

**The PACT\* FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK  
FINAL REPORT (FY2001-2002)**

Contract Number DFS(UD-PE)FY02-5276

University of Delaware

With the Delaware Parents' Association

We are pleased to report the results of the PACT Family Support Network's 15th year of successful work with families and grassroots community leadership in Delaware. We think that you, too, will be pleased when you hear of the good work that has been accomplished. We hoped that we could influence a large number of families deeply and help parents get good information and develop long-term support for themselves. We also hoped that we could bring more parent leaders along with our leadership certification classes and workshops. The results of both our parent work and our leadership training efforts have been exciting and we have collected good data to substantiate the success of the program.

Besides the women leaders that we have trained in our Parent and Family Worker Certification classes, we are particularly pleased with the large number of men that we have trained. Throughout the state, men trained in our groups are helping fathers in places of worship, in schools, in community centers, in prisons, and in low-income communities become more involved and more positive with their children. We have some fine men who have regularly attended training groups with us and who participate regularly in our ongoing Men's Network, as well as in our ongoing Leaders' Network. Last Spring we had a weekend workshop of 150 community leaders, all of whom had been through our peer support/education classes and are committed to helping us continue developing our Leaders' Network so that parent, child, and family work leaders throughout Delaware can continue to learn key information and support one another to create community change. Their work will go on, beyond the funding of this particular project with the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families. **This ongoing and ever expanding Leader's Network, which grew directly out of the Parent and Family Worker funding, is undoubtedly the most important outcome of the last five years of this grant. While doing our parent leader work, we have built a movement for community change. Our grant is completed, but the Leader's Network will continue to grow. Both men and women leaders will continue to meet at workshops, and support groups throughout the state, and they will continue to expand their work with families, schools, and other organizations.**

In addition to the men's work, we are pleased with the number of leaders from Parent and Family Worker Certification classes who have gone into the community, at no cost to the state, and started excellent groups, clubs, teams, choirs, etc. for parents. All of these activities were started by inspired and committed leaders who simply want to be part of a network of people who are helping parents get good information and support. The idea of a Family Support Network that trains and supports grassroots leadership, as well as parents, is proving to have a very big impact and is a cost-effective way to improve the lives of large numbers of children. The "villages" needed to raise Delaware's children are getting stronger, better informed, and more committed to seeing that things

go well for every child. In particular, much work has gone into training leaders from faith-based institutions and schools so that they can spread good information about children, be advocates for change, and organize good support for the parents that they work with.

Before I present more about our numbers and our results, however, let me review the reason for the creation of the PACT Family Support Network in Delaware. The Network is based upon years of our own community work, as well as upon the best thinking of current day child psychologists and family researchers. The most up-to-date research confirms what we all know. What young children need, most of all, is to grow up around warm, competent, responsive adults who are not so overwhelmed with their own worries and life crises that they can be joyfully involved with them.

Dr. Solnit, the world-renowned Yale child psychiatrist maintains that to become a productive and responsible adult, a young person needs a useful and self-respecting past, one that gives him or her a sound sense of self-worth and a sense that the future is worth anticipating. While a young person can be helped to create a good future, even though he/she has had a past full of failures, the task is much more difficult. Similarly, Lisbeth Schorr in Within Our Reach, maintains that “children whose families were never able to convey to them a sense of being valued and a feeling of coherence are in a poor position to cope with the world of school and work. They are likely to be in deep trouble by the time they become adolescents. To prevent damage a vast body of research now illuminates the importance of family support. Ultimately the support that improves life for children are those that convey to parents the message that one is not alone in carrying out one’s child rearing responsibilities (p. 153).” Schorr also argues that high risk families need more than information, they need intense services because ‘both common sense and research tell us that as family stress, regardless of its source, increases, the capacity for nurturing decreases and the likelihood of abuse and neglect increases (p.151).”

Furthermore, since the time of Burton White’s Harvard Project Research, 26 years ago, we have known that academic competence is determined primarily during the first two years of life by the quality of the language and social interactions of young children and their parents. While school reforms are still needed, they are not enough. Decades of research have taught us that parents are critically important to the academic and social success of all children. Studies have shown that, for most children, parenting makes a greater difference to eventual academic achievement than the schools they attend (Gandara, 1989). All parents want their children to succeed. They are, however, not equally equipped to prepare their children for academic success, to navigate their children through the educational system, or to advocate for school and community change. While individual parents, alone, will not be able to change the educational and economic futures of their children, a “community” of parents working together, can. By training grassroots leadership, as well as parents, this project has taken us many steps closer to the goal of creating “communities” of parents who can support one another, support their children, and effectively interact with the schools.

One fact is clear, as a society we have not started early enough with children and we have not helped parents develop the peer support they need to break the isolation of

parenting and learn the skills they must have to rear successful children. The Children's Defense fund states, "Family support programs prevent crisis. We now know that the more support parents receive in coping with the stress in their lives, the more likely they will be to stimulate their children's development and give them adequate guidance and emotional support." Teenagers rarely make a sudden decision to leave school at age 15 or 16; the act of dropping out of school, or choosing drugs, violence, or crime, or getting pregnant is usually the culmination of years of frustration with its roots in the family (Children's Defense Fund, 1991). Therefore, if we are to have a highly competent work force, if we are to end child abuse, racism, welfare and poverty, and if we are going to "close the achievement gap", we must give the highest priority to strengthening not just children, and not just schools, but families.

