

Community Collaborations to
Strengthen
and Preserve Families Grant

2022 Newsletter



In 2019, Partnership for Strong Families (PSF) received a five-year federal grant from the Children's Bureau to evaluate and refine our network of Resource Centers and establish a new center in Lake City, our NorthStar Family Resource Center, which opened in March of 2021. The Resource Centers provide services and resources to families that build upon their strengths with the ultimate goal of keeping every local child safe from abuse or neglect. Through this project's implementation and evaluation activities, it is projected that opportunities for improvement will be observed and put into practice, thus helping us to refine our service model.

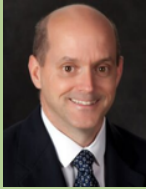
Funding provided by the Children's Bureau through the Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families Grant emphasizes the need for a collaborative, community-based approach to serving children and families. Likewise, PSF's Resource Center Model is rooted in the belief that services provided at our Resource Centers must be responsive to the local neighborhoods and communities they serve.

The purpose of this newsletter is to present highlights of our project, including some of the evaluation activities completed in 2021 and 2022, as well as share some information about our Grant team members and network of Resource Centers. We hope you enjoy!

MEET OUR TEAM



Toni Spoliansky is the **Project Director** for the Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families Grant. The primary function of this project is to evaluate, refine and expand Partnership for Strong Families' Resource Center Model, with the goal of identifying and highlighting components which are directly associated with reducing rates of child maltreatment and entries into foster care. Toni has over 15 years of child welfare experience. She has served as the Project Director for two federally funded grants. Spoliansky possesses a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Florida. She has managed several prevention efforts for Partnership for Strong Families, all with the goal to keep children from formally entering the child welfare system.



Dr. Robin Perry is the **Principal Investigator and Lead Evaluator** for the project. He obtained his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley in 1999. Prior to obtaining his Ph.D., he had eight years of practice experience in child welfare and domestic violence settings, including serving as a child protective investigator and service worker and child and family therapist. He is currently Professor of Social Work at Florida A&M University and Director of the Institute of Child & Family Services Research. He has worked as a researcher and evaluator for over 20 years and has published and presented extensively on topics including: program and outcome evaluation, child well-being, funding models for child welfare systems, domestic and sexual violence, task analyses and workforce issues, professional training and education of child welfare workers, child welfare performance measures, family group decision making, child maltreatment fatalities and child abuse prevention. Over the years, Dr. Perry has worked collaboratively with Florida Department of Children and Families, the Florida Coalition for Children, and several Community-Based Care agencies throughout Florida on research and evaluation activities, some of which have impacted policy and practice initiatives in Florida.



Pebbles Edelman is the **Chief of Clinical and Community Services** for Partnership for Strong Families. She has served in her role since 2009 and is responsible for the oversight and development of all clinical and family preservation programs within PSF's system of care, as well as provider and community relations. Her responsibilities include oversight of a multi-million dollar services budget, ensuring children and families are receiving quality services and achieving desired outcomes; enhancing PSF's collaborative relationships with service providers and partners; and overseeing and developing quality prevention programs, including PSF's network of Resource Centers as well as a \$2.5 million federal grant to evaluate and expand their Resource Center Model. Prior to joining PSF in 2004, she served as a Clinical Director at Meridian Behavioral Healthcare. Casey Family Programs has requested Edelman as a presenter and group facilitator in multiple communities nationwide seeking to replicate the Resource Center Model. Edelman holds a Master's degree and Specialist's degree in Counselor Education with a focus on marriage and family therapy from the University of Florida. She has been a Licensed Mental Health Counselor since 1997.



Christen Lancaster is a **Community Research Coordinator** at Partnership for Strong Families working with the Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families Grant, funded by the Children's Bureau. She has over 10 years of experience in the nonprofit field and believes in the importance of prevention services. Christen is trained in Mental Health First Aid, Motivational Interviewing, SOAR and Trauma Informed Care and is a Certified Behavioral Health Case Manager. Christen holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Family Youth and Community Science from the University of Florida.



Trisha Bernardin is a **Community Research Coordinator** at Partnership for Strong Families working with the Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families Grant, funded by the Children's Bureau. Trisha has over eight years of domestic and international experience working with at-risk youth and their families. She has worked in educational settings, recreational environments, and has been a part of community initiatives to improve the lives of children and families. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology and a Master of Science degree in family, youth, and community sciences from the University of Florida. Trisha's professional interests include cultural competence, prevention, youth and family development, mental wellness, and data management.



Haley Pegram is a **Community Research Coordinator** at Partnership for Strong Families working with the Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families Grant, funded by the Children's Bureau. She has extensive research experience particularly focused on bringing wellness resources to diverse communities and youth development. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology, a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology, and is currently working towards a Master of Science degree in Family, Youth, and Community Sciences all from the University of Florida.

OUR COMMUNITY RESEARCH COORDINATORS

ARE AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT TO
THE PROJECT. EACH
COMMUNITY RESEARCH
COORDINATOR IS LOCATED ON
SITE AT ONE OF OUR RESOURCE
CENTERS.

DAILY, THEY WORK TO ENGAGE
AND ENROLL OUR PATRONS
INTO OUR OUTCOME
EVALUATION AND ALSO PROVIDE
DIRECT SUPPORT TO OUR LEAD
EVALUATOR ON ALL
EVALUATION ACTIVITIES
RELATED TO THE PROJECT.

EXAMPLES OF OUR RESOURCE CENTER PROGRAMS

ACADEMIC & ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Each of the Resource Centers offer a variety of academic and enrichment activities for students in grades K-12. One of the most popular is Homework Help, where students are provided after-school assistance with their homework, additional help with challenging subjects, and tutoring focused on literacy. Some examples of enrichment programming also include social-emotional groups, Girls Scouts, Capoeira, African Drum, and more.

