

# Strengthening Multi-Ethnic Families and Communities: A Promising Group Model to Enhance Prevention

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# Agenda



- Introductions and interests
- Neglect prevention and *Family Connections*
- Strengthening Group model description
- Rites of passage and community vision
- Challenges and opportunities
- Other?

# Child Neglect



- (1) Neglect refers to omissions of care to meet a child's basic needs that (2) result in harm or a threat of harm to children
- A child is neglected when his or her most fundamental physical or emotional needs have been unmet
- An average of 1,139 reports of suspected neglect were made each month in Maryland in 2001.

# Why Neglect Prevention?

- Child neglect is the most common form of child maltreatment reported to public child protective services agencies.
- Its consequences are equally, if not more damaging, than other forms of child maltreatment.



# *Family Connections*



- ❖ Mission: Promoting the safety and well-being of children and families through family and community services, professional education and training, and research and evaluation.

# Program Description

- Guiding philosophies
- Service
- Education
- Research



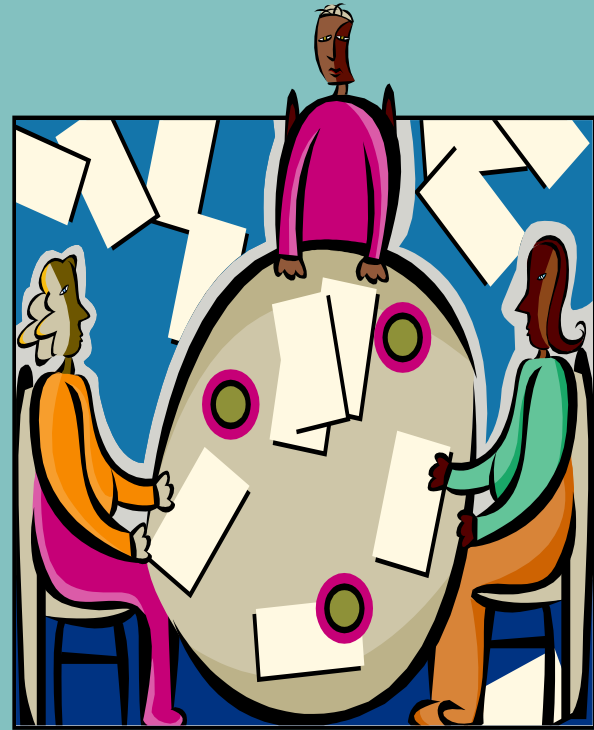
# Model Selection



- Philosophical fit
- Previous implementation
- System focus
- Model classification
- Staff expertise
- Fiscal fit

# Focus Groups

- What services did families find helpful/not helpful?
- What made families want to return/not return to work with an agency after introduction?
- What ways of working together were most/least desirable?





