



**Education Committee Public Hearing, 2.15.2013**

**Testimony by: Galit Sharma**

**In Support of HB 6359: Creation of an Office of Early Childhood**

Honorable members of the Education Committee,

My name is Galit Sharma, I am the Program Director of the Nurturing Families Network at the Family Centered Services of CT (formerly the Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis), and a Co-Chair of CT-PEN, the Connecticut Parenting Education Network. As a long time advocate for support and education for parents with young children, I am honored and excited to testify in support of HB 6359, which calls for creating an Office of Early Childhood (OEC).

In the past few years there has been much talk about the fragmented way that early childhood services are delivered, the frustration that providers often feel and the effect of this disconnected system on the families being served. Today- I want to say Thank You. Thank you to the Governor, the Legislators and the Early Childhood Planning Team. Thank you for listening, thank you for recognizing the challenges and thank you for taking action to generate change and create new opportunities for a better, unified early childhood system.

There are many good programs in CT, where many good, dedicated people do good and helpful things for families. This is all good, but is not enough. These programs have the potential to impact families in more significant ways if they work together by improving communication, combining resources and increasing collaboration. Instead of wasting time and resources on wondering what others are doing and if we are reinventing the wheel with every new idea, we will be able to focus our attention on developing our programs and



## **Nurturing Families Network**

### **Results Based Accountability (RBA)**

The Nurturing Families Network (NFN) is supporting parents and children in Connecticut with the goal of preventing child maltreatment by strengthening families through **early home visitation**, fatherhood outreach and group support.

When designing this program, the **CT Children's Trust Fund**, now a division of DSS, partnered with the University of Hartford's Department of Social Research who has been **evaluating** the Nurturing Families' work and its **impact on families**.

This **result-oriented** approach and the ongoing 17-year long **program evaluation** enable us to say with confidence that **NFN is making a difference** in helping children get a positive start in life.

In **RBA** terms, we can demonstrate **how much** we did, **how well** we did it, and why so many **families** in CT are **better off** as a result of their participation in the Nurturing Families Network program.

Coalition for the Nurturing Families Network

For more information call Cheryl Burack at (203) 624 2600 ext.111 or visit us at [nfnnewsandnotes.yolasite.com](http://nfnnewsandnotes.yolasite.com)