

How KCSL Helps



Kansas Children's Service League

877-530-5275 | kcsl.org

PARENT LEADERSHIP: Moving Parents Toward Greater Self Sufficiency

Parent leaders play an essential role in Kansas Children's Service League's mission to protect and promote the well-being of children. As an agency, we support parent leadership in all League programs and services. When parents are provided leadership opportunities, they become active participants in advocating for their child, family and communities while realizing their potential for solving parenting and family issues. The Kansas Children's Service League has been viewed as leaders in Kansas and in the nation in promoting and implementing Parent Leadership.

KCSL's Parent Leadership Program model includes:

- **Parent Leadership Cafes:** The Parent Leadership Café is a parent led empowerment activity where parents have the opportunity to share their visions, opinions, future opportunities, successes and insight into how social services, agencies, schools, child care centers and the community can provide higher quality services and support for families.
- **Parents Helping Parents (Circle of Parents®) Support Groups:** The Parents Helping Parents (Circle of Parents®) support group model works to increase protective factors in the prevention of child abuse and neglect and operates from a mutual self-help perspective. The support group model offers group members the opportunity of a solid concrete support system and social connections. In 2010, there were 24 support groups which served 380 parents. 100 percent of the participants reported receiving information and guidance from the group to cope with difficult parenting situations.
- **Parent Leadership Advisory Council:** The Parent Leadership Advisory Council provides guidance to the promotion and embracement of Parent Leadership within the community. Comprised of both practitioners and parents, the council becomes the guiding force regarding parent leadership. They become the enduring promoter, supporter and community entity which guides efforts for "Parent Leadership "in the community.
- **Parents as Leaders Training:** The Parents as Leaders Training offers both practitioners and parents an insight into the Parent Leadership concept and how to successfully implement and promote Parent Leadership within schools, child care centers, agencies and the community.

KCSL's Accomplishments in Parent Leadership:

- **"Creating Effective Parent-Practitioner Partnerships":** This is a new online course offered through the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community -Based Child Abuse and Prevention. The online course, designed and developed by KCSL staff, presents parent leadership as a strengths-based approach with the belief parents can offer valuable insight into programmatic and community decision-making to benefit children and families.
- **Statewide Parent Leadership Advisory Council:** a joint effort with the University of Kansas, this Council provides feedback to the Early Childhood Advocacy Council and the Parent Leadership Conference Committee. It consists of ten parent representatives from different Kansas agencies and organizations.
- **Kansas Parent Leadership Conference:** KCSL serves in a lead role on the Committee for this Conference which attracts over 250 participants annually.
- **The KU Kansas Parent Research Initiative:** utilized information gathered from KCSL Parent Leadership Cafes conducted at the Kansas Parent Leadership Conferences of 2008 and 2009 in their research.
- **Parent Representation on Councils:** KCSL parents serve on the National FRIENDS Parent Advisory Council, Circle of Parents PALS Team and the Kansas Statewide Parent Leadership Advisory Council.
- **Circle of Parents®** has recognized KCSL as the "leader" nationally in Parent Leadership initiatives.
- In 2006, KCSL parent Virginia Sumaya was honored as the National Parent Leader of the Year by Prevent Child Abuse America.
- **"The Role of Parent Mutual Support"** – FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Factsheet #17 – developed by BJ Gore, KCSL.

