

Family Resource Centers

OVERVIEW

What is it?

Family Resource Centers are neighborhood and community-based programs that offer supportive services and activities for families in safe and nurturing environments. Although each Family Resource Center may offer a different array of services based on the needs of the community, most offer academic, parenting, employment, health, social, and other community-building services.

Who is it for?

Family Resource Center services are available without regard to income; however, programs are targeted primarily to families with preschool and school-aged children.

Where are applications taken?

Family Resource Centers may require applications for some of the programs offered at the centers; although many programs operate without formal applications. Sometimes, public agencies may outstation staff at the Family Resource Centers to take applications for other programs (for example, DSS offices may have eligibility workers available to take applications for Work First, Food Stamps or Medicaid at some of the Family Resource Centers).

INTRODUCTION

The General Assembly established a Family Resource Center program in 1994 to work with families with children (birth through elementary school). The goal of the program is to: (1) enhance the children's development and ability to attain academic and social success; (2) ensure a successful transition from early childhood education programs and child care to the public schools; (3) assist families in achieving economic independence and self-sufficiency; and (4) mobilize public and private community resources to help children and families in need. Federally-funded Family Resource Centers were established the following year, to assist parents

The Division of Social Services within the NC Department of Health and Human Services administers the state-funded programs. The programs are administered on the local level by community-based public or non-profit organizations that were approved for funding. In deciding which applications to fund, a state task force considered the severity of the local problems, the likelihood that the locally designed plan would result in high quality services for children and their families, evidence of local collaboration and coordination of services, any innovative or experimental aspects of the plan that would make it a useful model for replication, the availability of other resources or funds, the incidence of crime and juvenile delinquency, and the amount needed to implement the proposal.

**BENEFITS/
SERVICES****Family Resource Centers**

Each Family Resource Center is neighborhood-based and governed by families with children. The services are available regardless of income, and serve the entire family. The array of services offered in each center are somewhat unique, based on the neighborhood's needs and resources. The centers often provide a "one-stop" source of help for families that is prevention-focused, family-friendly, community-based and comprehensive. Most programs offer the following core services:

- *Parent Education/Parent Support*—which may include parenting classes and/or parent/caregiver support groups;
- *Academic Success/Tutoring/Lending Libraries*—which may include tutoring and education programs, out-of-school suspension programs, lending libraries, and/or parent involvement programs;
- *Child and Youth Development*—which may include infant/toddler development play groups, mentoring programs (for example, for teen parents or adolescents), after school or summer child/youth enrichment programs, and/or child development assessments;
- *Parent/Child Participation Programs*—which may include family literacy programs, parent-child play groups, and/or parent-child development groups;
- *Adult Literacy/Adult Education*—which may include adult literacy programs, GED/Adult High School, Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), life skills classes (such as cooking, communication skills or conflict resolution), and/or financial management programs;
- *Health Services/Health Education*—which may include physical health screenings, immunization programs, health education/health promotion programs, health services programs (such as occupational therapy), WIC services, and/or substance abuse prevention/rehabilitation programs;
- *Occupational Skills/Job Readiness/Job Placement*—which may include computer or other skills development programs, job readiness programs, job search/placement counseling and support, job internship programs, and/or Work First collaboration programs;
- *Transportation/Child Care Support Services*—which may include transportation and/or drop-in child care programs;
- *Community Building*—which may include leadership development programs, community-policing, police substation at Family Resource Center sites, illegal drug use prevention programs, community drug traffic/illegal activity reduction programs, neighborhood watch/community safety programs, neighborhood clean-up programs, and/or mediation services; and

- *Individual Family Services Coordination*—which may include family counseling, intensive family services, child/family advocacy, emergency services and support programs, community food programs, and/or housing assistance programs.

Program Location

State and federally funded Family Resource Centers are located in the following counties:

| County | Name |
|----------------|---|
| Alleghany | Alleghany County Family Resource Center |
| Ashe | Ashe Partnership for Children Family Resource Center |
| Bertie | Colerain & Lewiston-Woodville Family Resource Center |
| Bladen | Bladen Family Support Initiative |
| Brunswick | CIS Family Resource Center |
| Cleveland | Hoechst Celanese Family Resource Center |
| Columbus | Multicultural Community Development Services |
| Davidson | Fairgrove Family Resource Center |
| Durham | Eastway Family and Academic Support Program |
| Edgecombe/Nash | Down East Partnership for Children Family Resource Centers |
| Gaston | Highland Family Resource Center |
| Gates | Family Care Center |
| Hyde | Hyde Family Center |
| Lenoir | La Grange Family Support Programs |
| Martin | Friends of Families/Family Support Services |
| McDowell | North Cover and Old Fort Family Resource Centers |
| Moore | Northern Moore Family Resource Center |
| New Hanover | Family Resource Center of the Bottom |
| Northampton | Garysburg Family Resource Center |
| Orange | Chapel Hill Training Outreach Inc. Family Resource Centers |
| Pitt | Bethel Family Resource Center |
| Richmond | Richmond County Community Support |
| Robinson | Robeson County Family Support and Family Preservation Program |
| Rowan | Paul L. Dunbar Family Resource Center |
| Transylvania | The Family Center of Transylvania County |
| Tyrell | Friends of Families/Family Support Service |
| Vance | South Henderson Family Resource Center |
| Warren | Warren Family Institute |
| Wayne | Employment Support Program |

Additional Family Resource Centers operate around the state that are not funded by the state. These centers are not included in the list above.

**ELIGIBILITY
REQUIREMENTS**

General Eligibility Requirements

There are no income or other eligibility requirements for the Family Resource Centers. While there are no formal residency requirements, Family Resource Centers target their services to families with children in the neighborhood or community in which the center is based.

**NUMBERS
SERVED**

Family Resource Centers administered by the Division of Social Services served more than 8,000 families during SFY 97-98.

FINANCING

There are three funding streams that help fund Family Resource Centers.

- NC General Assembly appropriated \$2,001,109 in SFY 97-98 to fund the 16 Family Resource Centers.
- The federal Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, Subpart 2 is used to support Family Resource Centers, Family Support programs and Family Preservation programs. These programs typically receive \$75,000 each. The federal monies were used to support 18 Family Resource Centers administered through the Division of Social Services.
- Community Based Family Resource programs. There are three programs funded by the federal government, and three funded through the pooling of funds under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, Subpart 2 programs.

ADMINISTRATION

The federally-funded monies flow through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the Children's Bureau of the US Department of Health and Human Services. The Division of Social Services, within the NC Department of Health and Human Services, administers the family resource centers. The program is administered on the local level by public or private non-profit agencies across the state.

SOURCES OF LAW

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|----------------------|---|
| Federal statute: | PL 105-89 (Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997), amending Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, Subpart 2, for federally funded Family Resource Centers |
| Federal regulations: | None |
| State statute: | NCGS 143B-152 |
| State policy manual: | Under development (Family Resource Center) |

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION**

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