

Alabama Families and Communities Embrace the Family Resource Center Model

The family resource center model has proven to be one of the most successful social service models available to communities and families. This model is a resource-friendly, effective manner in which families can access and utilize social services to address their complex issues.

Attributes of this model that champion the successes in helping families include: comprehensiveness and flexibility, individualized support, strengths-based and prevention-focused, collaboration across systems and disciplines, family focused, and relentless problem solving.

Accountability Gives Rise to the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers, Inc.

Alabama's experience with family resource centers in the early 1990's was positive but tenuous. In the Spring of 1999, four centers rallied together to support the important work of family resource centers across the state through 1) the establishment of measurable standards of operation, and 2) through the networking of sites that practice the ideals of highest quality, comprehensive family services. This grassroots effort gave rise to the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers, Inc.

The Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers is an organization of non-profit centers that provides a wide array of services designed to strengthen and support families in Alabama. The purpose of the Alabama Network is to support the development, growth, and continuation of family resource centers by providing technical assistance, training, advocacy, resources, and networking opportunities. Each year, thousands of families receive intensive services at member sites, such as case management, counseling, home visitation, parenting, health, employment readiness, and emergency services. In addition thousands more youth receive services in school and community-based programs sponsored by member sites.

The Alabama Network carefully delineated 25 standards that provide oversight of service delivery, fiscal management, and center administration and accountability. Each standard is specific and measurable, and ensures that the highest quality of service is available to those families seeking assistance from a member site. Membership in the Alabama Network is based on proven implementation and maintenance of each of the 25 standards.

The Alabama Network Receives Legislative Endorsement

In May 2000, the Alabama Legislature passed into law the Alabama Network's 25 standards for family resource centers. This major milestone protects the integrity of Alabama's family resource center model and ensures the highest quality of service for Alabama families.