

Family Connections:

Working with Grandparent
Families to Increase Safety,
Well-Being, & Permanence

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Grandparent Family Connections

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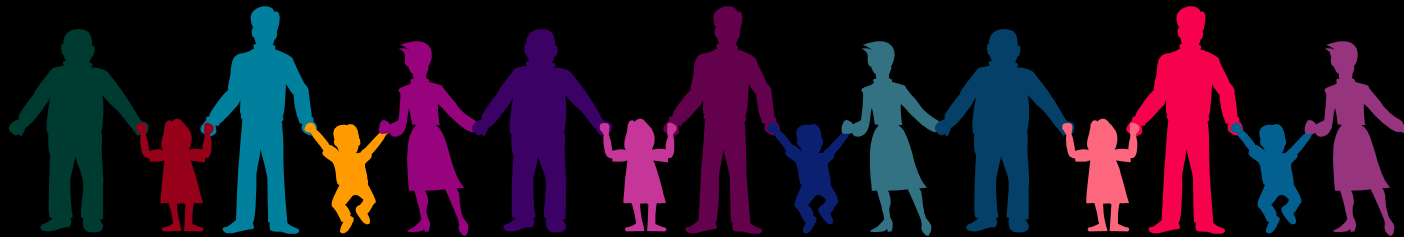
- ❑ UMB Title IVE Education for Public Child Welfare Program
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Overview of Presentation

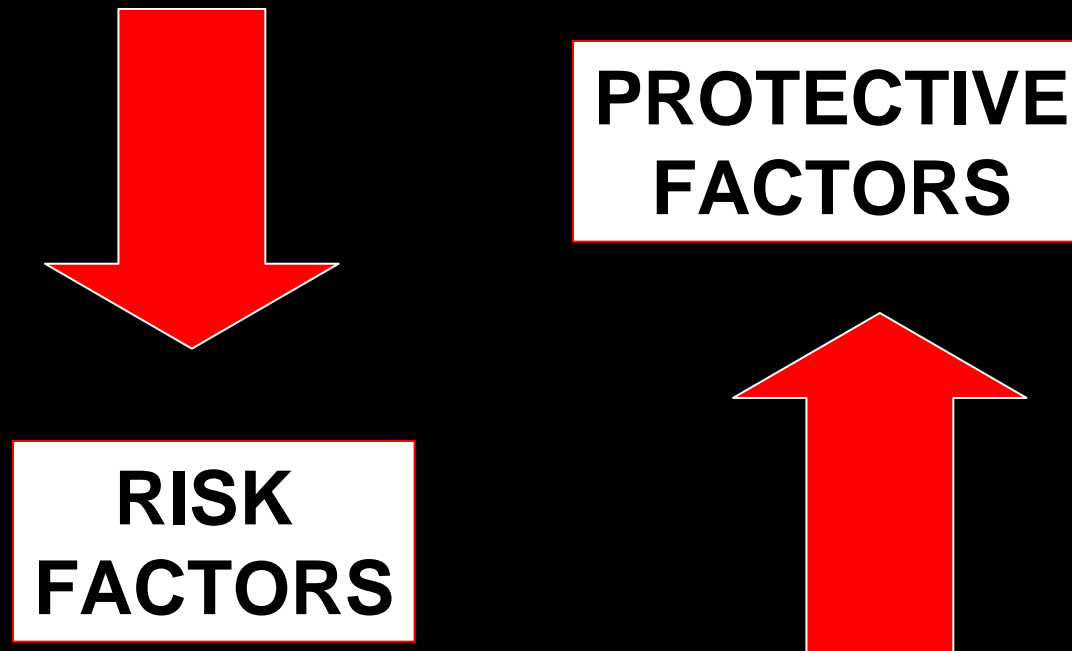
- Background: The Family Connections Program
- Summary of Study Results
- Targeting Intergenerational Families
 - A Growing Trend in Child Welfare
 - Assessment
 - Intervention
 - Integrating Research & Practice
- Implications/Discussion

