

CIRCLE OF PARENTS®

Circle of Parents® is a growing national network of non-profit organizations and parent leaders that offer anyone in a parenting role the opportunity to participate in weekly group meetings with other parents to exchange ideas, share information, develop and practice new parenting skills, learn about community resources, and give and receive support. Groups are parent-led with the support of a trained group facilitator, are conducted in a confidential and non-judgmental manner, are free of charge and provide developmentally-appropriate children's programs or child care concurrent with parent group meetings. CTF has served as the lead agency for the Circle of Parents® initiative, started in Michigan in October 2006. A Responsible Fatherhood program component was added for January 1 - December 31, 2008 for technical assistance and training.

Parent Leadership

Circle of Parents® participants gain the knowledge and skills to function in meaningful leadership roles and represent a "parent voice" to help shape the direction of their families, programs and communities.

Research Based

Focus groups and evaluation indicate that Circle of Parents® participants:

- Become empowered to influence other parents and their community;
- Feel supported and connected to other parents; learn about non-violent ways to discipline children, and learn more about themselves and how this awareness helps them to become better parents; and
- Gain knowledge about meeting family needs from resources and materials that are provided.

2007

- Eleven state-wide main program sites have been established, with multiple groups operating at most sites.
- CTF also hosted a Circle of Parents® two-day facilitators' training in conjunction with Great Start and Pathways MI.

- In FY2007, approximately 165 parents/caregivers and 75 children participated in the Circle of Parents® program, and 14 new groups started statewide. Through the program, parents become empowered to not only impact their own families, but to influence other parents and their community by advocating on behalf of children and families.
- In FY2007, the CTF direct services grant monitor accepted a position to represent CTF on the Advisory Board for Parent Leadership in State Government.

2008

- CTF continued to serve as the lead agency for the Circle of Parents® Initiative.
- In FY2008, Circle of Parents® workshops were provided to parents and human services professionals in October and November at the Parenting Awareness Michigan (PAM) Annual Conference.
- Approximately 161 parent leaders, facilitators, program managers, coordinators, and/or directors attended workshops and training sessions throughout the year.
- Approximately 187 parents/caregivers and 56 children participated in the Circle of Parents® program.
- Four new groups started statewide to bring the total number to 15 sites.
- Parents advocated at the state level. Four English-speaking parents and three Spanish-speaking parents attended the Michigan Children's Agenda in Lansing; where they had the opportunity to speak with legislators and advocate for the needs of their families.

SAFE DELIVERY

2007 & 2008

CTF administered funding and worked with consultants for the Safe Delivery of Newborns program via Interagency Agreement. Safe Delivery was created in 2001 by a statute separate from CTF's enabling legislation. It addresses a unique niche in child abuse prevention, namely a short-term amnesty for birth parents who wish to anonymously surrender a newborn in a safe environment without either the child or parents entering the child welfare system.