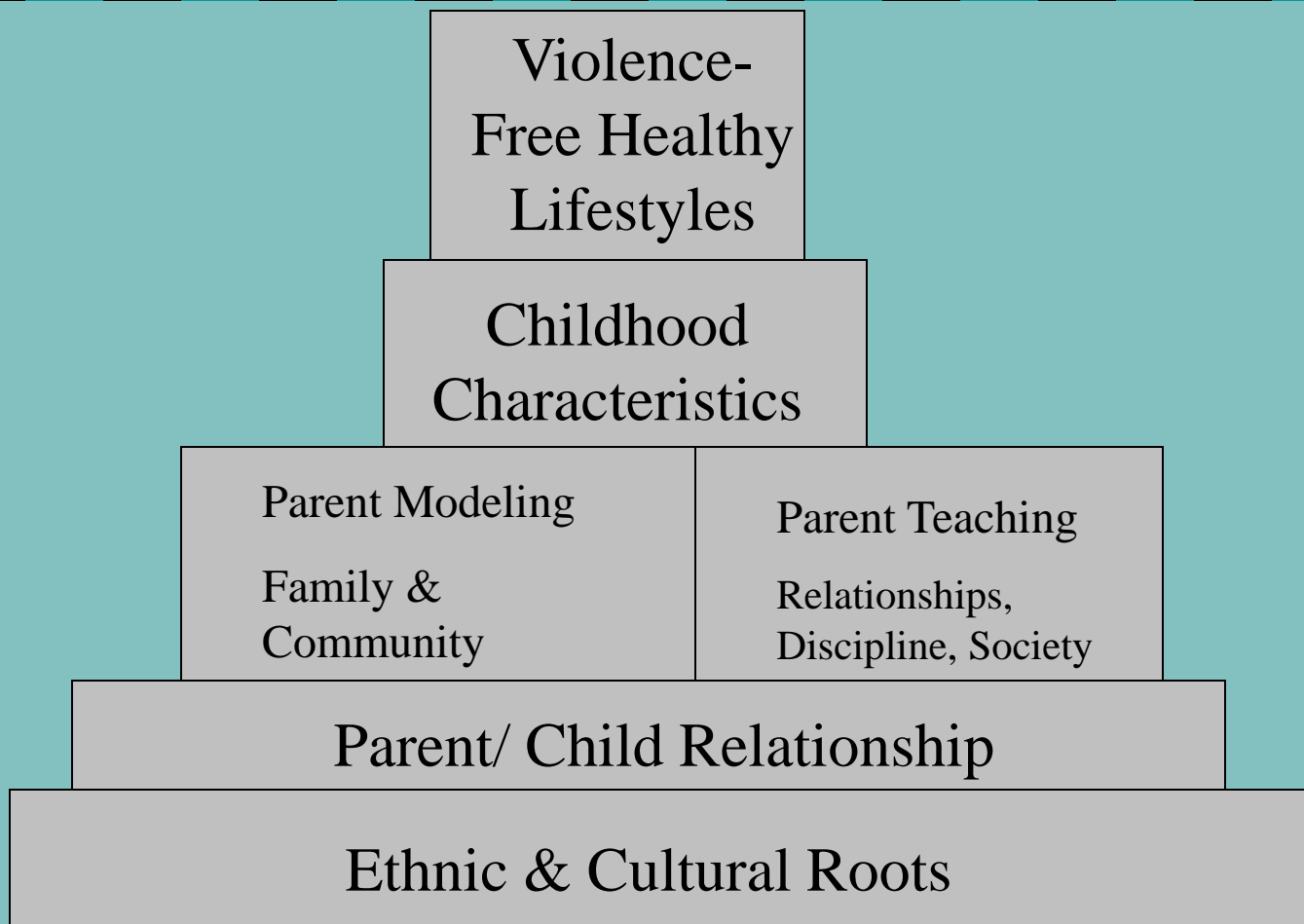
# Strengthening Multi-Ethnic

■ Families and Communities:

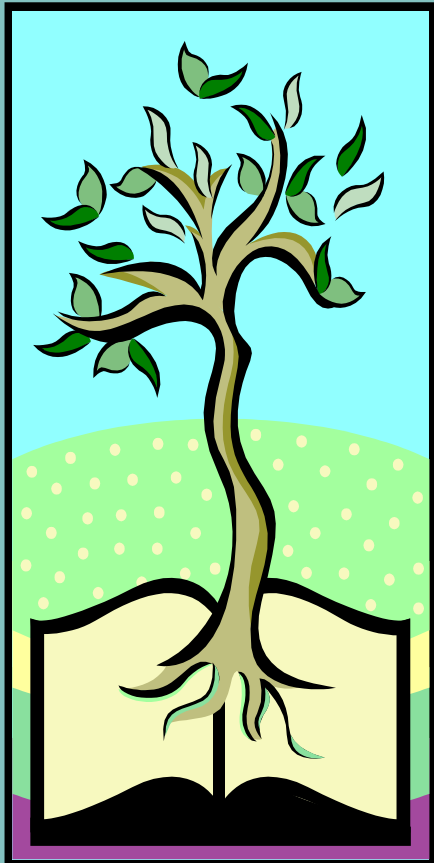
# A Violence Prevention Parent Training Program



# Building Blocks



# Ethnic & Cultural Roots



- Foundation of who we are as individuals
- Represents our history and our culture
- Incorporates our values, traditions, and customs

# Parent/Child Relationship

- Biological parent or any significant adult in the child's life
- Relationship should have certain characteristics to support and nurture the child



