



# GEORGIA GUIDE FOR POWERFUL PARENTING

**Champions for Parents:** This Brief boosts the power of our community partners to elevate the opportunities for parenting potential. The tool will categorize available resources to 1) simplify access and 2) activate community partners to leverage powerful parenting statewide.

We define power in the following context:

- Parents are powerful models for their developing children.
- Each generation of parents become experts in their own way, adapting their skills and knowledge to meet the unique challenges they face.
- Community partners and state agencies are powerful influences for the families they engage and support.
- Parenting curriculum can be a powerful mechanism for communicating best practices and developmentally appropriate expectations with Georgia families.

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**Commitment:** We are committed to a strength-based focus that parents come to the table equipped to take care of their children. We don't make assumptions that all families need the same thing at the same time. Champions for Parents is the lens in which we approach this work and how we lift families up as capable of taking care of their children when given the needed supports.

### Strategic Takeaways

- Parents are key to ensuring children's needs are met. Parents are what is best for their children and by empowering our parents, we empower our children.
- Community partners interact with various Children's Cabinets members through direct, indirect, or informal controls.
- Members can strengthen how they impact parents and children in the community, by supporting programs that have already been proven to work and meet the needs of the local community.
- Community partner agencies are powerful influences for the families they engage and support. Parenting curriculum can be a powerful mechanism for communicating best practices and developmentally appropriate expectations with Georgia families
- For this work, we
  - recognize that parents have power and are powerful individuals.
  - want to utilize what you are doing to assist others.
  - recognize that parents are powerful models for their developing child
- Each state agency plays a crucial role in engaging with families and providing them with the necessary services. State agencies can maximize their impact in the following ways:
  - *Service Providing Agencies:* These agencies can offer parenting programs that provide a comprehensive framework for families. These programs can equip parents with the necessary skills and knowledge to raise their children effectively, thereby maximizing the impact of the services offered.
  - *Education Agencies:* By expanding their efforts to engage with student parents and offering tailored programs, these agencies can significantly improve the outcomes for families. Programs could include flexible scheduling, childcare services, or additional academic support, all of which can help student parents balance their responsibilities and succeed academically.
  - *Justice Focused Agencies:* With a "second chance" perspective, these agencies can customize programs for families that have interacted with the justice system. These programs could focus on rehabilitation, community reintegration, and providing the necessary support to prevent recidivism.
- When tailoring their programs and services to the specific needs of the families they serve, state agencies can make a significant positive impact on their communities. It's all about understanding the unique challenges each family faces and providing the right support to help them overcome those challenges.



## Purpose

The purpose of the “Leveraging Community Partners to Improve Parenting Skills Training” project is to provide initial research on the awareness and implementation of parenting skills training programs for families across the state of Georgia.

## Why it Matters

Research shows that early positive and supportive interactions with the adults in a children’s life (parents, grandparents, other caregivers etc.) can make key differences in the development of a child.<sup>1</sup> Parents want what is best for their children and try to be the best for them.

Every child has different needs that can only be met by their parent. Parenting skills training focuses on enhancing parenting practices, behaviors, and discipline techniques along with learning age-appropriate child development skills and milestones to promote positive interactions between parents and children. Parenting skills must be adapted based on the child. Barriers of life, such as personal trauma, job security, impacts a parent’s ability to engage in the best possible way with their children. As a community, we want our children to thrive which includes – physical health and safety, social competence, and cognitive competence. As a parents voice a need for help, it’s our duty as a community to listen and meet them where they are and encourage them.

Having research supported community programming available for parents who are seeking help is vital to meeting a voiced need from the community that will impact generations and empower our parents across the state.

## Research

What research is available that supports parenting skills training programs? How can we, as state partners, strengthen communities’ partners ability to implement these programs?