FINANCIAL LITERACY/FIGHT FOR YOUR MONEY

Financial literacy classes hosted in partnership with local businesses and other financial experts teach participants skills such as budgeting, banking, saving, and credit repair. Participants build a portfolio of financial lessons that can be used to create their own plan for financial stability and increased self-sufficiency. During 2022, Fight for Your Money was provided virtually and in-person.

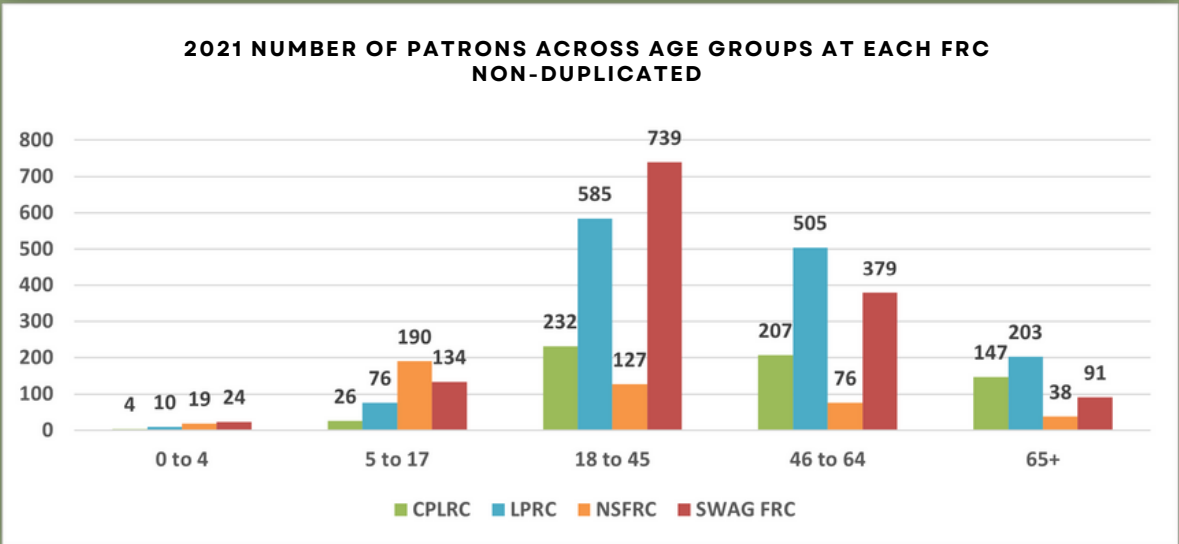
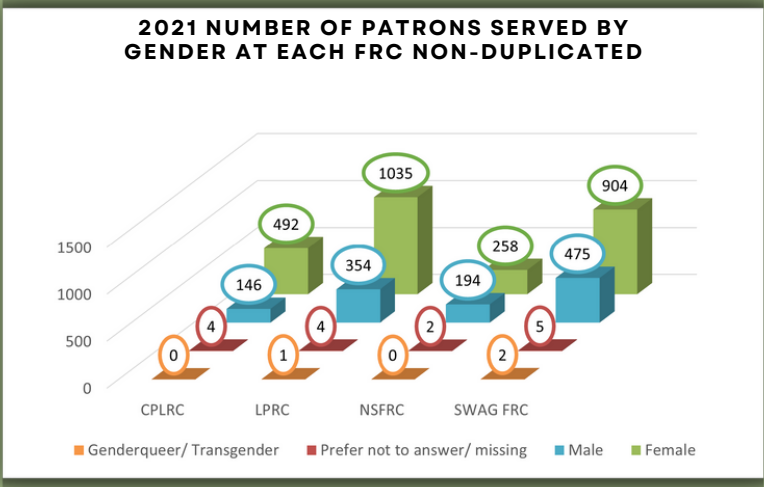
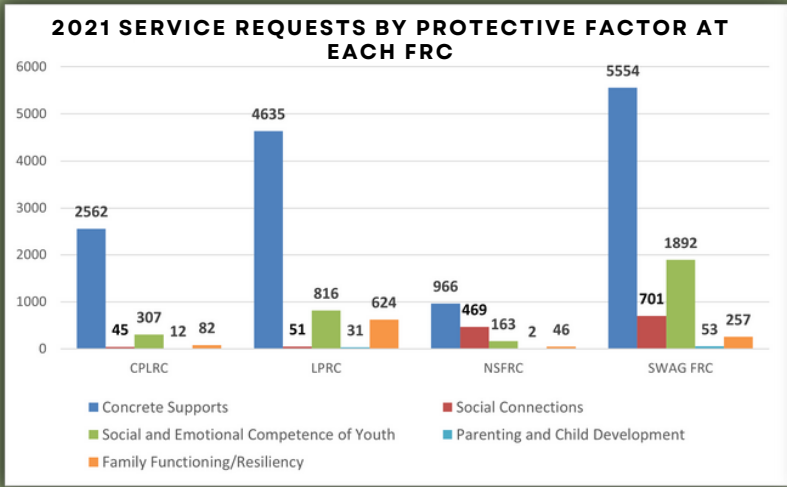
CONCRETE SUPPORTS/BASIC NEEDS

Each of our sites provide a number of concrete supports, both on-site or referral-based. These include emergency food pantries, food distributions, clothing closets, baby bags with child safety information, diapers, hygiene items, and more. Concrete supports are our most frequently accessed services and are used to build trust, reduce stressors, and help families reach a place where they can take next steps towards self-sufficiency.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS

Our Family Resource Centers have renewed their focus on garnering the community’s voice through Community Advisory Councils. Two of our sites, SWAG FRC and TCCRC, have existing, long-term advisory boards, the SW Advocacy Group and Tri-County Community Resources, that help provide guidance and support related to daily operations and programming. Similarly, NSFRC works with their own Resource Center Advisory Council, which was implemented prior to opening. Beginning in 2022, CPLRC began development of a Parent & Community Advisory Council, developing protocols, recruiting members, and hosting regular meetings. This group is now working on their first project together, revitalizing their Community Garden, involving adults and children. LPRC also has plans to re-establish their Parent & Community Advisory Council in 2023.

