

2023-2024

Pennsylvania Children's Trust Fund and Strengthening Families™

ANNUAL REPORT



Pennsylvania Children's Trust Fund

The Pennsylvania Children's Trust Fund (CTF) was established in December 1988 by Act 1988-151 [11 P.S. §§ 2231-2238] and is supported by the Department of Human Services (DHS). CTF operates under the administration of the 15-member CTF Board, which is composed of legislators appointed by the House and Senate and citizens appointed by the Governor. The Deputy Secretary of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) serves as CTF's Executive Director and carries out the duties and responsibilities assigned by the board through OCDEL's Bureau of Early Intervention Services and Family Supports.

The CTF board funds community-based programs with three-year grants to implement Evidence-Based or Evidence-Informed programs that are designed to promote child and family well-being and prevent child abuse and neglect. The funded programs support families to ensure they have the resources and information they need to provide enriching and nurturing environments for their children. Grantees are asked to collaborate in their community, intentionally integrate

the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors (SFPF) Framework into the work and create a plan to sustain their programs after CTF funds have expired.

Funds for CTF are generated from a surcharge on all applications for marriage licenses and divorce complaints, a State Income Tax check-off option, online vehicle registration and driver's license renewal options, and private donations that are paid into a special non-lapsing fund. Since its inception, CTF has invested more than \$43.2 million through 338 grants. A full list of former grantees, including the counties served, can be found on the Children's Trust Fund website at www.pactf.org. **For private donations please send your contributions to:**
Children's Trust Fund
Department of Human Services
Office of Child Development and Early Learning
607 South Drive, 4th Floor Rotunda
Harrisburg, PA 17120

In 2023-2024, the Governor appointed several public members to serve vacant seats. The full Board of Directors held an orientation and planning retreat in April.

Children's Trust Fund Board Members

Legislative Board Members

- Senator Art Haywood, Pennsylvania State Senate District 4
- Representative Ann Flood, Pennsylvania State House District 138
- Representative Donna Bullock, Pennsylvania State House District 195 (term ended)

Public Board Members

- Dr. Rachel Berger (resigned May 2024)
- Bruce Clash, Chair (term ended January 2024)
- Paul DiLorenzo, Chair as of January 2024
- Bruce Erb
- Philip Falvo
- Nacole Hough
- Lindy Keefe
- Angela Liddle (term ended October 2023)
- Kristi Lyons
- Cathleen Palm
- Rodney Wagner (term ended October 2023)

Active Children's Trust Fund Grantees

Cohort 29 (October 1, 2021-September 30, 2024)

- Blueprints
- Children's Advocacy Center of Lawrence County Inc.
- Community Action Partnership of Lancaster County Inc.
- Family Connection of Easton
- Family Services of Montgomery County
- Lancaster General Hospital
- Maternal and Family Health Services
- Maternity Care Coalition

Cohort 30 (July 1, 2022- June 30, 2025)

- Community Connections for Children Inc. (Formerly Child Care Consultants)
- Columbia County Commissioners
- Family Service Association of Bucks County
- Jim Thorpe Area School District
- Maternal and Child Health Consortium
- National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
- The Learning Lamp

Cohort 31 (October 1, 2023-September 30, 2026)

- Family Service of Chester County
- Philadelphia Health Management Corporation

Evidence-based, Evidence Informed, and Promising Practices

Below are some of the Evidence-based, Evidence Informed, and Promising Practices that have been offered by CTF grantees. These types of services and programs are responsive to local community needs, prevent child abuse, and strengthen families. Some are targeted to supporting fathers, others are to support women with postpartum depression and anxiety, home visiting programs, and positive parenting programs (individual and groups):

- 24/7 Dad
- Exchange Club Family Center
- Growing Great Kids
- Moving Beyond Depression
- Nurse-Family Partnership (enhanced resource navigation)
- Nursing-Legal Partnership (enhanced resource navigation)
- Nurturing Parenting Program
- ParentChild+
- Parents as Teachers
- Triple P - Positive Parenting Program



Impact Statements

A parent shared an improvement in how she handled a stressful situation. Instead of her old behavior of “lashing out,” she took some time to be alone and played cards. This helped her to calm down, think through what happened, and decide the best way to handle the situation.

