

Family Connection Plan Cover Sheet

County: Tift Region: 11

Submitted on March 30, 2003

Three-Year Community Strategic

Plan

(July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2006)

(Check, if
applicable)

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applicable)

Section I: Executive Summary [for 3 Year Plan only)

A. Description of county

Tift County is located in rural south central Georgia. The population of Tift County is 38,407 of which 35% is minority. 7.7% of the population is Hispanic or Latino with approximately 56% of the Hispanic population speaking English less than “very well”.

Tift County has a high rate (more than 60%) of families starting at risk of poverty with approximately 31% of all children in poverty. Single-headed families with children living in poverty are 65.7% compared to the state rate of 44.3%. Of every 100 babies born in Tift County 40 are born to mothers with less than 12 years of education. Only 63.8 out of 100 students complete high school. The median household income for Tift County is \$29,926. Approximately 50 out of every 100 students are eligible for reduced price lunches. Tift County has shown a noticeable increase in substantiated child abuse and neglect reports with 22 per 1000 children ages birth to 18.

The local economy is supported by agriculture and small industry. Tift County has one hospital that serves as the regional hospital for adjoining counties.

B. Description of collaborative

The Tift County Commission on Children and Youth (TCCCY) was formed in June of 1990 to serve as the collaborative body coordinating services and programs for children and families. The TCCCY serves as the lead coordinator for many of the grant proposals and has facilitated over three million dollars in competitive funding since 1989 for literacy, child care, juvenile justice, parenting, adolescent substance abuse, early intervention, prekindergarten, and health care programs. All of the proposals have been characterized by public input, partnership building, and creative and shared use of resources, and have been designed to fill a gap in the community as identified by the collaborative partners.

The collaborative started as a small group of committed volunteers in 1990. The TCCCY has a track record of commitment to collaboration. From the beginning this collaborative has worked to establish a shared vision, build public and political will for the vision, implement the vision, and evaluate the progress and outcomes.

Monthly meetings have been held since 1990 and a bi-monthly newsletter is published. The governing body is the Board of Trustees consisting of at least 20 elected members representing the broad interest of the public to include members from public and non profit agencies, governmental bodies and agencies, businesses, and the community at large. An Executive Committee is elected from the Board of Trustees. Collaborative partners for the TCCCY include members from Plight, Tift Co. Recreation Dept., Big Brothers Big Sisters, The Exchange Club, Tift Co. DFCS, Mother’s Love Child Care Center, Tift Co.

Extension Service, Tift Regional Medical Center, Tift County Commissioners, ABAC, CPES, Tift Housing Authority, District Attorney, Tift Co. Health Dept, Tift Co. Sheriff's Office, Juvenile Justice, Tift Co. Council on Child Abuse, Tift Co. Board of Education, United Way, Tifton Police Dept., Literacy Volunteers, City of Tifton, KAC/Child Care Resource & Referral, Tifton Headstart, Tift Co. Pre-K, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Chamber of Commerce , Behavioral Health, Albritton Beaumont Funeral Chapel (coroner) and Community Representatives. The monthly meetings are a source of information, networking, and an opportunity for collaborative members to bring up issues of importance. Community partners represent families, public sector organizations, businesses, the arts, and elected officials. Any agency or organization that works with children and families as well as members of the community as a whole are encouraged to participate in the collaborative. Much of the collaborative work occurs in small groups, convened for a particular issue or event. Workgroups are formed as necessary to address a particular issue or to organize an event in the community. At this time, we have committees for Safe Places & Caring Adults and for Youth Leadership.

The role of the collaborative is seen by the partners as: a broker for resources and funding, the entity to facilitate comprehensive planning for children and families, an entity with the flexibility that state agencies do not have to help fill service gaps by designing and implementing new services.

C. Community Assessment

Our Executive Board met and decided the best way to conduct a needs assessment would be with a community survey. Our community collaborative members provided input to the design and content of the survey, completed a survey, and helped distribute the surveys in the community. Surveys for adults and students were distributed and completed from December 2002 through February 2003. Adult surveys were distributed to all school employees, civic groups, Housing Authority residents, church groups, local agencies, and at public locations to include a diverse group of participants. Of the 500 surveys distributed we received 328 (68%) completed surveys. Student surveys for ages 10 to 20 were completed by church groups, Housing Authority residents, Teen Leadership groups, alternative school students and to the general public at the movie theater. Out of 325 surveys we had 221 (68%) returned. Based on the results of our survey most families felt there are strengths in the religious, community involvement, public education and family togetherness within our county. The challenges for Tift County were identified in high school drop out rates, teen pregnancy rates, and child abuse and neglect rates. Based on the results of the community survey and discussions in our collaborative planning meetings we will focus on inventorying and evaluating our services and programs to identify the service gaps.

