Safe Children Resilient Families Healthy Communities

Family Education & Support Services
Supporting Families...Strengthening Communities
About Us

Our Vision: Children Thrive

Our Strategy:
Provide evidence based best practice services that:

- Ensure adults have skills, support and resources necessary to influence healthy child development,
- Engage the community in promoting healthy outcomes for youth, recognizing those outcomes influence our workforce and community well-being.
- Inform the community of research, science and evidence based approaches
- Improve child safety, family resilience, and a community sense of hope.

Our Purpose:
Family Education and Support Services is a dynamic non-profit 501c3 organization launched in 2000 with a purpose to inspire healthy child development by providing quality training and support services. As a result of our work families:

- Acquire sound parenting skills
- Develop parenting confidence
- Improve health and early childhood development outcomes
- Enhance relationships and attachment
- Connect to support networks in their local communities

Families receive services that are collaborative, accountable, evidence based and subject to external evaluation. Our highest priority is to provide assistance to families that are facing multiple challenges and are in urgent need of support and intervention. These challenges are commonly underpinned by isolation compounded by health issues, addiction, family instability and violence, sleep deprivation and feelings of being unable to cope and the complexities that can arise from financial stress, age, ethnicity and other factors.

Family Education & Support Services
Supporting Families...Strengthening Communities

Our Board:

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Community Parents Representative

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Tumwater Police Department

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South Sound Reading Foundation

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Family Law Attorney, William B. Pope & Associates

Olivia Zhou
Thurston County Prosecutor’s Office

Tanya Murray, Past President
SPSCC, Adjunct Instructor
Family Education & Support Services (FESS) acknowledges that the nations understanding of brain and early development has initiated rapid change in early intervention, prevention and social service delivery. We strive to work with local government, policy makers and community providers to ensure evidence-based practices are available in our community, and delivered with the highest standards. Our mission enables our staff and stakeholders to ensure that vulnerable families receive essential services and that the remaining parents, children and families are aware of and have access to services that prevent abuse and promote family well-being.

The FESS 2017 - 2020 Strategic plan will be implemented within the following context:

**Safe Children**
When children feel safe, they can take risks, ask questions, make mistakes, and learn to trust. Children living in safe environments grow to be developmentally, socially and emotionally healthy adults who trust, are productive community members and are prepared to parent the next generation of youth.

- **Resilient Families**
  Resilient families are able to accept their new reality, even if it’s not as good as the one they’ve had before. It is in the accepting and trying to put together a life that’s good that creates resilience.

- **Healthy Communities**
  More than ever before, there is a global understanding that long-term social, economic and environmental development would be impossible without healthy families - creating healthy communities.

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### 1. Children thrive to their greatest potential

Many families, not only vulnerable families, seek support when parenting especially in the first few years of a child’s life. FESS is recognized at a local, state and national level as expert teachers in the area of quality parent education. We plan to continue to provide support and resources on the topic of effective parenting approaches that parents and caregivers can trust, and community providers can count on.

**We Will:**
- Further develop our social media presence
- Participate in research partnerships to continue the development of evidence based practice in early parenting
- Share quality research findings within professional and community settings
- Maintain strong contemporary communications as a means of influencing and connecting parents, stakeholders and our community

### 2. Adults have training and support

FESS recognizes that some people come to the job of parenting with considerable challenges. FESS provides supportive and preventative services in order to meet the complex needs of these families which may include:
- Very young parents
- Parents with intellectual disabilities or mental illness
- Addressing the impact of poverty of families
- Families with previous child protection reports
- Families impacted by trauma such as addiction, domestic violence or divorce

**We Will:**
- Continue to provide critical evidence based services that aid families to provide safe environments for children to grow. We will also continue to work with community partners, health providers and government to ensure services are available to vulnerable populations

### 3. Support adults with emerging challenges

FESS will place high priority on meeting the needs of families with problems that emerge during pregnancy or following the birth of a child such as:
- Infant development or disability
- Post natal depression/prenatal mental health issues
- Emerging mental illness
- Major events like loss of income, change of family structure or death

**We Will:**
- Strengthen relationships and referral pathways with healthcare professionals
- Exchange knowledge and evidence informed practice approaches with other professionals to support families

### 4. Capacity Building

Quality service initiatives can only be delivered with high quality teams and supportive infrastructure. In recognition that service delivery in a changing environment can be challenging.

**We Will:**
- Continue to seek ways of improving access to services for families
- Continue to support research and development to ensure increasing understanding of early childhood development and parenting
- Further develop understanding of cultural differences and values in family and parenting
- Develop facilities that welcome families and encourage learning, foster staff, volunteer and family wellbeing

### 5. Working Together

When working with higher levels of complexity it is increasingly important to ensure services are accessible so that all parents feel safe, welcome and inspired to learn about healthy parenting approaches with other professionals to support families.
Our Services

As a nonprofit 501 (c) 3 organization, Family Education & Support Services provides a range of services to families. These services range from pregnancy to graduation from high-school. We serve parents, foster parents, teen parents, step-parents, kinship caregivers, fictive kin, moms, dads and other adults who influence children such as teachers, social service providers, coaches, mentors, community leaders, nurses, law and justice representatives and early learning professionals. We also provide a rich spectrum of family strengthening activities, support groups, trainings, and enrichment activities for youth in an effort to promote healthy child development.