Both research and our hands on work show us that the most striking fact about the programs that have accomplished the seeming miracle of helping high-risk families to change the conditions in which their children grow up is how much these successful programs have in common. According to Schorr, **"All families rearing children need support. But for parents who are isolated and beset by a multitude of other stresses, the stakes are higher and support can prevent severe damage. A vast body of research now illuminates the importance of support."** Thirty years of parent education has taught this country that parent education alone does not create the emotional change that is necessary for most low-income parents to be able to really change their parenting behavior, let alone be advocates for school and community change. They need relationships that help them see their worth and that help them see that life can be very good. As Ethel Seiderman says, "When families have problems and when crises arise, they manage them so much better when they can count on support." It is for these reasons that we started The PACT Family Support Network. Parents need help with their anger, discouragement, deep sadness, and hopelessness to really parent and live well. They need good information about child development and good parenting behavior, but they are rarely able to implement it effectively without good long-term support. Delaware has lots of parent education, but not nearly enough parent support programs. Both are needed to create a good continuum of services for children and families.

We are not, therefore, just offering parent education. We could do that and serve many more parents. But we think that we would have simply served them, but not necessarily changed, in any long-term way, their parenting behavior. To really help parents to parent and be advocates for their children, our objective is to increase not just knowledge, but parents' capacity to function effectively on their own behalf, to heighten their self-esteem, and to enable them to take greater charge of their own lives. **If there is anything that thirty years of parent education work throughout the U.S. has taught us, it is that our best chances of getting confident, successful children, lie in helping parents achieve successful lives and reclaim their own self confidence, as we give them good information.** More often than not, confident parents raise confident children and parents who assume that they are stupid and worthless, raise children who feel similarly about themselves. That is the very sad fact that we are facing as we try to change the lives of children. Among other things, they need to see hope, love, and some joy on the faces surrounding them. These emotions are sometimes not easy to find on the faces in low-income communities, where every day poses new threats to survival. **We, in**

**The Pact Family Support Network have watched many faces this year move from discouragement to hopefulness, from anger and resentment to caring, and from fear and timidity to confidence. That is why so many parents come back to the groups over and over again. That is one of the reasons why they rate our classes so highly. They can feel that not only are they learning how to parent, they are learning that they are very special people with the competence to create good lives for themselves and their children.** They share their struggles in our groups, over and over again, because they see that it actually works to change their lives, the lives of their children, and even the communities and schools their children are a part of.

Through our Parent and Family Worker Certification work we indirectly serve very large numbers of parents, thousands each year. In our direct parent work, however, we do not serve as many parents as we could if we did straight parent education. We choose to do it this way because we want to serve parents with the “high-intensity” emotional support that research has shown to be essential to really change lives. We will just share one story to illustrate our point.

A parent reported to us that before The Family Support Network, she had never been able to feel any warmth for her son or daughter. After years of mistreatment from her parents when she was a child, she had stopped trying to love them. She had, in fact, stopped trying to love anyone. She had learned that she could go away emotionally, distance herself from any feelings and just handle life on her own. She had great amounts of mistrust of everyone, and, in particular, herself. She, therefore, really resented everyone and found some reason to not want anyone around. As a parent, this attitude extended to her children. She simply didn’t trust that they were good people or that they could ever love anybody. She didn’t want to spend time with them. She started calling them “bad” as soon as they started to explore their world at ages one and two. She started yelling at them and soon they were rebelling and acting like the “bad” people that she assumed they were. Through three cycles of classes she began to feel more of a sense that someone could actually care for her and want things right for her. She began to understand that much of what she felt toward her children really had more to do with feelings that she hadn’t cleared up from her own childhood. She had, in fact, gone through the last twenty years feeling pretty much like everyone was “bad” at the core. Through listening to the theory, being listened to, and trying more positive approaches with her children, she began to see that, “Maybe people are okay after all. Maybe they just treat each other badly when they are hurting and alone inside.” She began to try to validate her children and find ways to spend positive time with them. Of course, they responded by being more positive toward her and each other. In her words, “I am so thankful for this year with all of you in this group. I feel like I can love again. I feel like I like my children. I feel like I’ve come back from some dark hateful spot, out into the light. Thank you all so much for giving me back myself and my children. Thank you for believing in me.”

We, in The PACT Family Support Network, think that these two children are worth the time we spent with their Mother. In fact, we do not believe that we could have turned her behavior around with any less time and that her children were headed for disaster. Few can make a success of their lives with a mother who dislikes them and tells them in a hundred different ways that they are “bad” people. This is just one example of

why “high risk families need high intensity services.” Our work with this mother was more expensive than an eight-week parent education class, but much less expensive, and less stigmatizing than therapy. We have dozens of similar examples of change in this last year alone. Therefore, we are deeply grateful to The Department of Services For Children, Youth, and Their Families for giving us so many years of funding to create change for Delaware children, families, and communities.