# Parent Teaching/Modeling



- How parents transmit their beliefs to their children through behavior and words to communicate, develop relationships, manage behavior, and problem solve

# Childhood Characteristics

- Self-esteem
- Self discipline
- Social competency



# Core Components

- Integrates parent training, education and community resource awareness
- Addresses violence against self (drugs/alcohol) and violence against others (child abuse, domestic violence, crime, gangs)
- Assists parents and children in developing strong ethnic/cultural roots, a positive parent-child relationship, and life skills for functioning in today's society
- Enhance parent ability to model and teach as a vehicle for fostering high self-esteem, self-discipline and social competence

# Curriculum Areas

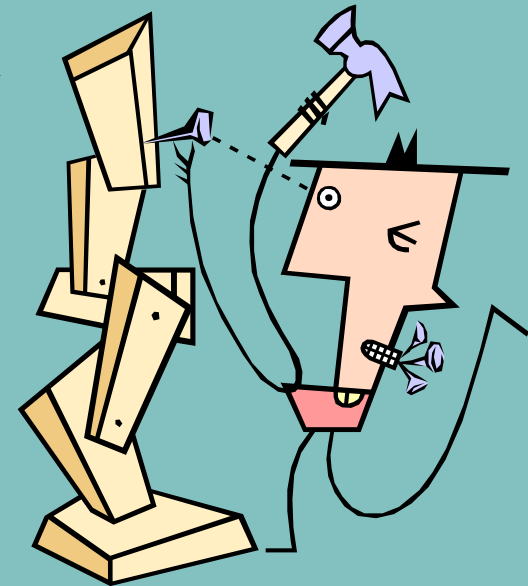
- Cultural/spiritual
- Enhancing relationships – violence prevention
- Positive discipline
- Rites of passage
- Community involvement



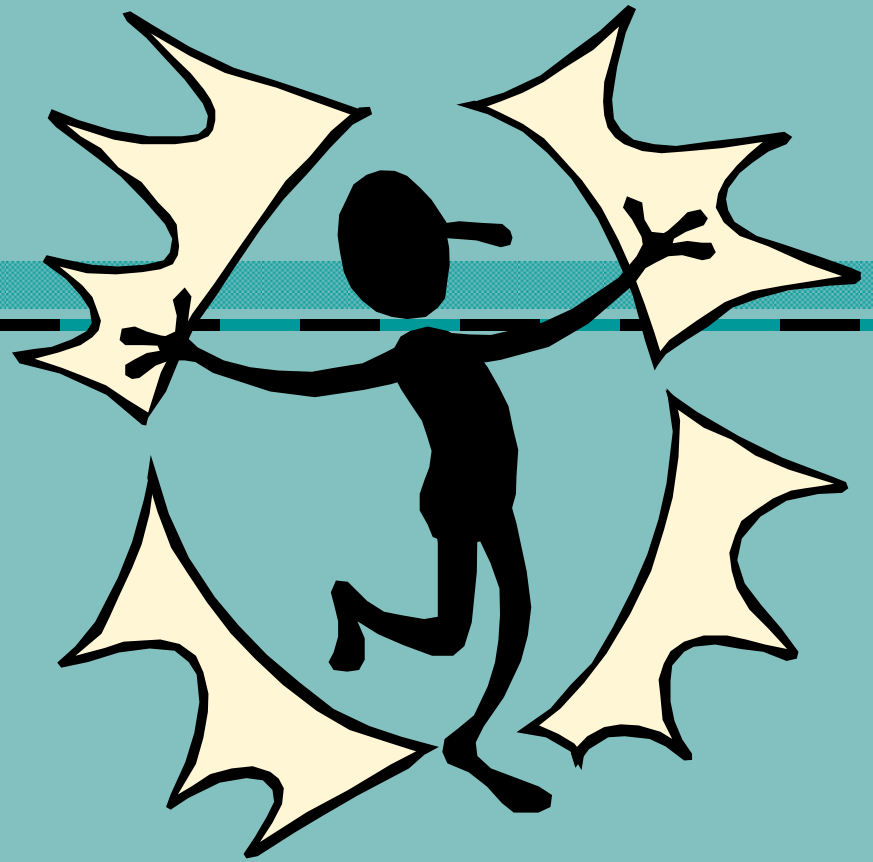


# Structure

- Orientation and 12, weekly three-hour sessions
- Responsive to a variety of learning styles by utilizing instructor modeling, role-play, lecture, discussion and parent follow-up activities
- No expectation that a parent must read
- Facilitative model with curriculum as framework
- Evaluation procedure



■ BREAK!