Family Connections

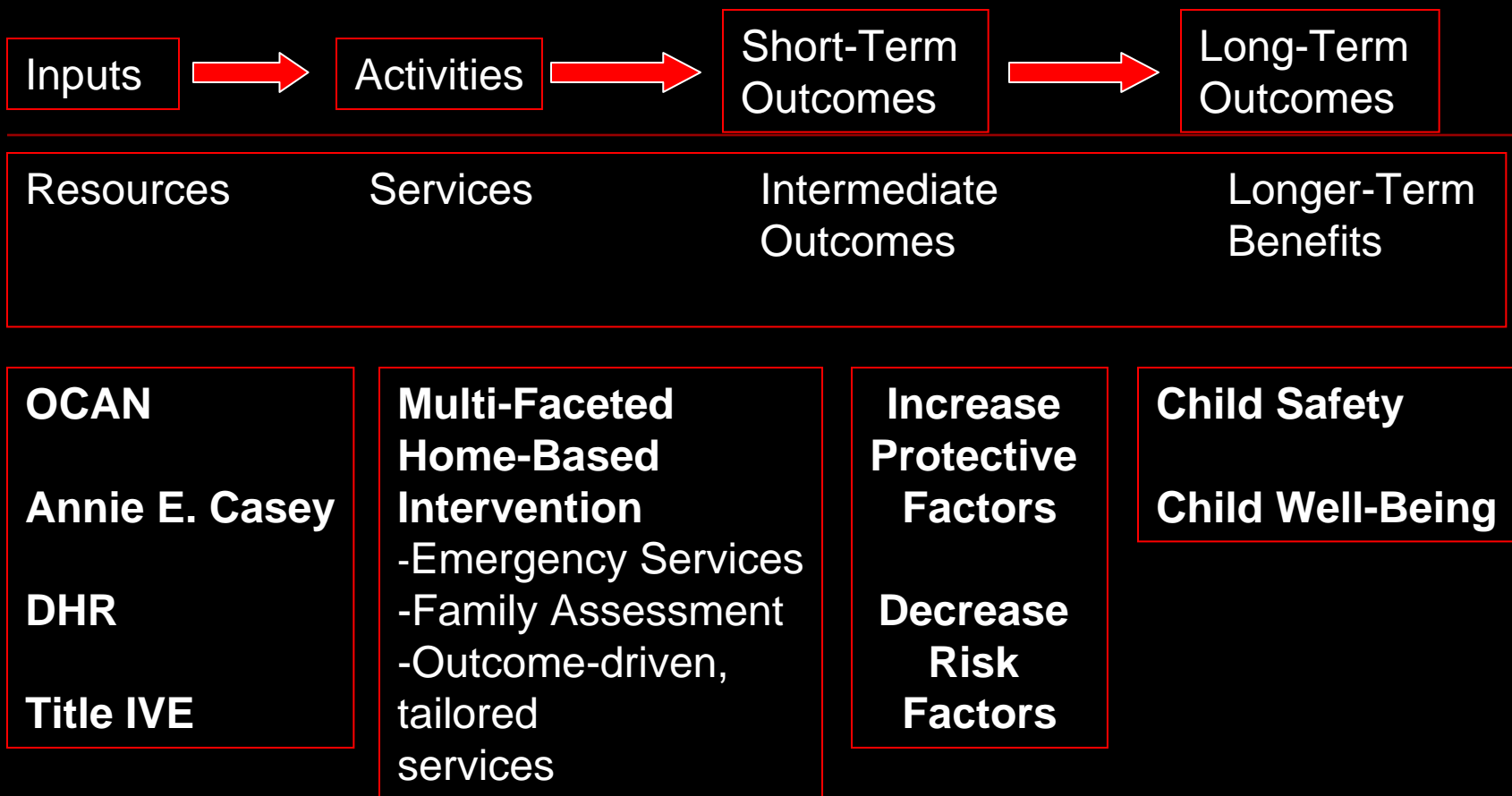
Family Connections promotes the safety and well-being of children and families through family and community services, professional education and training, and research and evaluation.



A Prevention Science Framework



LOGIC MODEL



Summary of Selected Results

- Results for Both Groups
 - Reduction of risk factors
(depressive symptoms, life stress, parenting stress)
 - Enhancement of protective factors
(social support, parenting attitudes, parenting satisfaction)
 - Increase in Child Safety
(physical and psychological care)
 - Increase in Child Well-Being
(child behavior)

Grandparent Family Connections (GFC)

A Replication of the
Family Connections Program funded by
the U.S.D.H.H.S.
Children's Bureau

Intergenerational Families

Why focus on intergenerational families?