## **Data From The 2001-2002 Contract Year**

PACT Family Support Network data for both the Parent Groups and the Parent and Family Worker Certification classes, were collected during the year by Dr. Leslie Cooksy, Center For Community Research and Service, University of Delaware.

### **PACT Family Support Network Parent Groups:**

1. During the year, 289 parents took a cycle or more of the PACT Family Support Network (FSN) and 209 parents filled out evaluations. We served a high-risk population, including a large number of welfare recipients and men and women prisoners who were soon to be released to rejoin their families. This population has been required to be involved in many services and typically has a high level of disappointment and resentment toward any such community services. Yet of this group, 51.2 % reported that the service was of “very great value”, and 37.6 % reported that it was of “great value”. That is, a total of 88.8 % found it to be of great or very great value. Only 8.8 % reported that it was of “moderate value”, and 1.1 % reported it to have only “some value”. Just .8 % reported that it was of “little value”. Therefore, the overwhelming majority (88.8%) of participants reported that the program was of “great” or “very great” value to them as parents.
2. Of the participants, 87% were females and 13% were males. We are particularly pleased that we were able to serve so many high risk fathers in Delaware and that they found the program to be of “great” or “very great” value to them as parents.
3. Of the participants, 8.8% took all three cycles, 33.8% took two cycles, 57.4% took only one cycle. Therefore, almost half of the participants took more than one cycle, 41.8%. 94.8% reported that they would like to take another cycle. 16.7% of those 94.8% could not due to time constraints, leaving the correctional facility, change in class location, or some other limit. The high number who returned and the high number who expressed interest in returning indicate a high level of satisfaction with the learning experience.
4. The variables that were most effected by the training were variables that are highly related to violence prevention in children and to the development of pro-social behavior and academic success in children. 92% or more of the parents reported that the program made a difference in the following behaviors:

**Social and Emotional Competence -**

- Complimented their child more often (97.6% of parents)
- Yelled at their child less often (99.2% of parents)
- Controlled their angry feelings better (96.8% of parents)
- Enforced the limits they set for their child more respectfully (98.3% of parents)
- Could more often figure out better ways than hitting to handle their child's behavior (96.8% of parents)
- Made more time to pay attention to their child (96% of parents)
- Said "I love you." more often to their child (92.7% of parents)
- Hugged their child more often (94.3% of parents)
- Set a more positive and hopeful tone around their child (98.3% of parents)
- Listened to their child more (99.2% of parents)
- Set a more positive and hopeful tone around their child (98.3% of parents)

**Educational Competence -**

- Read to their child more often (92.0% of parents)
- Be more involved in their child's education (92.9% of parents)

**Self –**

- Felt better about themselves as a parent ( 97.6% of parents)
- Can get better support for themselves (100% of parents)
- Can handle stress better (98.4% of parents)
- Better able to see their own intelligence (91.2% of parents)
- Begin to make their lives more of a success in the ways that they want it to be a Success (94.2% of parents)

**Community –**

- Could be more helpful to other parents (90.2% of parents)
- Be a better listener for other adults in their community (91.1%)

**These variables are highly related to those that put children into the high-risk status. We have reduced the number of children likely to be at a high- risk for child abuse, school failure, school drop out, teen pregnancy, addiction, depression, violence, and crime. These are just the kind of results that Delaware needs in order to make a difference in the direction of good outcomes for our children.**

**PACT Family Support Network Parent and Family Worker Certification Classes:**

The Parent and Family Worker Certification training had a great impact on families in Delaware. Of the 29 who finished the 36 week class and filled out evaluations, 21 reported the program to be of "very great value" and the other 7 reported the program to be of "great value". One reported the program to be of "moderate value" and none reported it to be of "little or no value". Therefore, 96.5% found the program to be of "great" or "very great" value.

Variables that the Parent Leaders reported that the class helped them with:

**Leading Others –**

- More thoughtful of the emotional needs of parents they serve
- More able to set up successful parent group, talk, workshop, or other activity
- Better able overall to serve the parents, young people, or community they serve
- Better able to understand the emotional needs of children and young people
- More able to help parents and others play a good role in the educational and intellectual development of children
- More able to help parents and other adults play a decisive role in making sure that Racism, sexism, classism, etc. do not get passed on to children
- More able to help parents, or others, foster cooperative, rather than rebellious and aggressive behavior in children
- More able to help parents, or others to increase the amount of positive attention that they give to children
- More able to help parents validate children more often
- More able to help parents, or others, to discipline children respectfully and keep punishment to a minimum
- More able to help parents regain a sense of hope

**Getting Support For Themselves**

- Better able, overall to get support for themselves
- Became more connected with other community leaders
- More able to see that they were more intelligent and capable than they thought before coming to the class