2021 RESOURCE CENTER SERVICE UTILIZATION DATA

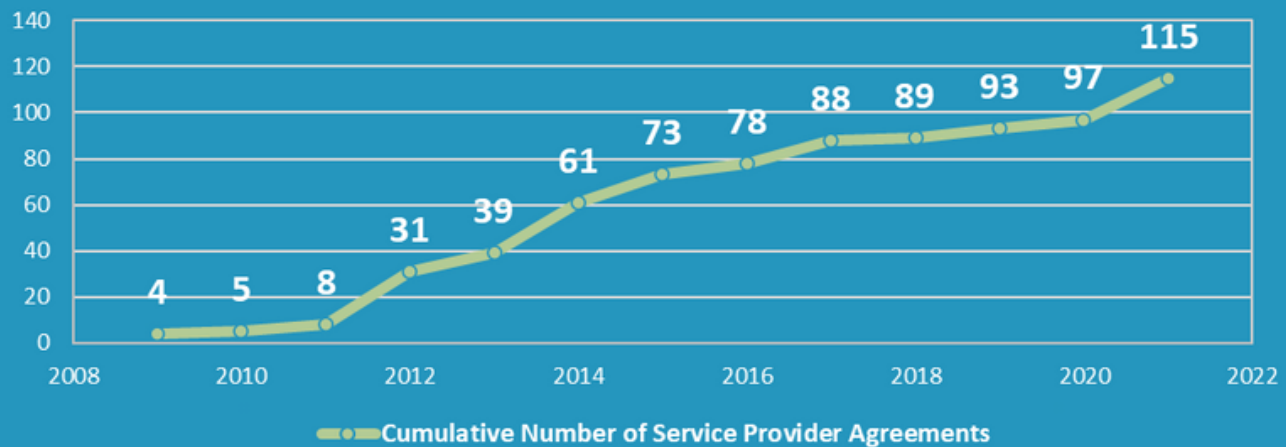


Partnership for Strong Families Service Provider Agreements (2009-2021)

The Partnership for Strong Families (PSF) Resource Center (RC) model is a multi-system collaborative, with representation across five sectors (public, business, philanthropy, community, and nonprofit). These collaborations help PSF Resource Centers assist communities who have historically had limited access to family support services.

Over time, a network of 115 community partnerships were initiated across three of PSF's Family Resource Centers, Library Partnership Resource Center (LPRC), SWAG Family Resource Center (SWAG FRC), and Cone Park Library Resource Center (CPLRC). Every service provided at the FRCs is free and responsive to the needs of the surrounding community. In addition to partners with official agreements, there are many providers that deliver one-time events and provide support through sponsorship, co-event planning, and tabling.

CUMULATIVE NUMBER OF SERVICE PROVIDER AGREEMENTS INITIATED BY YEAR (2009-2021)



As of 2021, there have been an average of 9 agreements added each year. This shows a 91% retention rate on agreements over 13 years. This speaks highly of PSF's FRC staff's ability to develop and sustain relationships that provide direct services to families in need.

EXAMPLES OF SERVICE TYPES, BY SECTOR

PUBLIC

- PHONE ASSISTANCE – EVENT PROVIDED BY A GOVERNMENT ENTITY CREATED TO PROVIDE FREE PHONES TO LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS
- HEALTH INFO EVENT – PROVIDED BY UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, PROVIDING HEALTH RELATED INFORMATION AND IMMUNIZATIONS

BUSINESS

- CAPOEIRA – BRAZILIAN MARTIAL ARTS PROGRAM PROVIDED TO CHILDREN FROM A PRIVATE BUSINESS

PHILANTHROPIC

- BABY BAG SERVICE – PRIVATE DONORS PURCHASE ITEMS AND CREATE BABY BAGS FOR NEW AND EXPECTING MOTHERS
- NOTARY SERVICES – PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL PROVIDING THIS FREE SERVICE IN THE RESOURCE CENTERS