Parents assist children in developing and honing their knowledge and abilities, setting a course for their health and well-being from childhood to adulthood. While styles of parenting vary, certain practices prove effective across a variety of families and environments, such as:<sup>2</sup>

- Following the child’s lead and responding in a predictable way
- Showing warmth and sensitivity
- Having routines and household rules
- Sharing books and talking with children
- Supporting health and safety

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<sup>1</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education; Board on Children, Youth, and Families; Committee on Supporting the Parents of Young Children; Breiner H, Ford M, Gadsden VL, editors. Parenting Matters: Supporting Parents of Children Ages 0-8. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2016 Nov 21. 2, Parenting Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

<sup>2</sup> *IBID.*



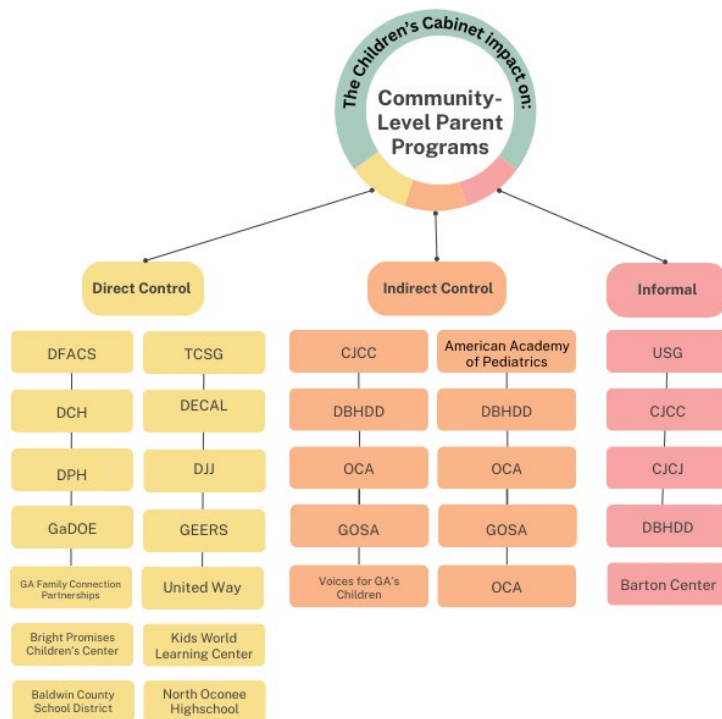
- Using appropriate discipline without harshness

In addition to general parenting 101, there are interventions that can support parents who may need additional support. While, again, parenting may vary, there have also been evidence-based practices that have been proven effective, such as:

- Treating parents as equal partners when figuring out which services most benefit them and their children
- Making sure that families with multiple service needs receive coordinated services
- Creating opportunities for parents to connect with and receive support from other parents with similar circumstances
- Addressing trauma in order to prevent it from interfering with parenting and healthy child development
- Making sure that programs are well suited for the diverse cultures of families
- Enhancing efforts to involve fathers

For the context of this project, identifying the role each state partner has with community partners that provide parenting skills training is the first step. Georgia has phenomenal work on the local level being done to support parents. The education available for parents varies depending on where you live. It seems the importance of these services is not determined by one's geographical location. Research showed that every Children's Cabinet member fell into one of three categories – direct, indirect, or informal impact of community partners that provide parenting skills training.

Direct Impact is defined as agencies who directly interact with parents (ex. Provide childcare) or oversee statewide level parenting programs. Indirect Impact is defined as agencies that fund parent programming as part of a larger project, but are not statewide level projects (ex. subgrantee). Informal Impact is defined as agencies that although do not directly or indirectly impact parenting programs, do have a great deal of influence on key stakeholders who come into contact with parents. A detailed breakdown has been provided on as part of the Landscape Review.





## Additional Resources

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Administration for Children and Families has created a program website for evidence-based parent curricula. These programs are primarily for parents of children aged 0-6 years. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/parenting/article/parenting-curricula-review-databases>

The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse has created a website for evidence-based parent curricula. These programs can be found under “address behavior problems in children and adolescents” or “address child abuse and neglect.” These programs are primarily for parents of children aged 0-18 years. [CEBC » Search › Topic Areas › Parent Training Programs \(cebc4cw.org\)](https://cebc4cw.org/search/topic/parent-training-programs)