**These men and women serve large numbers of parents in community centers, churches, schools, and agencies throughout Delaware. The average number of parents that they report that they serve in a year is 100 parents, for a total of 2,900 parents that were and will continue to be impacted positively each year from the leadership training part of this project. This training is a very cost effective way of reaching large numbers of parents in Delaware. Indeed, we believe it is the only way to ultimately create the nurturing “villages” that we need around every child in Delaware.**

**Therefore, we thank the Department Of Services For Children, Youth and Families, for the opportunity that you have given us to make a big difference to so many children, for so many years to come, through the work that has taken place this year. In the words of one of our parents, “How can I thank you enough. This program has helped me become the mother that I always wanted to be, but was too angry to be before this group. I wish every parent could have this chance.”\***

\*The individual answers to open ended questions on Parent Surveys and Parent Leader Surveys are attached. You will see that they, too, reflect the high value that participants put on their experience with this program.

## **Parent Responses To Written Questions**

**What part of the PACT Family Support Network experience was the most helpful to you as a parent?**

### **Everything was helpful**

- All
- Every session as a whole. Each week I learned something new that I could take and apply to my life on order to become a better parent.
- All of it
- all parts
- All great.
- All.
- All of it.
- All of it.
- Virtually all.
- All.
- all of it.

### **Listening and sharing with others**

- I get a chance to talk to someone who go through some of the things I experience.
- talking to other support daycare and parents that attend the class.
- The fact that everyone involved was there to listen. Listening achieves much more than too much advice.
- The support of other parents/provider. The information given by the leader.
- listening to others answers to questions I had that help me.
- listening to each other
- Listening to others Being listened to.
- Peer Counseling
- Peer Counseling
- meeting other parent
- Peer Counseling
- Talking about my experiences and listening to other parents
- I feel as though all of it was very helpful to me.
- Listening to others experiences on our topics. And how they handle problems.
- Listening skills and also I've learned to ask for help for myself to help me to achieve my future goals. Also has helped me to talk to my girls more effectively.
- Sharing and listening to people that have been in the same situations that may be going on in my home.
- Listen to everyone else's problems and realizing yours aren't as bad as you thought.
- Realizing I am not alone. It has taught me patience. I am able to talk things out instead of bottling it up.
- The most helpful experience to me was learning to deal with children of differences and etc. Also being friendly and cheerful to others. I really enjoyed our class and learned alot about other people. I really enjoyed being with other people.
- Getting together with other daycare providers & enjoying the sessions! They are very helpful to me & was helpful in my time of need.
- The most helpful thing was talking to others in class and meeting new friends, and learning new activities to do with the children.
- The support the people in the class gave me was wonderful and very helpful. The sessions helped too!
- knowing other people have the same children issues as me.
- Know that I was not by myself with day care provider problem. And ideas on handling day care situation in my home [?]
- Just being able to talk and learn about different things among Day Cares and How children develop motor skills-- setting up environments



- Listening more
- Listening
- The sessions were great and the support when need and at times I really needed it.
- Just talking to other providers and parents with dealing with different behaviors.
- The support of other people.
- The handouts and talking to other parents.
- the patience from the participants
- The listening partnerships
- Speaking with other providers and adults; to listen
- Dealing with home of the same issues that others have already been through. Just hearing and using some good advice for myself.
- Talking about stressful situations
- the debate capabilities of the class to be able to determine what is best
- Becoming stress free after the nights' class. Having new friends and old share your life and daycare problems and happiness with
- Talked about your kids.
- The sharing and listening.
- The listening time with them.
- Listening to the fathers.
- I like to class because I could be myself. Speak What I felt be free vent out feelings went home feeling fine
- It helped me as a parent not to be so stressed out with my own kids.
- support from other daycare providers, understand each other's problems, each of us help one another solve our problems, emotional support, advice given
- Hearing some of the other provider's ideas helped me with my children in my daycare center.
- Learning more experience about being a better childcare provider and receiving information about some things I did not know that I should know about being a Provider
- also learning not just for my home day but for my own children.
- Getting support helped me to parent better, with more love and patience.

#### **Learn how to deal with attitudes and needs of my children**

- different talks about how to handle children behaviors, attitudes.
- Being able to share with other parents, and learning more about children, and looking at different situations, from a child's point of view.
- Learning and talking about children's needs and expectations. Getting idea's from our group leaders.
- Learning other ways of disciplining my children.
- Learning how to discipline my child in different way's.
- Understanding my children better.
- It helped me to take the time to learn and listen to my child. That even though they may be young, their feelings matter. That you can be a good parent with just time and love.
- It helped me to be more patient with my kids and not just presume things at first sight.
- Made me to deal with my children
- it gave me more insight on what parenting should be about.
- Being able to cope with a preteen, teenager, and a husband
- Learning how to handle different situations as they arrive, and also I learned how to approach certain situation from different angles. This class was very supportive and stress relieving for me. By the time each class ends I feel much more relaxed than
- To help me learn about my son's feelings.
- About relationships matter. Love matters.
- Trying raise your child in respectful way.
- Learning how do be a parent.
- to enforce the limits of your child
- Love, and attention

#### **Learn to listen to my children/people more, have patience and take time for them**

- Learning how to listen to my children.

