Crisis Nurseries: From Family Crisis to Respite Support to Improving Parent and Child Well Being
Presenters

Amy Kendal-Lynch, M.S.  
*Program Director*

Tiffanny Powell, M.S.  
*Family Support Program Manager*
Objectives

• Learn how the Crisis Nursery model of care is a vital part of respite support for families in crisis.

• Explore how the Protective Factors can improve outcomes and strengthen family and child well being.

• Learn concrete suggestions for utilizing Adverse Childhood Experiences data to develop trauma informed approaches.
SMARTIE EXERCISE
History of Crisis Nurseries

• Crisis Nurseries were formed from the Crisis Nursery Congressional Act of 1986 to provide holistic prevention and intervention services to families with young children, who were in crisis, and at high risk of abuse and neglect.

• The Act requires that service be provided without fee for a maximum of 30 days in any year. Requires such crisis nurseries to also provide referral to support services.

• There are 7 Crisis Nurseries in Illinois: Chicago, Rockford, Bloomington, Peoria, Springfield, Urbana, and Effingham.

• The 7 Crisis Nurseries form the Crisis Nursery Coalition of Illinois.
History of Crisis Nursery and ARCH Partnership

• The ARCH Network led the way by integrating the crisis nursery model into prevention services to families experiencing crisis with young children (ages birth to six) who are vulnerable to abuse and neglect.
Crisis Nursery Video

videoplayback.mp4
Crisis Nursery Services Crisis Care

• Center Based Model Crisis Nursery
  • Open 24 hours per day/7 days per week for families with children from birth through age 6.
  • Families experiencing crises such as domestic violence, parental stress, mental health, homelessness, substance abuse, and employment/school issues.
  • Intakes to assess for domestic violence, homelessness, post partum depression, and family needs.
  • Referrals and linkages to other service providers.
Post Crisis Services

- Home Visiting
- Parent Education
- Parent Support Groups
- Parent-Child Interaction Activities
- Basic necessities for families and children
Goals of Crisis Nurseries

1. Decrease the risk of child abuse and neglect
2. Increase parenting knowledge and skills.
3. Decrease parental stress
Center for the Developing Child Video

What are ACE’s

- Adverse Childhood Experience that happened within a person’s first 18 years of life.
- Including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, incarcerated parent, parent with mental health or substance abuse issues
- The more Adverse Childhood Experiences a person has, the more negative health and mental health outcomes.
Mechanisms by Which Adverse Childhood Experiences Influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan
How ACE’s Impact Families

• Examples: free shelf, referrals to other programs, prioritizing families who have experienced high levels of trauma

• How to be trauma informed though the use of ACE’s
What are the Protective Factors

- Protective factors are conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities or the larger society that mitigate or eliminate risk.
- Protective factors contribute to the healthy development and well-being of children, youth, and families.
The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

**Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework Logic Model**

**Core Functions**
- State, system, agency, program and community leaders work across systems to:
  - Build parent partnerships
  - Deepen knowledge and understanding
  - Shift practice, policy and systems
  - Ensure accountability

**Program Practice**
- Programs that serve children and families:
  - Shift organization culture to value and build upon families' strengths
  - Make policy changes to support changes in worker practice
  - Implement everyday actions that support families in building protective factors

**Worker Practice**
- Individual workers:
  - Have knowledge of protective factors and skills to help families build them
  - Change their approach to relationships with parents
  - Implement everyday actions that support families in building protective factors

**Protective Factors**
- Families are supported to build:
  - Parental resilience
  - Social connections
  - Knowledge of parenting and child development
  - Concrete support in times of need
  - Social and emotional competence of children

**Results**
- Strengthened families
- Optimal child development
- Reduced likelihood of child abuse and neglect
Parental Resilience

• Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity, and trauma
• Normalizing that parenting is stressful
• Parents are willing to ask for help, problem solve, have good self-care, and positive attitude about parenting.
• How you can help: value parents, listen to their concerns, support parents’ decisions, value their cultural diversity, build leadership skills.
Social Connections

• Relationships with others that provide emotional support, informational support, instrumental support, and spiritual support.
• Parents are able to feel secure and confident.
• Buffer parental stress.
• Support nurturing parenting behaviors that promote secure attachments with their children.
• How you can help: model good relational behavior, help the family identify supporters, and invite parents to groups and activities
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

• Understanding child development and developmental stages.
• Understanding how to use positive parenting practices.
• Children need secure attachments and parents who are consistent, responsive, accepting, and nurturing.
• How you can help: connect parents to parenting classes or a home visiting program, model appropriate developmental expectations, discuss the importance of nurturing parenting, identify child and parents’ strengths, encourage parents to be involved.
Concrete Support in Times of Need

• Assisting parents with concrete support in times of need to help their family receive the basic necessities
• Asking for help is a sign of strength and parents are building resilience
• Use a strength based approach
• How you can help: encourage help seeking behavior, work with family on stigma about community services, help the family navigate community services, help parents advocate for their child, and identify barriers and problem solve how to overcome these barriers.
Social-Emotional Competence of Children

• Social-emotional competence includes: self-esteem, self-regulation, patience, persistence, conflict resolution, communication skills, empathy, and social skills.
• Activities to promote social-emotional competence: creating a safe environment, being emotionally responsive, setting clear expectations, and creating opportunities for children to solve problems.
• How you can help: provide concrete tips and resources, model developmentally appropriate interactions, and connect families to resources.
Implementation of Protective Factors

- Family Goals
- Child Goals
- Reflective Supervision for staff
Parent Quotes

“They are good to my son and when I need them they are there.”

“The constant support, in every instance they have given me comfort, inspiration and compassion.”

“When you need help with child care, and have no one they are there.”

“I feel like a better parent since I was able to get things done while my daughter was safe.”

“They helped me prepare my house for my daughter to be in a happy, safe, and dangerous atmosphere.”
Questions
Resources

• https://www.childrenshomeandaid.org/parenting/crisis-nursery/

• https://www.maryvilleacademy.org/programs/maryville-family-support-services/maryville-crisis-nursery/

• www.Cncoi.org

• https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/

• https://www.cssp.org/young-children-their-families/strengtheningfamilies/about

• http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources
Contact Information

Amy Kendal Lynch
KendalLynchA@maryvilleacademy.org

Tiffany Powell
tpowell@childrenshomeandaid.org