D. Vision

The citizens are healthy, happy, secure, literate, and responsible. The community cooperates to insure that everyone is productive, motivated, and creative.

E. Goals and Benchmarks

1. Collaborative Development

Goal 1: TCCCY will develop new collaborative partnerships with unrepresented sectors of the community.

Benchmark Objective 1.1: Increase faith-based representation from 1 representative in 2003 to 3 by 2006.

Benchmark Objective 1.2: Increase family representation to include all segments of the community from 1 in 2003 to 3 in 2007.

Goal 2: To develop and implement a Targeted Case Management system to address existing service gaps in the community.

Benchmark Objective 2.1: Increase opportunities for frontline workers to plan together how to best meet individual families' needs.

Benchmark Objective 2.2: Develop integrated targeted case management system across service systems.

2. Systems Change

Goal 1: TCCCY will inventory the quantity and quality of services to integrate these services to families where gaps exist.

Benchmark Objective 1.1: Inventory supports and services and analyze the unmet needs of middle-school children and identify policy barriers.

Benchmark Objective 1.2: Inventory services and analyze the unmet needs of pre-school children to improve available services.

Goal 2: Service components from various partners will be integrated to maximize resources and strengthen supports for children and families.

Benchmark Objective 2.1: Integrate existing shelter resources in the region with local resources.

Benchmark Objective 2.2: Integrate existing space resources with other programs to enhance support for families and children.

3. Results for Children and Families

Goal 1: All children in Tift County will graduate on time.

Benchmark Objective 1.1: Increase the high school graduation rate from 60.4% in 2001 to 70% by 2006.

Benchmark Objective 1.2: Reduce the rate of teen pregnancies from 51.9 per 1000 in 2001 to 44 per 1000 by 2006.

Goal 2: All children will be free of abuse, neglect and domestic violence.

Benchmark Objective 1.1: Reduce the rate of confirmed child abuse and neglect from 34.7 per 1000 in 2000 to 25 per 1000 by 2006.

Goal 3: All families will have access to quality, affordable and accessible childcare and early learning opportunities in Tift County.

Benchmark Objective 3.1: To increase accessible, quality and affordable childcare by increasing the education levels of child care teachers; increase the training provided to teachers so that those who have CDA's will increase from 2% in 2001 to 25% in 2006.

F. Funding and Resources: Our collaborative members are supported by local, state, and federal monies. Some of our collaborative members such as Tift Co. DFCS, Tift Co. Health Dept. and Tift Co. School System are government funded agencies and will continue to be so with the enhancement of additional local, state and federal grant monies as they become available. Many of our members are grant funded or rely on grants/fund raising/donations to continue operation. Some of the grant monies being utilized by our collaborative members include: Family Connection, DHR, AHYD, WIA—School to Work Grant, GELI Funding, TANF funds, Safe & Drug Free Schools, DJJ, DOE, Administration for Children & Families Federal Fund, USDA Free & Reduced Lunch Fund, DFCS/CAPS childcare subsidies, CJCD VAWA, GCCC/DHR, Dept. of Community Affairs, Federal Corp. for National and Community Service, CTF, BBBS of America and other sources. Some of our agencies receive monies from foundations such as Target and Tifton Aluminum. The collaborative plans to implement Children At Risk Targeted Case Management. Local funding comes from local and county government, United Way, The Exchange Club, private donations, and fundraising. Our community is dedicated to improving the quality of life for our citizens and actively seeks opportunities for funding to enhance our community.

A. Community Engagement

Tift County Commission on Children and Youth will focus on providing the community with results-based accountability. The collaborative will be working to show positive results in reducing high school dropout, teen pregnancy, and child abuse and neglect. Throughout the next three years the collaborative will also focus on engaging more representatives from families, churches and businesses.

Section II: Collaborative Governance and Systems Change

II B. Collaborative Development (relates to strengthening and sustaining the governance body)

Goals, Benchmark Objectives

Goal 1: The Tift County Commission on Children and Youth will develop new collaborative partnerships with unrepresented sectors of the community.

Benchmark Objective 1.1 Increase faith-based representation from 1 representative in 2003 to 3 by 2007. Code: CL13

Benchmark Objective 1.2 Increase family representation to include all segments of the community from 1 in 2003 to 3 in 2007. Code: CL7

Goal 2: Develop collaborative planning and delivery of frontline services to families through Targeted Case Management.