- The most helpful to me because it made me see that I needed to listen to my children more.
- This class helped me to be more patience. To listen more, be aware of others and how they feel before I speak.
- Their was alot of helpful information to help me with my stress level with my day care I have to learn to listen to the children better.
- Good listen.
- Taking out more time
- Patience
- The most helpful was me to be a better parent to my kids and to learn to understand and have more patients with my kids.
- it help understand their ways more and listen more and that make them better children.
- Teaches me to listen to my child before acting (lots of patience)
- Learning To Pay Attention To All People - esp. my children
- The listening and getting listened to and being able to listen better and pay attention to my children.
- Learning to communicate with my children.
- How to communicate with them.
- to be more patient with my child and show him how I feel.
- Learning that my attention matters so much to my child.

#### **Improved my self-esteem as parent/person**

- I can do all things if I put my mind to it.
- I feel better about myself as a parent and as a person. I am a better listener and I am more sociable with people. These classes improves my self esteem in a very nice way because I feel better about myself. I feel more completely and secured.
- Taking this class not only helped me doing daycare but has also helped me be a good parent & listener at home (not work)
- I feel better as a wife and mother to know that what I am doing is really important
- Being liked by my teacher. Then I could like my child better. Getting listened to.

#### **Random**

- the information from the sessions
- Other providers, handouts some times I she the classes er longer.
- Learning that all I do can make a difference to my child. I matter so much. Being sensitive.
- understanding emotions of my children and myself. I like the support too.
- reading literacy class

What part of the PACT Family Support Network experience was the least helpful to you as a parent?

#### **Everything was helpful**

- nothing wasn't helpful, anything new or advice can always help.
- It all helped one way or another.
- There was no least for me everything meant something to my day to day job of taking care of my children as well as others
- I don't think anything that I have learned was least helpful. It was all important.
- I learned alot of information, I believe all of it applies to my life.
- Everything was helpful.
- Everything was helpful.
- Everything was helpful in different ways.
- nothing. I think we have learned something from each class so I can't say anything bad.
- I cannot think of anything that was least helpful. I enjoyed everything about the class.
- Nothing it was all helpful.
- Every class was really enjoyable.

- I honestly can say that each class that I attended I got something out of it. Whether it was support, stress, listening skills, ideas etc.
- Every part of these cycles are very helpful.
- I honestly didn't learn anything that I didn't feel was helpful. Everything I learned I feel that I could put it to use.
- There was no least. Everything was helpful to me.
- There wasn't really anything that was not helpful.
- I found it all to be very helpful.
- nothing, I enjoy the whole class
- It was all great
- I find everything helpful
- It was all very helpful to my daycare
- everything ok
- I think all of the class was helpful.
- cant think of anything that wasn't helpful it all help me
- Everything was helpful
- It was all useful to me. I got something out of each class.
- all was helpful.
- All was good.
- I don't have nothing bad to say.
- It was all good.
- Each night I went home with something new to try.
- All was helpful.
- I could use all of it. If not now then maybe later.
- The class actually taught me somethings about myself and how to be a parent.
- Every thing is.
- That it had to end.
- Everything was very important.
- everything was important to me.

#### **Nothing/None**

- Nothing
- Nothing
- None
- None
- nothing
- nothing
- none
- None
- none of it
- None
- None
- none
- None
- Nothing
- None
- none
- nothing
- nothing
- nothing
- None
- none
- none
- Nothing!
- None
- None

**N/A**

- N/A
- n/a
- n/a
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- NA
- NA
- na
- NA
- NA
- NA
- NA
- NA

**Discipline**

- the session where we talked about discipline. I'm not the type of parent that hits not abuses my child physically or mentally. An the same techniques P.A.C.T. talked about are pretty much the same techniques I use.
- Child abuse or hitting my children because I never hit my kids.
- Hitting children.

**Meeting Times**

- the fact that it's only once a week.
- too short-- I want more classes next year.
- Want more classes - This really helped.

**Physical Properties of the class**

- Lack of refreshments!
- The inability to have my child present.
- Sometimes people get off topic
- Sometimes I wanted to give advice and couldn't. That was hard for me but I learned from it.
- Sometimes people came late. It interrupted.

**Random**

- Showing love and affection and letting my children know I love them. There's not a day that goes by that I don't make sure my children know that.
- I already knew about reading to my children.
- not caring, not being there for them.

**If you would like to offer any other comments about the program or this evaluation, please feel free to do so.**

**Not Applicable**

- None

**Teaching Staff**

- The instructor again was very open with us. She is a very pleasant person. She is a good listener. I would recommend others to get involved with this class.
- I think our leader, Kim Boughman, is a very inspirational, compassionate, knowledgeable teacher.
- The instructor Jackie Katz is very knowledgeable about this program.

- The instructor of this class was excellent, she expressed herself when teaching very clearly and she got straight to the point. Everyone involved with this class were excellent, very friendly and understanding.
- The instructor is very knowledgeable about the classes and the feelings of the other providers. The class has helped me as a provider that I can offer some assistance to my children and parents.
- Kim is a wonderful person and the program is great.
- I feel Lillian is a very good facilitator of the group.