Intergenerational families represent a growing trend. Many of these families face challenges that increase the likelihood that families struggle to meet the needs of children and neglect could occur.

Explaining the Trend

A number of factors have contributed to the increase in intergenerational households:

- Increase in drug abuse, especially crack cocaine
- AIDS
- Parental incarceration
- Divorce
- Teen pregnancy
- Rise in single-parent households
- Poverty
- Occurrences of child abuse and neglect

Challenges & Stressors

Accumulation of risk factors, especially among African-American, urban grandparent caregivers:

- More likely to live in poverty (Fuller-Thomson et al., 1997; Kelley, et al., 2000).
- Providing long-term care (Fuller-Thomson et al., 1997).
- Increased psychological distress, social isolation, depression, deteriorating health (Kelley et al., 2000; Minkler & Fuller-Thomson, 1999).
- Intergenerational strain (Climo et al., 1999).
- Complex legal situations (Grant, 2000).

Challenges & Stressors (cont'd)

Grandchildren:

- Victims of abuse and neglect.
- Victims of domestic violence.
- Histories of living in unstable and chaotic households.
- Problem behaviors in school, home, and community.
- Emotional, academic difficulties and/or psychological or physical problems (e.g., Sands & Goldberg-Glen, 2000).

A Population in Need of Services

Though their needs are serious and unique, few programs assist intergenerational families. Grandparent caregivers often fall between the cracks of foster care, aging, education, and disability service systems.

Grandparent Family Connections: An Overview of the Program

Assessment
Intervention
Research

Comprehensive Assessment

Using Instruments to Enhance
Practice and Select Outcomes

Family Assessment Form (FAF)*

- Designed to integrate assessment, service plans, and documentation
- Subscales based on areas of family functioning
- Ecological perspective
- Assesses context
- Strengths and needs based
- Multiple sources of information

*Children's Bureau of Southern California, 1997.

Family Assessment Form

Family Functioning Factors

- Living Conditions
- Financial Conditions
- Supports to Caregivers
- Caregiver/Child Interaction
- Developmental Stimulation
- Interaction Between Caregivers

- (ALSO: Caregiver History & Caregiver Personal Characteristics)

Family Assessment Form

Behavioral Concerns Observational Checklist

- Acting-Out Behaviors
- Inner-Directed Behaviors
- School Behavior Problems
- Health and Development Problems
- Temperament

Research/Clinical Instruments

Families participate in research interviews. Some of the data gathered is shared with service providers...

Family Resource Scale

Dunst, K. J., & Leet, H. E. (1987). Measuring the adequacy of resources in households with young children. *Childcare, Health, and Human Development*, 13, 111-125.

MAST

Selzer, M. L. (1971). The Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test: The quest for a new diagnostic instrument. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 127, 1653-1658.

DAST

Skinner, H. (1982). The Drug Abuse Screening Test. *Addictive Behavior*, 7(4), 363-367.

Research/Clinical Instruments

RAND Health Survey

Ware, J. E., Sherbourne, C. D., & Davies, A. R. (1988). *A short-form general health survey*. Publication P-7444. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

BSI

Derogatis, L. R. (1993). *Brief Symptom Inventory Manual*. Towson, MD: Clinical Research.

CES-D

Radloff, L.S. (1977) The CES-D scale: A self-report depression scale for research in the general population. *Applied Psychological Measurement*, 1, 385-401.

Support Functions Scale

Dunst, C., Trivette, C., & Deal, A.(1988). *Enabling and empowering families: Principles and guidelines for practice*. Cambridge, MA; Brookline Books.