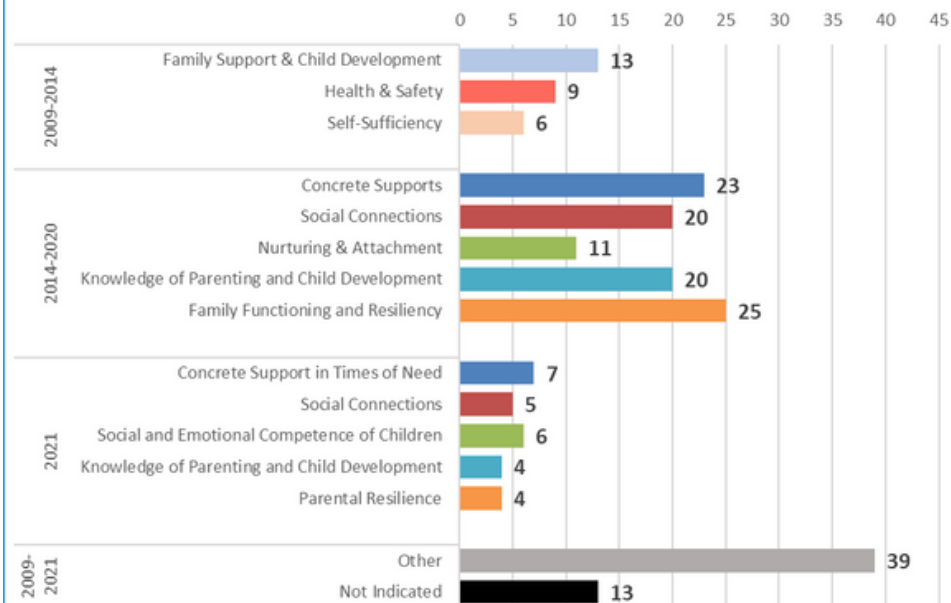
COMMUNITY

- PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT – COMMUNITY MEETINGS HELD TO ENHANCE AND PRESERVE THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES

NONPROFIT

- GIRLS ON THE RUN – A NATIONAL NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT STRENGTHENS THIRD- TO EIGHTH GRADE GIRLS' SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL SKILLS.
- KEEP ALACHUA BEAUTIFUL IS A SUBSIDIARY OF KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL, PROVIDE WEEKLY PROGRAMMING TO HELP BEAUTIFY, CONSERVE RESOURCES, RECYCLE, EDUCATE AND PRESERVE THE COMMUNITY'S ENVIRONMENT

Active agreements by category/protective factor time frame



This chart shows some agreements are listed more than once as many agreements include multiple services to patrons and indicate multiple categories or protective factors from services provided by the agency.

FOCUSING ON ACTION:

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES SELF-ASSESSMENT (SFSA) - ACTION ITEM UPDATES

The SFSA Process

The purpose of the SFSA process was to evaluate our Resource Centers' practices, programs, and services based on the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework. During Summer of 2021, each of PSF's 3 Resource Centers located in Gainesville identified unique teams, composed of staff members, volunteers, community collaborators from partner organizations, and Community Ambassadors who utilize services and programs at their respective resource center. The team members completed a survey with questions related to the implementation of each protective factor. The SFSA team came together for critical discussion and dialog to assess each item and develop action items to address any gaps in programs, services, or resource center practices. Since that time, staff have been working to implement action items with the allotted resources and staff capacities. Updates on action items and plans were categorized into key themes determined by each SFSA team and are provided in this newsletter. Preliminary information about the SFSA Process for NorthStar Family Resource Center, which was completed at the end of 2022, can be found on page 14.

Resource Center staff have focused on enhancing services and supports for all themes. Action items are listed with the protective factor SFSA report from which they were developed, however in some cases action items may overlap with another protective factor or theme. It is important to recognize that attainment of select action items may be impacted given staff capacities and/or available resources. However, resource center staff, community partners, and community ambassadors will continue to work collaboratively to do their best to achieve the best solution for each action item.

Core Meanings of the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Protective Factors

- 1. Concrete Support in Times of Need**
Access to concrete support and services that address a family's needs and help minimize stress caused by challenges.
- 2. Social Connections**
Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, and spiritual support.
- 3. Social and Emotional Competence of Children**
Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions, and establish and maintain relationships.
- 4. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development**
Understanding child development and parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development.
- 5. Parental Resilience**
Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity, and trauma.

¹ Center for the Study of Social Policy. (2015). Core Meanings of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors. The contents of this project are funded by the Children's Bureau, under grant #90CA1868. The contents of this project do not necessarily represent the official views of the Children's Bureau.

CONE PARK LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTER ACTION ITEM KEY THEME UPDATES



THEME ONE: PARENT FOCUSED ADVISORY COUNCIL AND PROGRAMMING.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Explore and consider a formal collaboration between Cone Park Library Resource Center (CPLRC) and the Cone Park Library (CPL) to establish a parent/community advisory council (PCAC).

Action Item Update: CPLRC's PCAC has been meeting routinely since September 2022. After several months of vacancies, the Cone Park library branch manager position has been filled. The CPLRC's Manager will meet with the new branch manager and introduce the PCAC, extending an invitation to join.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Efforts should be made (perhaps in consultation with a newly formed PCAC) to explore the collaborative development and implementation of possible parent-focused activities/events aimed at stress relief.

Action Item Update: In response to patron requests, CPLRC has started a Zumba class and gardening group which provide social connections and reduce stress.



THEME TWO: INCREASE AWARENESS TARGETED TO FATHERS, INCREASE AWARENESS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA AND INCREASE AWARENESS OF STAFF TRAINING.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Create a joint marketing strategy between CPLRC and other resource centers to market directly to fathers.

Action Item Update: The CPLRC Manager will reach out to the Director of Resource Centers to discuss plans for collaborating with other FRCs on creating a joint marketing strategy focused on fathers.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Develop a coordinated and collaborative strategy for engagement and dissemination of program/service/activity information that is relatable to local families with the goal of creating buy-in and enhancing the utilization of the CPLRC and CPL.

Action Item Update: The CPL Branch Manager, who acted in an interim capacity since October 2022, was officially hired at the beginning of January 2023. Having previously worked at the Cone Park branch, she has a good relationship with the CPLRC Manager. Together they planned the 2022 Fall Festival and work in a collaborative fashion on afterschool events. As time goes by, further integration of collaboration and engagement strategies may develop.

Social Connections Action Item: Determine which trainings associated with diversity and other issues (including, but not limited to, mental health) that staff receive that might have relevance for an expanded group of participants (including Community Ambassadors, other patrons, etc.).