#### **Personal Growth**

- I stopped saying racist things because of this class. I understand better why not to, especially around children.

#### **Share With Others/Relieve Stress**

- If we can't make this class we can call other provider and have a session. this help us a lot. I think we learn a lot about each other and learn how to deal with ourselves.
- I learn in this class plus I get to meet new people. Its also time I feel that I can relax and share my feelings with others that are going through some of the same things that I am.
- I would recommend this class for any an every teenager or adult to take. This was the biggest class so far. Every class has been different and has been helpful to me. We talk, we laugh and we even cry together. A family that loves together shares
- This is a very good class as far as learning and getting stress free.
- Good stress releaser.
- I am so glad we have this support system. To have people that understand where we are at in our business and be able to talk and share feelings with others.
- classes helped me relieve my stress of daycare by offering advice, solutions to problems, and emotional support to continue to do this profession.
- It great to talk out things to people gone through the same has you.
- This program has helped me deal with stress better and hope the program will continue.
- It was helpful, especially the interacting with the male partners to get a different perspective.

#### **Information/Parenting Skills**

- I have taken other parenting classes and feel as though I have learned the most through this program.
- I believe that this parenting course has given me a lot of info on how I can be a better parent.
- I feel as though is a great program, as long as the participant is willing an open these sessions could be of great value.
- This class has helped me raise my child as a single parent much easier than if this course was not available. I've become able to take time when needed, have patience when its needed. And my daughter and I have the nest relationship because of some help from this course.
- I appreciate this now i have a better understanding with my son, we are very close he's 3 yrs. old. I've learned a lot since I've been down about my son.

#### **Continue the Program**

- I understand this class may not be continuing. I would be willing to pay a fee to help find it. So please consider this as an option.
- I hope the class continues as we need the encouragement and self help the class offers.
- I really enjoyed this class. I learned a lot from this program and want to continue another cycle.
- This class helps me get through all the trials of everyday life. I look forward to the next cycle.
- I really feel this workshop should continue. It has helped me in my business and personality.
- Please keep this program as we need the class to help us.
- I am so glad that this class is around for us to take it to help people and also me because it is very helpful.
- I don't understand why you would take a class away from providers that really need this class.
- I am hoping to take more classes. I think it is a good program for me.

#### **Enjoyable**

- I like this class. I learned a lot and look forward to it.

- I love it!!
- I really enjoyed the class. It really helped me to stop yelling so much and to listen more carefully.
- This was a very good class can't wait for the next one!

## **Parent And Family Worker Responses To Written Questions**

**What part of the PACT Family Support Network experience was the most helpful to you as a leader of parents, young people, or your community?**

### **Re-involve oneself**

- Per my community I found it most helpful to learn about how to work on feelings that are close to me that I do not usually don't want to see, like internalized racism.

### **More connected with other community leaders**

- Become more connected with other community leaders.

### **Understanding young people better/Be a better listener/Getting them excited**

- Understanding the emotional needs of young people and better listener for children
- All of it helped. The counseling techniques and good information about how to get children excited about learning and reading were so helpful
- It helped me be a better parent by understanding how to listen more effectively and in terms of the importance of allowing others to share their experiences.
- Taught me skills with young people.
- As a leader of young people it was helpful to learn how we can teach and guide out young people while still providing respectful support and listening to them.
- The listening skills
- Listening skills.

### **Peer counseling skills**

- The peer counseling skills and the listening partnerships were very helpful to me as a parent, and as leader of parents and young people.
- I was helpful to learn the peer counseling skills.
- The co-counseling techniques
- Counseling and Learning about the different oppressions...sexism, racism, classism.

### **Listening to others, and being listened to**

- It was completely different from other classes. We built relationships, got close, listened to one another and learned so much about child development, education, and counseling skills
- Listening and giving full attention to people.
- I listen so much to others; it was really helpful for me to have a place where I got listened to about my own feelings.
- Communicating with other parents - seeing similarities in us all.
- The support from other leaders.
- The most helpful part to me is learning how to listen to others.
- Being a part of the Leaders Network and learning strategies for listening and relationship building.
- The connection to leaders statewide and the opportunity to collectively think about effectively supporting families.

### **Empower a family**

- To become able to empower a family with support of listening, having empathy and respect.
- Helping others feel better about helping themselves, helping them with their children and helping childcare providers with working with children. Just being a part of working to make things better for children!
- I like it all. If I had to pick, I'd choose how Gwen modeled caring about and growing people

### **Understanding parents**

- I understand parents better now. I can listen first, teach after. I can build better relationships with parents and children.

### **Other**

- Knowing that the information shared really works! As a leader as well as a parent - FSN helped me personally. Therefore, my enthusiasm and hopefulness impacted the delivery and the "hands on" opportunities provided by FSN - such as play day with parent and child and listening partnership
- Excellent teaching
- The ways I learned to run support groups and activities

### **What part of the PACT Family Support Network experience was the least helpful to you as a leader of parents, young people, or your community?**

#### **It was all great!**

- It was all helpful!
- It was all good.
- It was all great. I looked forward to every class.