Promising Intervention Strategies

Working With Grandparents to Increase Capacity & Reduce Risk

Attitudes toward change

Parenting attitudes

Parenting competence

Social support

Family functioning

Spirituality

Caregiver health status

Everyday stress

Parental stress

Caregiver mental health

Caregiver drug/alcohol use

Practice Principles

- Ecological developmental framework
- Community outreach
- Family assessment & tailored intervention
- Helping alliance with family
- Empowerment/strengths-based
- Cultural competence
- Outcome-driven service plans

Special Considerations

- Life Stage Issues
- Traumatized Children
- Attachment Challenges
- Intergenerational Conflict
- Legal Issues
- Health Care Issues

Intervention Services (Core FC Services)

- Crisis Intervention
- Emergency Assistance
- Individualized Outcomes-Based Services
- Individual and Family Counseling
- Advocacy
- Case Management
- (GFC) Interdisciplinary Practice

GFC Research Design

Approximately 200 families are randomly assigned to intervention groups:

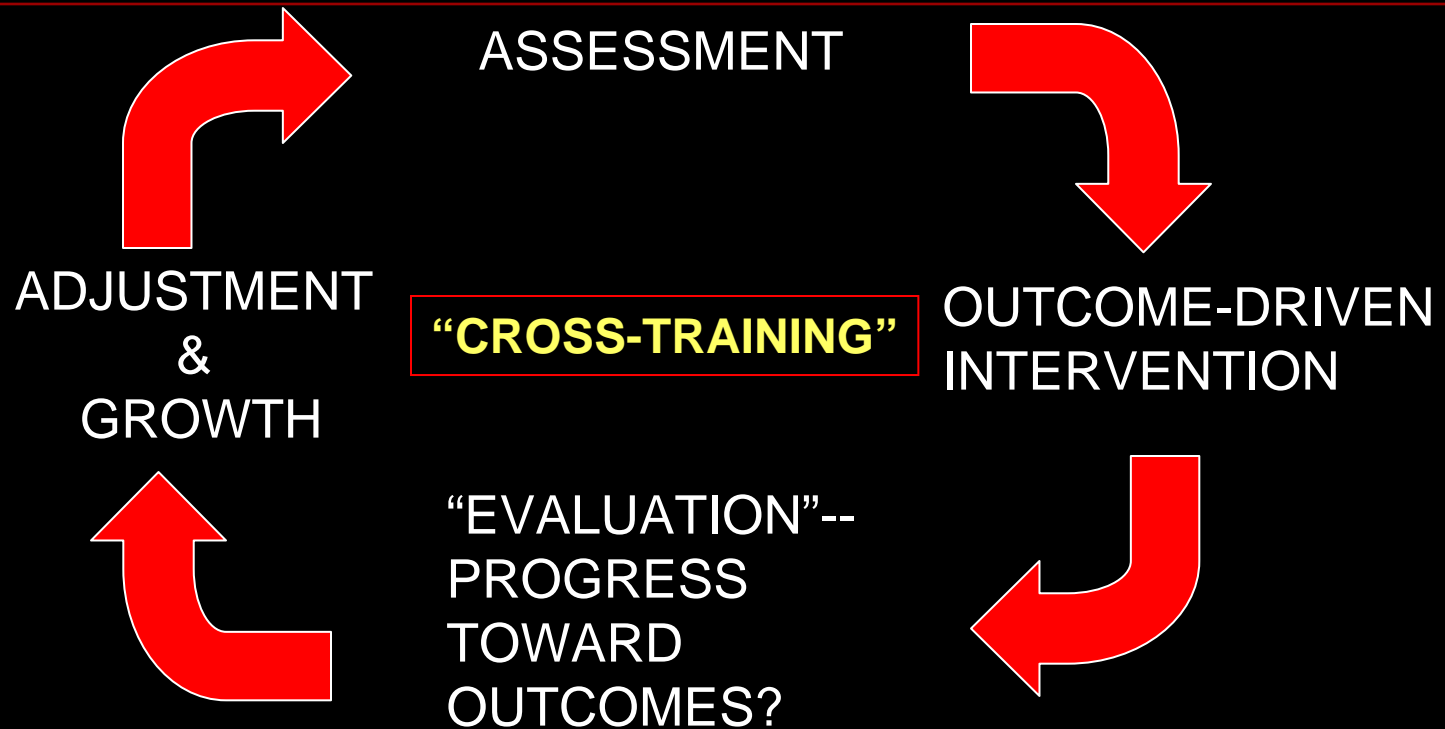
Information & Referral

FC 3-Month

FC 6-Month

FC 6-Month “Plus”

Putting It All Together...



This process occurs at both individual (i.e., client) and programmatic levels.

For more information on
Family Connections &
Grandparent Family Connections,
please visit the University of Maryland,
Center for Families web site:

<http://www.family.umaryland.edu>