~ Maternity Care Coalition

A parent in the Parents as Teachers (PAT) program has shown she has learned the importance of self-care and is currently working with a therapist. The parent has been engaged and is interactive during visits. She asks many questions and has made adjustments in her parenting practices.

~ Community Connections for Children

A parent in the Building the Family program shared she has learned that fancy/expensive toys aren't necessary to support her child's brain development and learning. The parent can identify simple, safe items around the house that can support her child's learning. She also plans to take her child to the library on a regular basis and sign up for story time and other children's activities that are offered.

~ Maternity Care Coalition

The Triple P program staff and families participated in Child Abuse Prevention Month activities. The families and children painted canvases that were displayed throughout the community.

~ Columbia County Family Center

Professional Development and Learning Communities

Following an orientation webinar, all grantees were invited to participate in Learning Communities focused on promotion of family well-being and prevention of child maltreatment and provided networking opportunities to share best practices and resources.

At the May 9, 2024, CTF Grantee Annual Meeting, grantees, CTF Board members, OCDEL, and Center for Schools and Communities (CSC) staff participated in a focused conversation about the CTF administrative processes, what was working with the community programs, and identified challenges with program implementation.



Children's Trust Fund Fiscal Report

Based on state fiscal year:

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Beginning Balance	\$1,005,000.00
--------------------------	-----------------------

Total Revenue	\$1,379,000.00
----------------------	-----------------------

- Marriage/Divorce Fees \$1,003,000.00
- PennDOT Donations \$310,000.00
- Investment Income \$63,000.00
- Donations \$3,000.00

Total Funds Available	\$2,384,000.00
------------------------------	-----------------------

Total Expenditures	\$1,122,000.00
---------------------------	-----------------------

- Grant Payments \$1,100,000.00
- Operating Costs \$22,000.00

Ending Balance	\$1,262,000.00
-----------------------	-----------------------



Pennsylvania Strengthening Families Leadership Team

Pennsylvania Strengthening Families Leadership Team (SFLT) activities are supported by the CTF Board, which contracts with CSC to facilitate this work. SFLT works to promote the inclusion of the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework into policies, programs, and practices in multiple family service systems throughout the state. The team consists of leaders in various systems and communities. CSC coordinated four SFLT meetings in 2023-2024, focused on effectively embedding the Strengthening Families™ approach in organizations and systems, developing materials about the Protective Factors, and promoting family engagement and leadership.

CSC served as the lead for Be Strong Parent Café institutes with local team support and introduced a new course featuring Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE).

The Strengthening Families™ approach promotes the development of protective factors within families, by building on strengths and moving from “What’s wrong?” to “What’s strong?” It is not a curriculum or a program but a framework of five research-informed protective factors, identified by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, that support families so that even in stressful times, child maltreatment may be prevented. It is based on the belief that all families have strengths, and all families need support. When these protective factors are robust in families, children thrive.

Charlyn Harper Browne, Ph.D. is a former senior fellow at the Center for the Study of Social Policy where, for 16 years, she was responsible for contributing to the research, theoretical, and training components of projects related to young children and their families. Dr. Browne delivered a keynote speech at the Strengthening Families Partnering to Build Resilient Families and Communities conference, highlighting the expanded definition of resilience from her work: “Expanding the Perspectives and Research Foundation for the Strengthening Families and Youth Thrive Frameworks.”

826 people participated in professional learning experiences in 2023-2024



64 participants attended the Cohort 31 CTF grantee orientation and two additional networking sessions.



338 participants attended six webinars focused on best practices in family support.



57 participants attended four place-based Parent Café Training Institutes.



36 participants attended Community of Champions Engaging Families with Parent Cafes workshops.



59 participants attended four Pennsylvania Parent Café Learning Communities.



12 participants attended Building Protective Factors through Parents Café and Hosting Meaningful Café Conversations workshops.



23 participants attended an Introduction to HOPE course.



237 participants attended the 2024 Strengthening Families Conference held in State College, Pennsylvania.