Action Item Update: CPLRC has provided some appropriate webinar links to PCAC member and will continue to consider this as training opportunities become available.



THEME THREE: INCREASED ENGAGEMENT WITH MALES/FATHERS, NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS, LOCAL FAMILIES, LIBRARY OUTDOOR RESOURCES AND VIRTUAL SPACES.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Explore options for connecting immigrant and refugee families to services in their own language.

Action Item Update: The CPLRC manager will discuss with the CPL Branch Manager possible strategies for connecting with immigrant and refugee families.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Explore how outdoor resources can be utilized for individual and health-based activities targeted towards caregivers. Consider (for example) the development of a regular program such as a formal or informal track league.

Action Item Update: CPLRC plans on having its second annual On Track Fitness Health and Wellness Fair in 2023. This event promotes utilizing Cone Park's outdoor resources while giving health advice. Zumba is held on-site, and the gardening group also utilizes the property's free resources.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Provide more father focused programming at CPLRC.

Action Item Update: The CPLRC Manager will discuss with the CPL Branch Manager possible programming options to better engage fathers.

Social Connections Action Item: Explore social media utilization strategies for CPLRC (perhaps in collaboration with CPL) as a means of engaging/connecting with patrons and their families (including marginalized groups) and disseminating information regarding program and resource supports/opportunities.

Action Item Update: Outside of the "Family Resource Centers" Facebook page and PSF's wider social media strategies, the limitation has been reached in exploring social media utilization strategies.

Social Connections Action Item: Explore how (structure and feasibility given benefits and concerns) social media groups can supplement existing face-to-face activities and help foster meaningful connections among participants.

Action Item Update: While CPLRC staff encourage patrons to make their own social media groups, there is a staffing limitation to monitoring such groups, which prohibits CPLRC staff from making or hosting them.



THEME FOUR: BUILDING CAPACITY BY ENHANCING STAFF AND SPACE RESOURCES.

Concrete Supports in Times of Need, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, and Social and Emotional Action Item: Explore the possibilities of enhancing/expanding staff and space resources so that CPLRC can ensure a maximization of potential service and support-benefits linked to protective factors.

Action Item Update: In the first week of December 2022, a long-time patron and volunteer was hired to work part-time through PSF's host agency agreement, created in 2019 with The National Caucus & Center on Black Aging, Inc.

LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP RESOURCE CENTER ACTION ITEM KEY THEME UPDATES



THEME ONE: SUPPORT PARENT CONNECTIONS WITH INFORMAL PEER MENTORS, PARENTS WITH SIMILAR EXPERIENCES, AND PARENT-LED GROUPS.

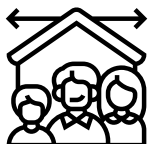
Parental Resilience Action Item: Continue involvement of peer mentors in future LPRC programs and events.

Action Item Update: The LPRC manager is planning to reintroduce events including a Mother's Day event, financial fitness workshops, and an employment conference and job fair, to provide patrons the opportunity to connect and engage with one another.

Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development

Action Item: Future Parent and Community Advisory Council could poll parents to assess if there is an interest in parent-led discussion and support groups.

Action Item Update: With LPRC experiencing significant staff changes over the past 6 months, the creation of the Parent and Community Advisory Council has been postponed. There are plans to begin re-development of the PCAC in 2023.



THEME TWO: BUILD CULTURAL CAPACITY THROUGH STAFF TRAININGS, ACCESS TO TRANSLATION, AND DIVERSE REPRESENTATION.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Continue with current efforts to expand LPRC's ability to provide services and information in other languages (primarily Spanish).

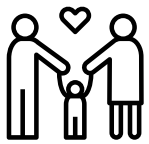
Action Item Update: Rack cards with information about PSF's Resource Center services continue to be available in Spanish at all locations including LPRC. Ongoing efforts are currently being made to locate additional resources for our Spanish speaking patrons.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Continue and expand targeted advertising of job postings to ensure open positions are seen by more individuals who reflect the cultural groups served by the LPRC and other Resource Centers.

Action Item Update: Efforts continue to be made to increase diversity where job opportunities are posted, including at the LPRC job board, on PSF social media accounts, and the Gainesville Black Professionals Association. Staff are also developing relationships with recruiters to bring more job opportunities to patrons.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Work with PSF leadership to pursue possible trainings led by partner organizations (such as the Pride Center of NCFL and the Rural Women's Health Project). Continue encouraging participation in training in cultural awareness and how to improve work with diverse families.

Action Item Update: PSF is currently planning a webinar focused on LGBTQ+ topics for all staff in January. Staff completed a training hosted by the Gainesville Immigrant Neighbor Inclusion (GINI) Initiative and the Rural Women's Health Project in July 2022 that focused on working with diverse families. In June 2022, all LPRC staff participated in an equity and inclusion workshop through Proximity People. LPRC's Family Support Facilitator completed a training in July 2022 by the Gainesville Immigrant Neighbor Inclusion (GINI) Initiative and the Rural Women's Health Project on providing culturally competent, linguistically accessible services to work with diverse families. More trainings will be explored in 2023.



THEME THREE: INCREASE PARENT ENGAGEMENT BY IMPROVING MESSAGING TO THE COMMUNITY, REMOVING BARRIERS TO PROGRAM ATTENDANCE, AND ENGAGING WITH FATHERS/MALE CAREGIVERS.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Build on existing communication methods to improve messaging and increase awareness of the LPRC as a trustworthy place that treats parents with respect and acknowledges their strengths.