#### **Driving**

- The driving on a regular basis

#### **Class Logistics**

- Workshop was good but do it later in class cycle.
- Not getting a list of recruits for the class.
- Some of the information related to relationship building was redundant for me in particular given the course work that we had.
- The part I like the least is telling about myself.

#### **More classes**

- There should be more classes
- More of these classes are needed
- I wish we could meet twice a week and all summer long. The support really makes a difference.
- I wished that the classes could have met longer. All of my experiences as part of the PACT Family Support Network were very helpful to me

#### **Nothing**

- Nothing
- Nothing
- nothing
- nothing
- None
- Nothing. I loved it all.
- None. Everything has been a great experience - nothing about this program is unimportant (It is very important.)
- I have not had a least helpful experience. My experience has helped.

#### **N/A**

- N/A
- NA



### **Other**

- Being able to set up a workshop
- 

**If this experience has been helpful, please share a specific way that it has helped you be a leader who can make a difference for parents, young people or the community.**

### **Better Listener**

- As a parent and community leader it has created a better listener in me and made me more aware of peoples space and being able to allow a person to release feelings w/o holding it against them or being too controversial.
- Be a better listener!
- I am able to listen without interrupting give attention and build relationships and trust.
- To listen more to others.

### **Understand young people**

- I think to understand the young people's behavior and their needs and just to be there for them, we can all help make a better and brighter future for them.
- I understand more about child development and the needs of children
- I know more about how to help children succeed in school

### **Understanding Parent's Needs**

- I have a bigger idea about parents' needs who are different from my own background. I am white and middle class and I have a much better perspective on how to be thoughtful, respectful, and helpful towards people of color, raised poor parents etc, This has been hugely helpful to me.
- I have worked as a family service work and this experience helped me do my home visit with families we support.
- I understand parents better. I listen better and can create better learning situations for them.
- It helped me to better read the words and behavior so I can be there for parents. I listen better. More confident.

### **Inspire others/Lead/Change**

- The leader was informative and inspiring every week. I know how to do that for others now.
- This has been a great opportunity to grow as a leader and get skills and motivation to change. I was inspired every week.
- As I stated before, this experience was of very Great value - I feel that in leading my parent group, while I was in this class, it helped me help others feel better about themselves - their families and their children. This class helped me in the same way. The child-care providers and parents really need this class for the great support especially in a time of great uncertainty with the nation. During this year and the ending of last they really have depended on me as a leader and the class that I now know how to provide, to get them through the trying times. Probably the most important thing about heading the group for others is helping to work to make things better for everyone especially children!
- This has helped me to take on leadership by leading support groups and referring others to the program. We need more of this guidance in the state.
- This group put into words and structure what I have known in my heart my whole life - that true community education means embracing our families, empowering our parents and youth connecting people with one another, building listening partnerships where people support one another.

### **Sharing**

- The ability to share my own experiences as a parent and parent leader, has helped me to truly understand that each person's experience is unique to them.
- I as a parent have gained much insight into myself and how I parent my children and see similarities and differences within the parents that I work with. We have been able to learn from each other and get much support to keep us going.

- By being able to pass on the information in all the trainings I do throughout the community. I am able to incorporate PACT theory into my other topics emphasizing the importance of listening to children, allowing children to cry, getting support for parents, etc.

### **Thinking and Feeling/To become a better parent and teacher**

- Through this experience, I have discovered a way to use this process to think clearer, parent in a more effective way and in turn teach parents to use this process in an ongoing way to become clear thinkers and loving parents for their children.
- This experience has helped me understand feelings and how they affect everyday life. This experience will help me be a better leader. I will be able to relate to others better.
- Personal application of the information and principles shared - my son is a living testimony.

### **Other**

- The experience assists me to gain insight into how creative, intelligent, and powerful I am. It helped me to see that this sense of being completely good and human is the birth right of all. This birth right needs to be fostered in children through good listening, special times, and consideration. As a parent, my life needs to be extended to include respect and appreciation for all growing people, other parents, and community leaders.
- I learned so much about how to help children succeed in school, community, and family life. I can offer this information to others with more confidence now, listening to them, as I teach.
- I am firmer about holding out hope as I give good information. I understand discouragement better and how to move it. The peer listening techniques are so needed in our community.
- It has helped in my business, working with employees and clients, church and community groups I work with.
- PACT has helped me regain support and respect for mankind while learning skills to improve relationships with others, adult and children.

## **SOME OF THE MANY THINGS THAT PARENTS OR PARENT AND FAMILY WORKERS TOLD US OVER THE PERIOD OF THE GRANT**

### **Listening**

“I learned I should pay more attention to my son and listen to what he says, especially when he is expressing his feelings.”

“I listen first to my child then give my opinion or answer. When I am upset I go to my room to calm down then listen and answer.”