Benchmark Objective 2.1: Increase opportunities for frontline workers to plan together how to best meet individual families' needs. Code CL25

Benchmark Objective 2.2: Develop integrated case management system across service systems. Code CL25

II C. Systems Change to Support Results for Children and

Families (relates to improving policy and practices in decision making, service delivery, financing and budgeting)

Goals, Benchmark Objectives

Goal 1: The Tift County Commission on Children and Youth Collaborative will complete an inventory of agency services for families with children in Tift County to integrate these services to families where gaps exist.

Benchmark Objective 1.1. Complete an inventory listing all agency services available to families with children in Tift County. Code SY14

Benchmark Objective 1.2. Form a committee including representatives from existing services to evaluate services available, identify gaps in services and to develop a plan for providing services to the youth who are most at risk. Code SY18

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II D. Family Engagement

Family members (including parents, guardians, youth, and consumers) are defined as persons who represent their own individual perspective or experiences. They do not attend meetings, speak for, or commit resources on behalf of formal agencies, programs or organizations.

Check all that are applicable

Code	Indicators	Existing	Date To Be Implemented
CL34	Collaborative has assessed itself on family support principles and family engagement		04
CL35	Collaborative has participated in training about family engagement		05
CL36	Collaborative has developed plans for effective family engagement		05
CL37	Collaborative by-laws provide for parent/family positions on governing body <i>and</i> family members participate in that role	X	
CL38	Family members participate as <i>members</i> of collaborative committees, task forces, etc.		
CL39	Family members participate as <i>leaders</i> or co-leaders of committees, task forces, or the collaborative		
CL40	Collaborative meeting times and locations are convenient for family participation	X	
CL41	Collaborative provides leadership development opportunities for families such as training, peer mentoring, etc.		
CL42	Collaborative has a family advisory board	X	
CL43	Family members serve on interview committees to hire collaborative or program staff		
CL44	Family members are hired as staff to the collaborative or programs		
CL45	Collaborative involves families in planning process and in designing strategies		
CL46	Collaborative supports family participation in collaborative meetings and in events through transportation, child care, stipends, meals, etc.		

CL47	Collaborative actively seeks input of family members through surveys, focus groups, etc.		
CL48	Adult family members are involved in programs and activities for their children and youth		
CL49	Family members provide their opinions about services or programs		
CL50	Other:		

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Section III: Results for Children and Families

(One goal per page; duplicate pages as needed)

III A. Goal, Benchmark Objectives, Strategies, Target Groups, Supporting Evidence

Goal # 1 : All children in Tift County will graduate on time.

(Check one) Result Area: HC CR CS SF
 SS

Benchmark Objective: Increase the high school graduation rate from 60.4% in 2001 to 70% by 2006. Code CS3.6

Benchmark Objective: Reduce the rate of teen pregnancies from 51.9 per 1000 in 2001 to 44 per 1000 by 2006. Code HC1.3

Overall Three-Year Strategy # 1.1

(Check one) CD YD FD AD PH MH ED
 Other

Brief description:

Services and supports will be provided to establish ongoing relationships with caring adults; structured activities, and educational activities to serve the needs of all children in Tift County. Programs: Big Brothers Big Sisters Buddies in School, Buddies In School Mentoring Program using teen mentors and community based mentoring; Boy Scouts; 4-H; Wise Guys, Youth Leadership in Action; Girl Scouts; Plight; Teen Clinic; Law Enforcement Explorer Post 137; STAR; Alternative Night School; Tifton Police Dept. summer enrichment program; Headstart; Mott Gym Community Center; Extended childcare for holiday & summer; Extended School Day program; Foster Grandparents; YMCA summer program.

Target Groups: All Tift County Children.

Supporting Evidence for the Strategy: The national Search Institute has provided extensive evidence over time through asset-based research. The work of this and other organizations has convinced many that if communities will fulfill America's Promises to youth and their families that they will make choices that lead to a healthier, more satisfying life. To the extent that communities can assure adequate quality and quantity of these supportive resources, youth and families will also be more likely to reach their full potential and move to the role of community leadership.

America's Promises include: A Healthy Start for a healthy future; ongoing relationship with a caring adult; opportunities to serve and give back to the community; safe places and structured activities; marketable skills through effective education

www.dropoutprev.org

www.teenpregnancy.org

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Section III: Results for Children and Families

(One goal per page; duplicate pages as needed)

III A. Goal, Benchmark Objectives, Strategies, Target Groups, Supporting Evidence

Goal # 2: All children will be free of abuse, neglect and domestic violence.