Action Item Update: LPRC's listserv has increased to over 550 families that receive updates and information regarding events, programs, and resources. Information is posted on PSF's social media accounts, reaching up to 10,000 followers across platforms. LPRC works with Library leadership to promote information regarding the Resource Center on the Library's website and blog.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Collaborate with community partners who have successfully engaged fathers and other male caregivers to gather insight and ideas for improving engagement at LPRC.

Action Item Update: Events focused on fathers and male caregivers, such as the Father's and Men's Appreciation Gift Giveaway, are being planned for 2023.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Work with PSF and Library Partnership Branch leadership to address barriers to providing more child activities during LPRC programs and events.

Action Item Update: The managers of the Library Partnership Branch and LPRC meet monthly to discuss programming opportunities and upcoming events. Providing childcare during events will continue and be expanded. LPRC has hosted events such as the Afterschool Holiday Party and the Cookies and Cards Valentine's Day Party that provide activities for both children and their parents.



THEME FOUR: AMPLIFY COMMUNITY MEMBER VOICES IN ADVISORY COUNCIL LEADERSHIP, CONFERENCES AND COMMUNITY MEETINGS, AND PROVIDING FEEDBACK ON LPRC SERVICES.

Social Connections Action Item: Continue current efforts to develop the existing CAC into a Parent and Community Advisory Council for the LPRC. Hold an interest meeting for potential members by the end of 2021.

Action Item Update: With LPRC experiencing significant staff changes over the past 6 months, the creation of the Parent and Community Advisory Council has been postponed. There are plans to revisit the development of the PCAC in 2023.

Social Connections Action Item: Increase completion of LPRC satisfaction surveys by creating the option to complete surveys digitally. Display a QR code for the surveys on signs and flyers in the Resource Center.

Action Item Update: A digital version of the survey continues to be available and a flyer with the QR code is displayed inside LPRC. Printed satisfaction surveys are available at the reception desk at all hours and staff encourage patrons to complete the survey when they access services.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Invite parent and community leaders from the SFSA team and future PCAC to attend and/or present to key stakeholders during annual grantee meetings and community meetings.

Action Item Update: It is anticipated that these actions will be implemented with the re-development of the PCAC in 2023.

SWAG FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER ACTION ITEM KEY THEME UPDATES



THEME ONE: DEVELOP PEER-TO-PEER LED TRAININGS, A SPEAKER SERIES, AND PARENT SUPPORT NIGHTS.

Overarching Action Item: Create a dynamic speaker series and/or programs to reach two audiences - parents and youth.

Action Item Update: To create a dynamic speaker series, the SWAG FRC has partnered with Anthony Ray; creator of the “Dad, can we talk?” podcast series to provide engagement with fathers within the Southwest Gainesville community once a month beginning on February 16th, 2023, during the Community Dinner event.

Social Connections Action Item: Explore opportunities for the development of parent support groups and mentoring opportunities that are parent centered. Consideration may be given to the implementation of a “parent support night” following discussions with parents and Community Ambassadors.

Action Item Update: To support the development of parent support groups and parent centered mentoring opportunities, a forum where parents from the community can come together to receive social support and peer mentorship is being developed. This parent group gathering will begin within the next three months.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Explore means and mechanisms for Community Ambassadors to participate in training opportunities.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC is reaching out to local mental and physical health agencies to train community members, including community ambassadors on mental health first aid and standard first aid. A CPR/First Aid course for children will take place on February 2nd, 2023. Additionally, an adult CPR/AED training course will take place on February 16th, 2023.

Concrete Supports in Times of Need Action Item: Explore a peer-to-peer training program, created by and for community members, related to getting needed supports and resources and how to act in a collective manner to advocate for each other.

Action Item Update: The SWAG FRC team, with support from the SWAG Board are currently working to establish a Parent & Community Advisory Council (PCAC) within the next six months. A PCAC is being piloted at another site and some staff have received formal training in Parent Advisory Committees. These lessons will be used in the developed of SWAG FRC’s PCAC. The focus of the PCAC will be to provide a community-voice and guidance related to programming and events, while developing the leadership skills of those participating. Once the PCAC is established, the plan is for participants to have access to trainings provided by community agencies on relevant topics.



THEME TWO: INCREASE AWARENESS BY UTILIZING KEY COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND IMPROVING MESSAGING TO THE COMMUNITY.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Utilize community members to help raise awareness of the SWAG FRC.

Action Item Update: The SWAG FRC manager and SWAG Board are currently working to establish a Parent & Community Advisory Council (PCAC) that will play a role in increasing awareness of the SWAG FRC and associated events.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Continue evaluating the current engagement and outreach strategies to improve messaging to parents/families/households regarding the agency (SWAG FRC).

Action Item Update: As suggested by the SFSA team, in December of 2022, the SWAG FRC manager began work with the SWAG Board to reach out to an increased number of local landlords and leasing offices of apartment complexes to formalize a relationship where landlords and leasing offices are more consistently disseminating information regarding the SWAG FRC.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Formalize a communication channel between the SWAG Board and the members of the Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Team.

Action Item Update: Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Team and SWAG Board members have not yet formalized methods of communication, however due to other active collaborations, informal communication is occurring.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Action Item: Explore the means and mechanisms by which the community can become more aware of parenting and child development supports available at the Resource Center.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC will implement Family Reading Nights, UFLI curriculum, Girls on the Run, and increase word-of-mouth of child development programming. Family Reading Nights will begin within the next six months. UFLI curriculum will begin implementation on February 21st, 2023, and Girls on the Run will begin on February 6th, 2023.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Action Item: Help spread awareness of social and emotional programming by advertising the open-door policy on applications for children's programming. Open-door policy reflects consistent efforts of staff to communicate with parents that they are welcome to approach staff at any time with questions or concerns regarding their children and programming and supports available for children at the FRC and in the community.