“First, I am learning how to avoid child care burnout, by finding a good listener or being a good listener for a friend.”

“The most important thing that has happened because of the Support Network is that I have learnt to listen. To give individual attention to my children and to all others.”

“Families I work with report improved relationships with their children. They listen more and are more respectful of their children.”

“I can’t believe what a difference it makes to my child to listen to his feelings. He’s starting to tell me so much more, now that I know how to listen and how to respond to his feelings right. We are getting so much closer. He isn’t trying to defy me all the time. I guess it’s the respect of listening. It makes him feel like he matters to me so he isn’t trying to be bad all the time. What a relief. I haven’t hit him in months. Maybe I won’t be driven to that ever again. I mean we both control ourselves better, now that we are both getting listened to.”

### **Communicating**

“I have totally changed our relationship. I always told her what I didn’t like before, trying to make her perfect. Now I tell her all the things I like about her. I show my caring every day, in word, not just by doing things for her. And I am more physical in showing my love. I couldn’t even hug her when I came to this class. So she can tell I’m on her side now. It has helped so much.”

“I don’t yell as much.”

“I learned to deal with my kids better. I don’t yell at them, I talk things over with my kids.”

“I am better able to interrupt misinformation in a respectful way and provide more helpful information.”

“I was doing a lot of things wrong. I kind of knew that, but I couldn’t admit it. But now I understand why I was yelling and hitting so much. I know how to separate feelings

from actions now. I can feel angry and stop myself from acting on it. It's still hard, but there is a very different tone in my house. Things are shifting in my relationships with my kids and their father."

"I don't want to hit now. Single parenting is hard. I get used up, but I know better when it's starting to happen, and I know how to handle my emotions so that they don't explode on my kids. I still don't always know what to do, but I'm thinking better more of the time. I choose my times to talk to them about hard things. I tell them lots of good things that I like about them too. I wish someone had done that for me. Before I got into this group no one ever told me that I was a special person...no one ever. Now I know how important it is."

"I have more attention for my grandchildren and people I work with. I hear them and can give them better information. I play better with my grandchildren and other children."

### **Special Time - Paying Attention To Child/Children**

"My children get more attention, individual uninterrupted attention. It makes them behave better, just like you said."

"I now realize that each child need 'special time' with you."

"Special time is hard to fit into our lives, but when I can figure out how to get it in, we fight less. They are happier. I can see the results, so I'm trying to make time for it. I have to push myself, but I don't want violent children. And the closeness after special time, really does make them calmer and closer."

### **School Related Activities**

"You all really made me feel like reading to my child was important. I knew I was supposed to do it before, but now I really do it."

"I never did well with numbers, so I used to avoid them. Now I try to count things with my daughter, and act like numbers are fun. I hope it helps her do better than me."

"My child wasn't doing well in school. Thanks to this class, I think that things are starting to go better. I finally got the nerve to go into the teacher and ask what I could do."

"I understand that I can influence how smart my child can be just by talking to him now while he is a baby."

"My teenager has been acting up in school. I used to say that it was the school's fault and that they had to handle it themselves. Since this class, I am working with the school and trying to back things up at home. It's still hard, but things are going better."

### **Taking Care Of Self**

“I have begun to think more positive about myself and my family, as well as others. Some of my friends feel I have changed. This class has helped me so much.”

“I have more of an understanding of myself as to why I feel sad, unhappy or lonely at times.”

“I learned there are positive ways to relieve stress.”

“I take better care of myself, i.e. lost weight, eat healthier, exercise.”

“The PACT Family Support Network has made me a better person. I like myself more because I have become less judgmental and more helpful.”

“I have learned to be confident.”

“I have people I can call now if I start to feel depressed or angry. I ask for ten minutes of time and I cry or get mad. I always feel better afterwards. It works and my kids don't get abused.”

“Learning to cope correctly with my child's anger, is the best way of taking care of me. Before, I always felt awful after I yelled and hit. Now I get to be proud of myself more often 'cause I know how to be firm and respectful.”

### **Hate and Violence Reduction**

“I am less violent with my child and I know how to get him to get out anger in a safe way. I don't blame him for his anger. I just help him find good ways to get it out. It is amazing. This stuff works. He really is so much easier to deal with. I was doing all the wrong stuff before. I thought my 'get tough' approach was right, but this is a better way. I'm still firm, but I'm not hateful or mean.”

“Me and my kids are learning to have family meetings about issues. We are learning to listen to each other and see that everyone has feelings that are important.”

“I learned so much about racism and classism and other such things. I am helping my children see that people are hurt by attitudes of disrespect and that all people need to stand up when a group is being put down...or even when an individual is being put down. We are learning to be good 'allies' for other groups.”

“I understand now that one of the best ways that I can keep my children out of trouble and out of jail, is to spend lots of good time doing things with them that they want to do.”

“I am focusing on how to keep my relationships strong with my children. I understand that loneliness and fear are the feelings that so easily can turn to anger and violence.”

“I have learned to be a counselor for my children’s heaviest feelings. Now they don’t take them out on each other or get in so many fights with other kids.”