(Check one) Result Area: HC CR CS X
SF SS

Benchmark Objective: Reduce the rate of confirmed child abuse and neglect from 34.7 per 1000 in 2000 to 25 per 1000 by 2006. Code SF4.3

Overall Three-Year Strategy # 2.1:

(Check one) CD YD X FD AD PH MH ED
Other

Brief description: Primary Prevention: Promote public awareness, children safety/violence reduction, and cultural values that discourage child abuse and support needs and diversity of families and children. **Programs:** Community Awareness Program by Child Abuse Council; Red Flag Green Flag; It's Okay To Tell Puppet Show; Care for Kids Day.

Target Groups: General community with special focus on elementary age children.

Supporting Evidence for the Strategy:

Generally child abuse prevention programs are patterned after one of four models: public awareness, parent education, skills-based curricula for children, home visitation. *Prevention Fundamentals* by National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information.

www.calib.com.nccanch/pubs

"In addition to parent education programs, parent support groups may also strengthen families and prevent child maltreatment." *Prevention Fundamentals* (as noted above).

"Child abuse and neglect occurs in all segments of society, but risks are greater in families with economic hardships, isolation from the community and substance abuse." *Top Five Ways to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect*, Prevent Child Abuse America Website (www.preventchildabuse.org)

“Fact Sheet: An Approach to Preventing Child Abuse”, PCA America website
“Strategies to Keep Children Safe: *Why Community Partnerships Will Make A difference*”, The Center for the Study of Social Policy for Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, 1997.

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Overall Three-Year Strategy # 2.2:

(Check one) CD YD FD AD PH MH ED

Other

Brief description: Prevention: Family Support: Initiate a family support system that provides universal screening for children at birth and follow-up services as needed including home visitation, parent education, etc. **Programs:** First Steps; Healthy Families Georgia; Healthy Families II; Parent Education; Teen Parenting.

Target Groups: Whole families together.

Supporting Evidence for the Strategy:

As children get older, those who have been abused and neglected are more likely to perform poorly in school; to commit crimes; and to experience emotional problems, sexual problems, and alcohol/substance abuse. (Winter 1999)

www.futureofchildren.org

Overall Three-Year Strategy # 2.3:

(Check one) CD YD FD AD PH MH ED

Other

Brief description: Intervention: Initiate a system of support that provides crisis intervention and support to prevent the recurrence of abuse. **Programs:** Family Service Workers; Homestead Family Preservation; Prevention of Unnecessary Placement (PUP); Play Therapy; CASA; Child Protocol Committee; Plan & Implement emergency shelter; Ruth's Cottage.

Target Groups: Whole families together who have experienced domestic violence.

Supporting Evidence for the Strategy:

As many as 40% of child victims of physical abuse are also exposed to domestic violence. Between 45% and 70% of children exposed to domestic violence are also victims of physical abuse. Children exposed to domestic violence tend to be

more aggressive and to exhibit behavior problems ranging from temper tantrums to fights.

(Winter 1999) www.futureofchildren.org

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Section III: Results for Children and Families

(One goal per page; duplicate pages as needed)

Goal # 3: All families will have access to quality, affordable and accessible childcare and early learning opportunities in Tift County.

(Check one) Result Area: HC CR CS SF
 SS

Benchmark Objective: To increase accessible, quality and affordable childcare by increasing the education levels of child care teachers; increase the training provided to teachers so that those who have CDA's will increase from 2% in 2001 to 25% in 2006.

Overall Three-Year Strategy # 3.1 :

(Check one) CD YD FD AD PH MH ED Other

Brief description: Improve the quality, accessibility, and affordability of child care services for all children including those with special needs by focusing on quality improvements, i.e. training, technical assistance, improving educational levels and credentials of child care providers, and working toward national accreditation of all child care facilities. Programs: Foster Grandparents; Training & technical assistance for childcare providers; Promote capacity of childcare providers to serve children with special needs.

Target Groups: All childcare providers.

Supporting Evidence for the Strategy:

In virtually all large-scale studies of child care in the U.S., approximately 20% of the settings that participate in research have been found to fall below minimal thresholds of adequate care. For a one-year-old, care in a child care center or licensed home costs almost \$6,000 per year. The use of centers as a source of care for children under the age of three has nearly tripled in the last 20 years, from 8% in 1977 to 22% in 1997. (Spring/Summer 2001)

www.futureofchildren.org