# Values



# Spiritual Rite of Passage



Help your child:

- Develop a relationship with a “Greater Spirit”
- Develop faith in something for which there may not be proof
- Develop courage and strength to go on

Developed by: Ronald F. Johnson

# Spiritual Rite of Passage



Help your child:

- Learn to face obstacles without complaint or resentment
- Develop patience in the face of obstacles, difficulty, or adversity

Developed by: Ronald F. Johnson

# Spiritual Rite of Passage



Help your child:

- Develop ability to maintain unconditional love for himself/herself, family and community
- Develop friendships and attachments

Developed by: Ronald F. Johnson

# Cultural Rite of Passage



Help your child learn about:

- What is happening in your country of origin
- Cultural rituals, ceremonies, and traditions
- Cultural values

Developed by: Ronald F. Johnson

# Cultural Rite of Passage



Help your child:

- Learn about and participate in cultural holidays
- Learn about cultural foods
- Learn how people of the same cultural/ethnic background have influenced music, dance, hair styles, and fashion

Developed by: Ronald F. Johnson



# Historical Rite of Passage



Help your child:

- Learn about your cultural/ethnic group's contribution to world history
- Develop/maintain circles of interdependence

Developed by: Ronald F. Johnson

# Historical Rite of Passage



- Participate in family gatherings with your child and help your child develop and maintain relationships with the elderly
- Help your child learn about ethnic/cultural historical figures and their messages

# Historical Rite of Passage



Help your child:

- Develop plans to enhance his/her ethnic group and community
- Develop plans to enhance his/her state, country, and the world

Developed by: Ronald F. Johnson

# Community Involvement



# Model Implementation

- Transportation
- Childcare
- Food
- Door prizes
- Graduation



# Challenge: Attendance



- Group kick-off event prior to each new group cycle
- Staff instead of taxi pick-up in the AM
- Menu revision
- Mini focus group mid-way through group cycle
- Member-driven reminder calls

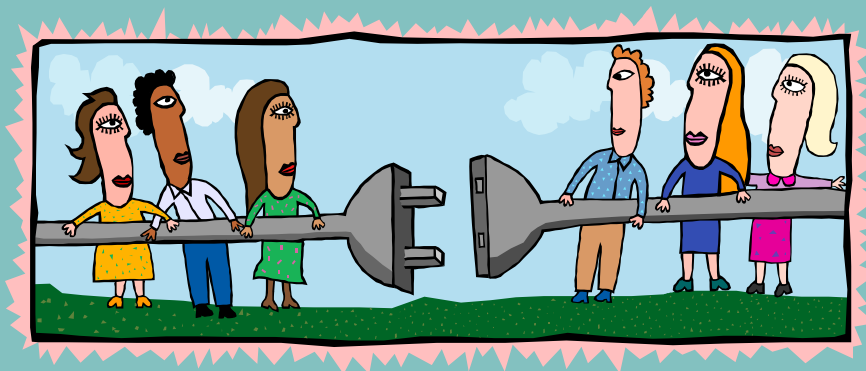
# Challenge: Funding

- Strengthen community partnership to support space needs
- Seek additional funding for model enhancements
- Reach out to the community to provide in-kind support



# Challenge: Human Resources

- Sponsored facilitator training for selected community providers
- Utilized trainees to provide therapeutic play activities
- Encouraged mutual support







# Preliminary Findings

- 82% agreed they felt supported and encouraged to share with the group
- 86% felt other group members listened to them
- 85% felt the group facilitators helped them when they asked for help
- 90% felt the facilitators shared information that was helpful to their family
- 90% learned new skills that they were able to use at home and in the community

# Conclusions

- Assess client engagement and readiness to change prior to group participation
- Modify structure and curriculum to fit clients and community
- Recognize significant resource demands and plan accordingly



# Afterthoughts

