends meet with less than ever before.

As families work hard to keep the basic needs of their children met, education is vital to their survival and future. From home visits and developmental screenings with families with children under the age of five, FRCs help to strengthen the bond between parent and child while building a solid base for educational support. Early identification and intervention by trained FRC parent educators leads to timely service delivery that saves money and minimizes the negative impacts of stress on the child and family. The FRCs are currently working with Birth to 3 to improve identification of children under two years of age who require evaluation to see if intervention is required to help them developmentally.

In addition, the parent educators certified in the Parents as Teachers model provide much needed personal visits and parenting education to families with children prenatally through five years of age. This internationally recognized model emphasizes healthy brain development and educated parenting because parents are a child's first and most important teacher. Parent educators partner with parents to help them effectively parent and provide their child with an environment that nurtures healthy development.

Parent educators also help parents to understand the importance of preschool in their child's development and to enroll in a quality setting that is a good fit for the family. The FRCs also provide support to home daycare providers in the form of professional development. Most recently the FRCs worked with All Our Kin to provide home daycare providers with training and consultation to implement the use of the Early Learning Guidelines to improve their knowledge and work with parents with children under 2 years of age in their care. This professional development increases the quality of care for the infants and toddlers in our licensed and unlicensed friend and family daycare providers in CT. By increasing the providers knowledge of infant / toddler development, the providers are also more likely to notice children needing further evaluation and making needed referrals with the family.

The FRCs support families in their goals for education and employment by providing access to adult education including ESL classes, GED and ABE classes and classes to provide computer training, to prepare for citizenship tests or to prepare a resume for job searches. Through a strong network of resources and referral partners, the FRC assists families in utilizing the services available in their community to reach their goals. Families need support and the FRCs need your continued support and full funding in order to work with our most vulnerable families in CT as they support their child's developmental and academic success.