Services Include:

• Intensive parenting training focused on ensuring child safety
  • Home visitation
  • Support groups
  • Case management or navigation services
  • Early childhood professional training
• Prevention training for parents and professional training
  • Evidence based parent training to parents impacted by addiction
  • Training for parents and professionals on the impact of domestic violence on children
• Nationally recognized kinship caregiver program
  • Father engagement services
• Training, support and resources for mothers individually and in group settings.
  • Collective impact community collaboration
• Prevention programs intended to build families and prevent crisis or trauma
• Family strengthening inter-generational activities and events
• Parent cooperative learning, peer training and mentoring
• Professional development related to positive strategies for family engagement
Safe Children

**Impact of Domestic Violence on Children**
This 4-hour class is designed to assist parents in supporting children who have witnessed, or have been affected by domestic violence. Upon completion of the seminar participants receive a certificate of attendance. Classes are provided by a certified parenting instructor.

**Clean & Sober Parenting**
The Clean & Sober Parenting Program helps family members sustain recovery. Finding someone to talk to who really understands the challenges of recovery can be difficult. Our classes give recovering parents/caregivers a place to talk with other parents who understand and can help find solutions to the very real problems real parents face.

**Parenting & Family Values (MRT)**
This program is based on the curriculum, Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT) and is designed to address past parenting behaviors, present family interactions and assist parents in planning for a healthy family future. This behavioral-based approach to parenting encourages parents to recognize the value of taking responsibility for the choices they make, and for the actions they take.

We are currently offering 1 college credit for this class as a collaboration with South Puget Sound Community College.

**Prison Parenting Program**
The Prison Parenting Program is an evidence-based parenting skills training program developed for criminal justice involved parents. The prison parenting program is appropriate for both incarcerated mothers and incarcerated fathers who are parenting from prison. The community version is appropriate for parents on parole or probation.

**Parent-Child Assistance Program**
Thurston is the 12th County in Washington State to adopt this award-winning, evidence-based case management model in support of our pregnant and parenting mothers with alcohol and/or drug abuse disorders that impede their ability to care for their children and live healthy functioning lives.

The goals of the Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP) are to help build and maintain healthy independent family lives, assure that children are in safe and stable homes and to prevent future births of alcohol/drug exposed children.
Resilient Families

Kinship Program
The Bilingual Kinship Programs link grandparents and other relative caregivers to support groups, training, education, and increased access to resources in the community. These programs are supported in part by the Lewis-Mason-Thurston Area Agency on Aging and the Department of Social and Health Services, Aging and Disability Services Administration.

Consider the Children
This 4-hour parenting class provides information and support for parents or parental custodians who are undergoing a divorce, paternity action, or parenting plan modification. Classes are provided twice monthly in Thurston, Lewis, and Pierce Counties and once per month in Mason County. At the end of each class participants are provided with a certificate which they can then file with the court to document attendance.

Parents 4 Parents Program
“Veteran Parents” provide support and training to parents newly entering the system. The program consists of two main elements: Peer mentoring and training through a supportive two-hour educational class known as Dependency 101. The goal of this program is reunification.

Dynamic Dads
This program is intended to improve the lives of children by promoting healthy father-child relationships, and increasing positive male involvement. Based on the award winning curriculum “Nurturing Father” this program examines the roots of fatherhood, child development, balancing work and fathering, and conflict resolution. We are currently offering 1 college credit for this class as a collaboration with South Puget Sound Community College.

“8 months old you took me into your home like I was your own loving, caring, appreciative thoughtful and heartwarming. You taught me good from bad and right from wrong, You are the light to my day, My rolemodel. I can count on you no matter what. Because of you I am who I am Today.”
- Mya, Age 12 (Kinship Program)
Healthy Communities

Winning at Parenting
This family participation parenting program is designed to increase the health of families by helping parents develop their parenting skills. Throughout the 6-week class, group members share parenting strengths and identify areas for personal growth. Winning at Parenting is intended to strengthen families by providing information, resources and an opportunity for parents to connect with each other. Classes are currently offered in collaboration with area schools, tribes and faith partners.

Lifeline
The Lifeline Support Group offers support and training programs for Foster Parents. The support group meets monthly at the Hands on Children’s Museum. The group facilitator provides support and training on a variety of pertinent topics including: cultural diversity, special needs, legislative issues, WAC’s and regulation, parenting strategies, advocacy and more.

Training for Professionals
Family Education & Support Services is dedicated to being a partner and resource for the community. We offer technical assistance and training classes focused on professional development of parent educators, prevention specialists, early childhood professionals and childcare providers. We also partner with South Puget Sound Community College, Centralia College and Pacific Lutheran University to provide robust services.

Thurston Thrives
Thurston Thrives is a community-wide effort to improve public health and safety for all residents in Thurston County. As an active member of the Education & Resilience Action Team, we envision a thriving community where individuals of all cultures are healthy, safe, valued, engaged and successful.

Parenting Seminars
This family participation parenting program is designed to increase the health of families by helping parents develop their parenting skills. Several evidence based curriculums are offered including: Circle of Security, Triple P Parenting, The Incredible Years and Guiding Good Choices. Throughout these seminars, group members share parenting strengths and identify areas for personal growth.

Thurston County Early Childhood Coalition
The purpose of the coalition is to help children from birth to age eight develop the social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills they need to succeed in school and life with the support of their parents and caregivers. The Coalition does this by working collectively to create and promote a comprehensive system of high-quality early care environments that are accessible, affordable, and effective.