Action Item Update: This language was added to homework help applications that were available beginning January 2023. Furthermore, the Academic Enrichment Coordinator continues to verbalize and demonstrate the open-door policy to all parents whose children are involved in child development programming



THEME THREE: INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH SWAG FRC PROGRAMS, LOCAL BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS, FATHERS/MALES, DIVERSE POPULATIONS, AND PATRONS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR PROGRAMS.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Increase engagement with local businesses and schools to promote the Resource Center.

Action Item Update: The new SWAG FRC manager plans to establish relationships with schools near SWAG FRC within the next six months. New relationships have been developed with companies including Gas South, Gainesville Health and Fitness, and Exit Reality. All the aforementioned businesses provided either volunteer, cash, and/or other gift assistance.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Recruit more fathers to utilize the services and programs at the SWAG FRC.

Action Item Update: In December 2022, the SWAG FRC manager began planning the addition of a dynamic speaker series to recruit more fathers to utilize the center. On February 16th, 2023, Anthony Ray, creator of the “Dad, Can We Talk?” podcast will begin a monthly dynamic speaking series during SWAG FRC’s Community Dinner.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Strengthen partnerships with local organizations such as Meridian Behavioral Health to provide mental health support for the community.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC continues its relationship with Meridian Behavioral Healthcare to provide mental health support to the community. The SWAG FRC manager is currently working to re-establish a partnership with University of Florida’s Equal Access Clinic to also promote and provide mental health support.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Action Item: Ensure that value is placed on peer-to-peer programs and services for parents in the community.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC has re-energized efforts to collect patron satisfaction surveys to ensure feedback is received regarding programs and services that are most needed and desired by parents and other community members. Additionally, peer-to-peer programs for parents in the community are currently being developed including a “Parent Café” and the potential for other parent centered social gatherings.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Create a Youth Advisory Council (YAC) to advise the SWAG FRC.

Action Item Update: After an assessment done by the previous SWAG FRC manager, it was determined that the creation of a YAC would require additional staff and funding, which the SWAG FRC does not currently have available.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Host social connection events with themes catered towards fathers

Action Item Update: The SWAG FRC manager has evaluated patron satisfaction surveys and met with the SWAG Board to determine the most appropriate social connection events that also engage fathers in the community.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children Action Item: Enhance understanding and appreciation for individuals from different cultures, ethnicities, sexual orientations, languages, and cultural expressions; and include volunteers and interns in cultural competence trainings.

Action Item Update: The SWAG FRC Staff utilize a warm and nonjudgmental approach to assisting and advocating for patrons. This approach helps staff to understand and appreciate all individuals of various backgrounds, sexual orientations, languages, and cultures. Several staff members speak at least two languages, SWAG has “All Are Welcome” LGBTQ+ stickers throughout the office, and on January 20th, 2023, staff attended a LGBTQ+ Inclusion webinar.

Social Connections Action Item: Explore the creation of a Community Advisory Council (CAC) with broad representation of community members who are motivated to serve the community and enhance supports for its members. Special attention should be paid to ensure the inclusion of fathers and grandfathers as part of this advisory committee.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC and the SWAG Board are currently working to recruit and establish a Parent & Community Advisory Council. The SWAG FRC and President of the SWAG Board have contacted local patrons, parents, and community leaders to foster community relations and form a Community Advisory Council. Special attention will be paid to ensure the inclusion of fathers and grandfathers.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children Recommendation: Enhance trainings to include competence of environmental and economic factors and how these factors play a role in social and emotional development.

Recommendation Update: Within the next six months, SWAG FRC will offer a Mental Health First Aid training. This training will include environmental and economic factors that play a role in social and emotional development.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Create a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) or Community Advisory Community (CAC) to advise the SWAG FRC.

Action Item Update: Within the next six months, SWAG FRC will offer a Mental Health First Aid training. This training will include environmental and economic factors that play a role in social and emotional development.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Explore what the organizational framework would be in terms of engagement and program planning that involves patrons.

Action Item Update: The Parent & Community Advisory Council, once established, will provide direct input into engagement and program planning activities. Additionally, patron satisfaction surveys continue to be used as a method of providing patron input into engagement and program planning.



THEME FOUR: BEGIN HOSTING SOCIAL CONNECTION EVENTS, COMMUNITY EVENTS AND PARENT-ONLY ACTIVITIES, ONCE APPROPRIATE, CONSIDERING SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Host a community event to talk about gun violence that can serve to help connect the community with grief counselors.

Action Item Update: The SWAG FRC team, along with other site managers, are planning to host a gun violence awareness event in 2023. The proposed structure of this event is intended to be similar to a block party with other community partners, prizes, and vendors. Decisions will be made about whether to co-host or hold separate events.

Social Connections Action Item: The SWAG FRC needs to reinstate and expand social connection/community events once it is safe to do so, given currently safety and public health concerns.

Action Item Update: All social connection and community events have been reinstated.

Social Connections Action Item: Ensure that patrons have supportive and responsive means and mechanisms to openly communicate with and/or inform the staff about any knowledge or skill sets they believe staff should have to better serve the community.

Action Item Update: Patron satisfaction surveys have always been available at the SWAG FRC. Since the last reporting period, there have also been renewed efforts to ensure each visitor is aware of this option to provide feedback and openly communicate with staff so that the community can be better served. These surveys can be completed anonymously, if the patron chooses.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Host social connection events with themes catered towards fathers.

Action Item Update: On February 16th, 2023, Anthony Ray, creator of the “Dad, Can We Talk?” podcast will begin a monthly dynamic speaking series during SWAG FRC’s Community Dinner to increase social connection of fathers.

FOCUSING ON ACTION:

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES SELF-ASSESSMENT (SFSA) PROCESS FOR THE NORTHSTAR FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (NSFRC)

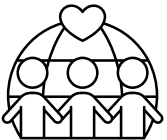


The purpose of the SFSA process was to evaluate NSFRC practices, programs, and services based on the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework. The NSFRC's SFSA team consisted of 2 direct service staff members, 1 volunteer, 2 community collaborators from partner organizations, and 3 Community Ambassadors who utilize services and programs at the NSFRC. Team members completed a survey with questions related to the implementation of each protective factor at the NSFRC. The SFSA team came together for critical discussion and dialog to assess each item and develop action items to address any gaps in programs, services, or Family Resource Center practices for three sessions between November and December of 2022. NSFRC staff and volunteers will work to implement action items with the allotted resources and staff capacities and report back to the SFSA team with updates in six months. Action items and plans were determined by the NSFRC SFSA team and categorized into four key themes, listed below. While reports with defined action items are still being finalized, some quotes from team members within each theme are highlighted here.



THEME ONE: DEVELOP NEW FRC PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SERVICES TO PATRONS.

"There is a need to build upon NSFRC strengths and focus on community-based change, first by building trusting relationships and collaborations with and between parents and community partners... community-based advocacy could be done that supported families and family leadership in said efforts."



THEME TWO: EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY ISSUES AND ACCESS HELPERS FOR THE FRC.

"Getting the resources out into the community is a good start. Providing needed resources (e.g., concrete resources and parenting supports) helps "build trust in the community" and with families that may eventually contribute to a foundation for enhancing mutual support among families."



THEME THREE: INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH AND SUPPORTS FOR CAREGIVERS, WITH A TARGETED FOCUS ON FATHERS, SINGLE MOTHERS, AND YOUTH EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES.

"...NorthStar FRC is... a caring place to be...people here truly care..." Additionally, supports and services are distributed without stigma, and staff are proactive in responding to patron and family needs in a confidential manner."



THEME FOUR: BUILD CAPACITY TO CONNECT WITH NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS THROUGH ACCESSING LOCAL RESOURCES, STAFF TRAINING, AND CONNECTING WITH LOCAL CHURCHES.

"On October 30th, 2022, the NorthStar FRC manager (Phil Mobley) met with local religious leaders to discuss issues of crime, drugs, and other issues affecting the community. There was an expanded discussion regarding these efforts that were supported by the SFSA Team. These efforts were considered a good start, but it was thought that more could be done to connect with these faithbased organizations that provide supports and services to marginalized populations."

SUCCESS STORIES

LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP RESOURCE CENTER (LPRC) GAINESVILLE, FL (NORTHEAST)

A mother and her family are regular patrons, and the mother reached out due to imminent risk of homelessness. She was staying with a family member; however, the utilities had been disconnected and an eviction notice had been issued. The mother had nowhere else to go and was concerned about losing her job as the result of her lack of housing. FRC staff were able to secure transitional housing for the family through a program that provides housing and additional supports, including case management services, to promote long-term self-sufficiency. The mother was able to cover a portion of the deposit with her income and another partner agency covered the additional costs. The mother is working hard with her case manager through the transitional housing program and is taking steps to earn her GED and apply for a manager position with her current employer.

NORTHSTAR FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (NSFRC) LAKE CITY, FL

A grandmother who adopted two of her grandchildren came seeking support with their care. She was concerned that the children were not listening and were pushing boundaries at home and school. One of the children was struggling academically and the other child was experiencing some minor anger issues. Staff were able to help the grandmother better understand appropriate developmental expectations of the children, along with the impact of past trauma on their behaviors. At the same time, the children attended homework help, receiving academic assistance, rewards for positive behaviors, and informal mentoring from staff and volunteers. The grandmother reported improved behaviors at home and positive reports from the school. The children continue to actively participate with afterschool programming, along with other extracurricular activities within the community.



SWAG FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (SWAG FRC) GAINESVILLE, FL (SOUTHWEST)

Through a generous community donation, SWAG FRC is providing extra supports for a limited number of children with identified or suspected learning disabilities. Two children recently graduated from the program, after completing bi-weekly sessions with a speech pathologist at SWAG FRC, and the results were amazing! The children improved both their reading efficiency and literacy skills. One child was initially reading 13 words per minute and upon program completion was reading 70 words per minute. Another child moved from the 24th percentile with their literacy skills to between the 79th and 90th percentile. We look forward to expanding this program in 2023.

CONE PARK LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTER (CPLRC) GAINESVILLE, FL (SOUTHEAST)

A patron was observed sitting alone outside of CPLRC. Concerned that the patron may be in some type of distress, a staff person went outside to speak with her. Sitting down, at the same level of the patron, the staff person was eventually able to engage the patron in a conversation in which the patron shared a loss of hope and feelings of harming herself. Staying with the patron for continued support, the staff person contacted law enforcement and requested a response to include a mental health professional. The patron later returned to share that she was at a very low point on the day she visited the Resource Center, and she was very grateful for the kind words, encouragement, and support she was provided - this intervention was a life changing moment for her.



WHAT'S AHEAD IN 2023!

- *FOCUS GROUPS AT EACH OF OUR RESOURCE CENTERS
- *ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM OUR OUTCOME EVALUATION ACTIVITIES
- *CONTINUE TO REFINE AND ENHANCE THE SERVICE AND PROGRAMMING AT OUR RESOURCE CENTERS
- *INITIATE A SECOND WAVE OF THE STRENGTHENING FAMILIES SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS