

THE ART OF COLLABORATION

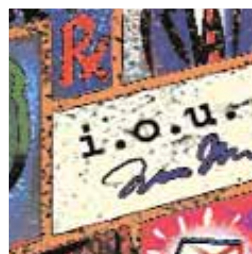
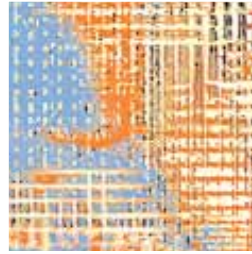
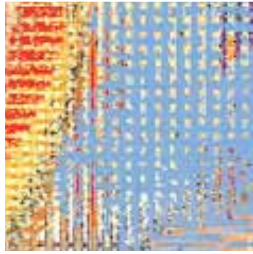
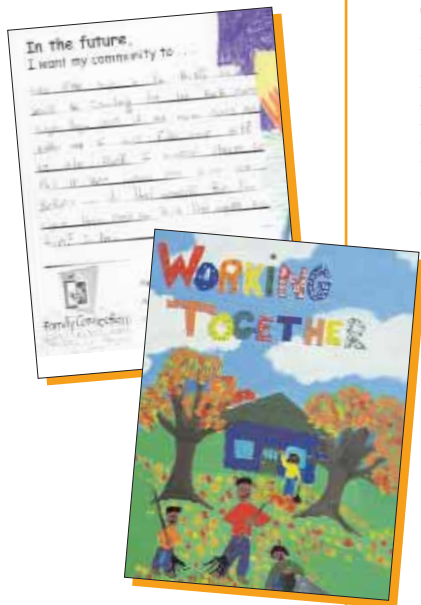


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Acknowledgements

Family Connection Partnership appreciates the board members, Family Connection coordinators, and partners who contributed to our Fiscal Year 2006 Year-End Report. Thank you for contributing to our collective success.

When does collaboration become...



We can admire a collaborative success story like a framed masterpiece in a museum, yet hidden from view are the great relationships that produced it. Collaboration becomes art when we begin with a plan and end with a measurable outcome; when we share authority and accountability, and risks and rewards; when our work is mission focused, moving strategies toward improved outcomes. Like the masterpiece that does not spring fully conceived from an artist's mind, a successful collaboration requires passion, talent, patience, flexibility, hard work, and a commitment to completion.

Since 1991, Family Connection has collaborated to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities in Georgia. The statewide network of 159 county collaboratives is comprised of community partners that include families, local business and civic leaders, local elected officials, faith-based and school-based organizations, and public/private human service providers. Each collaborative coordinates a planning process that identifies community needs and resources, sets goals and priorities, evaluates strategies and practices, and measures and reports results for its county.

Family Connection Partnership is the supporting state intermediary that links more than 3,000 partners throughout the network, builds the capacity of partners to implement their community plans, and leverages resources to help partners strengthen families.

This FY06 Year-End Report highlights a year of our collaborative efforts ***building the capacity of the Family Connection network, so its partners may focus their passion, hard work, and commitment on working together to achieve masterful results.***

The art of **Working Together**...



**Albert Wright, Board Chair and Gaye Morris Smith, Executive Director
Family Connection Partnership**

The strength of our Board of Directors, like the work of Family Connection, is built on great relationships and strong community participation. Our board draws its members from families, collaboratives, state agencies, and business and community leaders because strong community participation grounds our work.

As leaders focused on the bottom line and results, the board directed the implementation of new tools and processes that improve efficiencies in our work and solidify the unique niche that we have in the Family Connection network. We invested in a new Web-based electronic reporting tool that streamlines collaborative reporting. The *Family Connection Collaborative Information Management Systems* (CIMS) reduces reporting time, securely stores data, and tracks the work of Family Connection statewide—giving us access to thousands of program initiatives, resources, and community partners working on behalf of children and families. We also supported the implementation of the *Family Connection Collaborative Standards for Excellence in Collaboration and Community Decision-Making*. Standards provide guidelines and build upon measures for collaborative success that is necessary in achieving the results we desire.

When it comes to the *Art of Collaboration*, I think of Family Connection collaboratives creating individual sketches of their work, the board providing the strategic vision for the big picture, and Family Connection Partnership supplying the canvas for the collaborative masterpiece. It is through these relationships, and our working together, that we can depict positive outcomes for children, families, and communities in Georgia.

I thank our board members, funders, partners, collaboratives, staff, and many supporters for their artful contribution to our work.

*Albert L. Wright
Board Chair
Family Connection Partnership*

Family Connection Partnership has a special relationship with its partners. Whatever brings us together—creating collaborative standards, analyzing the impact of our work, or launching new initiatives—our missions gain strength when we work together.

This past year marked an increase in our collaborative efforts to support Family Connection and its work to improve outcomes for children, families, and communities in Georgia. In the five stories featured in this report, we highlight some of the teams, partners, and collaboratives that worked together and the results they collectively achieved.

Behind the scenes, more and more state and national partners have invited us to help with their initiatives and identify best practices in communities throughout Georgia. Our work with many of our public and private partners covered a myriad of issues: foster care, truancy prevention, early care and learning, health insurance coverage, community economic development, child advocacy, male involvement, and youth and adult leadership. We also supported our legislators by providing data from KIDS COUNT and the collaborative annual plans, and by providing input on policies that potentially impact children.

When I think about the *Art of Collaboration*, I think about a quote from St. Francis of Assisi:

He who works with his hands is a laborer. He who works with his hands and his head is a craftsman. He who works with his hands and his head and his heart is an artist.

I thank the many artists who contributed their passion, hard work, and commitment to better the lives of Georgians.

*Gaye Morris Smith
Executive Director
Family Connection Partnership*

Collaborative Standards



Quality measures that encourage growth, show progress, and focus on the mission of Family Connection are foundational to the art of collaboration. As Family Connection builds upon the measures implemented since 1991, it needs guidelines with criteria for achieving greater success.

Family Connection Standards for Excellence in Collaboration and Community Decision-Making was developed to meet this need. The Standards development process began in FY03 when Family Connection Partnership established a workgroup comprised of state and community representatives. Over the next two years, the workgroup developed drafts, solicited input from communities, and piloted the Standards in FY05. The resulting Standards provide five measures of collaborative responsibility: governance, strategic planning, evaluation, finance, and administration and operation; and criteria for meeting three status levels: *meets standards*, *proficient*, and *model of excellence*.

Objectives this past year were to implement Standards for all Family Connection collaboratives and support efforts for collaboratives to achieve the *meets standards* status level.



Working Together

A diverse workgroup, technical assistance teams, and a statewide effort

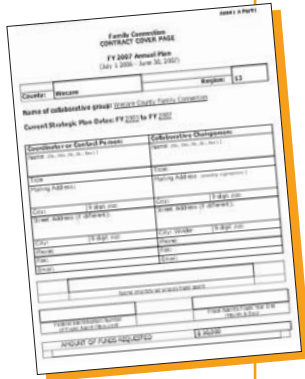
Implementing Standards took a year-long collaborative effort. Family Connection collaboratives submitted their required documentation, including strategic and annual plans, quarterly expenditure and program reports, Self Assessment, Evaluation Plan and Results Report, and Collaborative Member Survey. The Standards workgroup team, consisting of coordinators and Family Connection Partnership staff and consultants, verified the Self Assessment reports through regional on-site visits, and reviewed Standards. Technical assistance teams developed resources and followed up with collaboratives that had areas of improvement.



Achieving Results

Initiation of Standards process statewide

Family Connection Partnership met its objective to fully implement Standards throughout the Family Connection network: 159 county collaboratives completed the Standards process, with the focus on the *meets standards* status level, and Family Connection Partnership supported collaboratives throughout implementation. Completion of the process included feedback to each collaborative, which revealed the need for a few modifications as identified by collaboratives and Family Connection Partnership staff. Those changes have since been made. In FY07, those who achieve the *meets standards* status level may choose to apply for the *proficient* status level.



Coming in FY07

- Proficient status level becomes available to those who achieve *meets standards* status level
- Workgroup will focus on *model of excellence* status level for implementation in FY08

The art of **Performing**...

Collaborative Standards bring elements of quality and accountability to Family Connection by articulating criteria and measures of quality performance.



Phyllis Brunson
Project Manager

Center for the Study
of Social Policy,
Washington, D.C.

Our organization, with our national partners, periodically convenes to study the effectiveness of community decision-making efforts across the country, so I was excited to be a part of the early workgroup that discussed setting Standards for Georgia's Family Connection.

Across the country people and neighborhoods have embraced community collaboration to achieve better results for children and families, but without formalized standards for goals and outcomes, there is no accountability structure. The *Theory of Change*, which is the foundation for Family Connection and many community collaborations nationwide, calls for specific core components that must be present and working well for community partnership efforts to capitalize on opportunities to improve the well-being of children and families. These core components are now captured in the Family Connection formal Standards. A standards process helps to guide partnerships as they build these core components.

The open process used by Family Connection to develop formal Standards—forming a workgroup of community and collaborative members consisting of state and regional partners to work together—allowed the best set of Standards to be established because they were developed with input from all stakeholders. When the Standards were implemented in FY06, communications were kept open with the workgroup to adapt and improve the Standards as they were implemented and to determine the appropriate technical assistance necessary. This process gave Family Connection collaboratives ownership in developing and setting its own Standards—a critical component to successful community decision-making work.

Georgia's Family Connection is unique in setting this level of performance expectations for its collaboratives. We're looking to Georgia to help us raise the bar and push these ideas nationally.

My first experience with the implementation of Standards showed me that we (the collaboratives and Family Connection Partnership) are collaborating to achieve results.

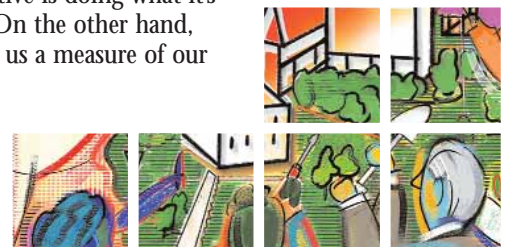
As part of the Standards review process, Family Connection Partnership sent a status letter to each collaborative chair, coordinator, and fiscal agent. Our fiscal agent received the letter first and was anxious because corrective action was requested on some indicators. When I received the letter and noticed the requested corrective action, I thought we had already fulfilled the requirements on those indicators. I notified Family Connection Partnership about my concerns and they responded quickly and in a professional manner. As a result, the Self Assessment items we misinterpreted were clarified and changed on the FY06 Self Assessment, and in the future, Family Connection Partnership will send notifications to coordinators first.

Shortly after this experience, my region selected me as its representative to the Standards workgroup. Working with this group has been a rewarding experience because up until this point, most of my collaboration experience had been at the local level. It has also given me a deeper appreciation for performance standards. On one hand, when a collaborative is doing what it's supposed to be doing, we do not want to be bothered. On the other hand, we want to be recognized for our efforts. Standards give us a measure of our performance and the autonomy to continue our work.



Tim Grizzle,
Coordinator

Union County
Family Connection
Commission, Ga.

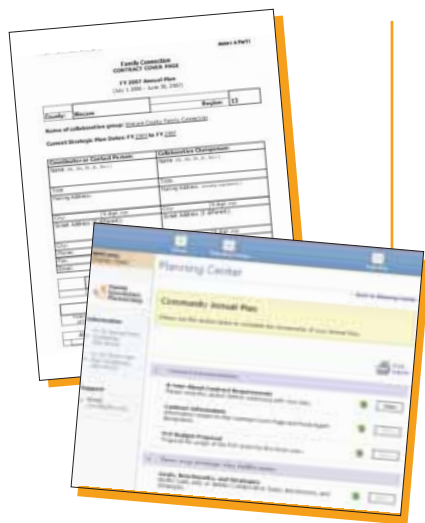




Documenting community plans, meeting contractual requirements, and accurately reporting the work of Family Connection advances the art of collaboration. As Family Connection validates its work, it needs a process to streamline reporting and a means to readily share data and best practices.

The *Collaborative Information Management System (CIMS)* was developed to meet those needs. In FY05, Family Connection Partnership contracted with software developer CYAN Data Systems to create a Web-based, centralized reporting system that offers collaboratives the ability to log on anywhere/anytime, enter reports using time-saving wizards, automatically format reports to meet state requirements, store information in a secure central database, and access collaborative information instantly.

Objectives this past year were to roll out CIMS and transition the reporting and reviewing process to CIMS.



Coming in FY07

- Collaboratives will continue to enter their required reports
- CIMS development team will create administration enhancements
- Family Connection Partnership will create a dedicated Community Information Management Team



Working Together Family Connection Partnership, CYAN Data Systems, and Family Connection Collaboratives

Family Connection Partnership staff worked together with Ryan Adams and Cliff Lardin from CYAN Data Systems to roll out CIMS at the Family Connection Conference in October 2005. After the conference, the Family Connection Partnership Community Support team worked with local collaboratives to schedule training sessions and find computer labs to host 13 regional training sessions. Once the training was complete, counties entered their plans, received feedback from Family Connection Partnership reviewers, and made the necessary corrections to successfully submit their plans. Part of the documentation collaboratives entered also was used in the Collaborative Standards process.



Achieving Results All collaboratives submitted plans via CIMS

Family Connection Partnership met its objective to roll out CIMS: CIMS was presented at the Family Connection Conference and later delivered in 13 regional training sessions. The second objective also was met to transition reporting to CIMS: All collaboratives successfully entered their required plans via CIMS; Family Connection Partnership conducted its review process for plans, contracts, and quarterly reports; and the Standards team used the collected information to process Collaborative Standards. In FY07, counties will continue to enter their required reports, including their Annual Plans, Three-Year Strategic Plans, and Self Assessments.

The art of Informing...

Collaborative Information Management System streamlines the process of reporting and sharing information about Family Connection.



**Julie Chance,
Executive Director**

Jenkins County Family
Enrichment Center, Ga.

Prior to Family Connection Partnership developing CIMS, Family Connection collaboratives in Region 7 worked with CYAN Data Systems to develop a local centralized database to streamline information sharing. Nine counties worked on the initial development: Jenkins, Richmond, Glascock, Hancock, Lincoln, Wilkes, Screven, Jefferson, and Warren counties. Our local system was so successful we introduced CYAN Data Systems to Family Connection Partnership, which sparked the idea for a statewide system.

CIMS turned out to be exactly what Family Connection coordinators and Family Connection Partnership staff needed because CYAN Data Systems collaborated with us throughout the development process. Collaboratives participated in the alpha and beta tests and in the CIMS pilot, giving feedback and suggestions that helped shape the final design. Many of us also assisted Family Connection Partnership when they delivered statewide training to collaboratives, which offered valuable hands-on practice before the system went live in February.

In addition to streamlining our reporting process, CIMS is valuable for state partners because it houses data on all 159 counties. Think about it; if a partner has resources for after-school programs, Family Connection Partnership can tap into CIMS to see which counties are working on that indicator or which counties have a need. Knowledge is definitely power.

Building a database is a lot like the work we do in our communities: It takes vision, collaboration, and the efforts of many to achieve results. I appreciate Family Connection Partnership for involving us in the process to create this resource.



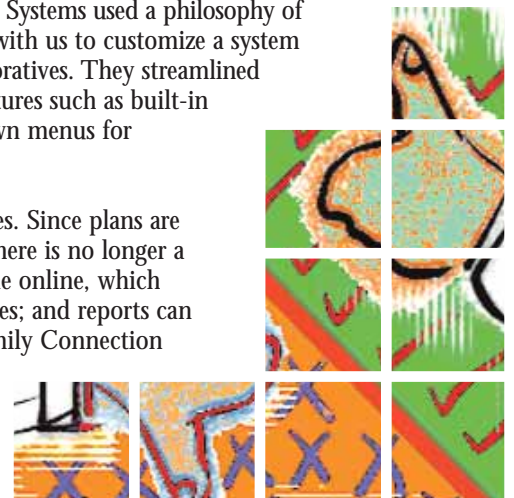
**Sayge Medlin,
Community
Information Manager**

Family Connection
Partnership, Ga.

The old reporting system and its “paper trail” was a challenge for everyone involved. Coordinators spent a lot of time manually formatting their documents in order to meet contract requirements, and then had to mail the entire document to us each time they had a correction. For Family Connection Partnership staff, that meant processing multiple reports for 159 county collaboratives, which included tracking full sets of documentation for each revision.

When Region 7 told us about their success in building a centralized database for their counties, we contacted their software developer, CYAN Data Systems, to see if they could build a statewide system for collaborative reporting. CYAN Data Systems used a philosophy of collaboration in designing our system, working closely with us to customize a system that reflected our needs and the needs of county collaboratives. They streamlined the collaborative reporting process by incorporating features such as built-in formatting, automated math calculations, and drop-down menus for standard codes.

The value of CIMS is that it manages time and resources. Since plans are entered electronically, changes can be made online, so there is no longer a need to mail full sets of documents; reviews can be made online, which saves time and money for review teams and collaboratives; and reports can be generated instantly, giving us a bird’s eye view of Family Connection initiatives and outcomes across the state.



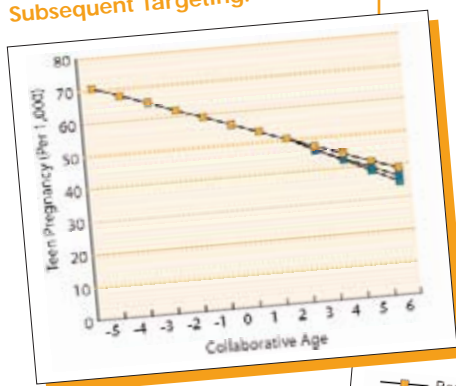


Studies that use local, state, and national data to examine the work of Family Connection are paramount to the art of collaboration. As partners, key stakeholders, and policymakers make crucial decisions that impact children and families, their need increases for evidence-based reports so they can make informed decisions.

An outcome analysis was initiated by Family Connection Partnership to meet one such need. The analysis examined the effect on indicators when Family Connection collaboratives formed in counties. Teen pregnancy and high school completion were chosen as the first indicators to study because they are targeted by a large number of collaboratives and there are data available for them in the KIDS COUNT database from 1994-2003.

The objective of this study was to identify counties that had a favorable pattern of change in the indicators and to identify characteristics of community collaboration associated with that change. The indicators were examined for changes at critical points in time: prior to the formation of collaboratives, two–four years after collaborative formation, and thereafter.

Declining Teen Pregnancy Rates Associated with Collaborative Formation and Subsequent Targeting.



Coming in FY07

- Findings on high school completion will be reported
- Further analyses will examine other indicators targeted by Family Connection

- Rate of decline prior to age 2 & projected after age 2—all counties statewide
- Rate of decline after collaborative age 2—all counties with collaboratives
- Rate of decline after collaborative age 2—counties targeting for 3 years (2000-2002: n=65)



Working Together

Statewide data counts

Evaluating data of this kind takes a team effort. Family Connection Partnership evaluation consultants from six organizations contributed to this study, which was based on KIDS COUNT data as well as data collected from Family Connection collaboratives' Self Assessments.



Achieving Results

Rates decline faster in counties with collaboratives

The most recent findings indicate that while teen pregnancy rates declined for the average county statewide during 1994-2003, they declined faster in counties with collaboratives—starting two years after collaborative formation—and even faster in counties with collaboratives that targeted the indicator for multiple years. In FY07, the findings for high school completion will be reported and further analyses will examine the effects of collaborative characteristics on these and other indicators, such as repeat teen births and low birthweight, considering differences in communities, including county size and socioeconomic conditions.

The art of Measuring...

Examining our work gives us the opportunity to know if we are making a difference and to replicate success in communities throughout Georgia.



**Alan Essig,
Executive Director**

Georgia Budget and
Policy Institute, Ga.

There is a new budget language in the General Assembly based on *outcomes*. Legislators want to know if their investments are paying off, and for that, they need information backed by hard facts.

Family Connection Partnership's recent outcome analysis is significant because it shows that when local communities focus on specific issues and drive resources to those issues, those communities can make a more significant impact. Outcomes not only have implications on policy, budget, and agency groups, they have economic implications for communities—if a county has fewer teen pregnancies and more youth graduating from high school, they have an advantage in attracting more business. Even if the outcomes from this report were negative, the study would have been valuable. Knowing what doesn't work is just as important because it provides an opportunity to go back and make adjustments. Any results we get help us make better programs and shape Georgia's future.



**Michele Ozumba,
Executive Director**

Georgia Campaign for
Adolescent Pregnancy
Prevention (G-CAPP), Ga.

Despite much progress over the past decade, Georgia's teen pregnancy rates are currently among the highest in the nation. We recognize that targeted and sustained community engagement at the local level is essential to addressing this critical issue. That is why G-CAPP is convening community, government, and nonprofit partners in three geographically diverse regions of the state—Regions 1, 10, and 12—to engage in open dialogue about the health status of teens, to examine the many environmental factors that influence teen pregnancy, and to develop creative collaborative efforts to prevent early pregnancy among teens in their communities.

Evaluation studies are critical to our work. We have evaluation consultants and we rely on data and studies from the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and KIDS COUNT.

The Family Connection Partnership outcome analysis gives us a good start, but we need to dig deeper. Once counties that have a significant decline in teen pregnancy are identified, we need to identify their best practices so they can be replicated. We need to see what models they are using, what agencies are involved, and what the outcomes are. We are excited to see that Family Connection Partnership plans to take their outcome analysis to the next level in FY07.

G-CAPP is a partner with Family Connection Partnership and a strong supporter of its community-based work. We hope to work together with the Family Connection network on our major multi-year initiative to strengthen community involvement in adolescent pregnancy prevention in our state. The project, "Taking Time for Teens: Empowering Georgia Communities to Prevent Teen Pregnancy," is supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.





Sharing information, keeping partners informed, and promoting the work of Family Connection are fundamental to the art of collaboration. As Family Connection expands its network in communities, counties, and regions across Georgia, it needs communication tools that connect its partners to the network.

Collaborative Webs was developed to meet that need. In FY05, Family Connection Partnership developed this comprehensive communication tool that offers collaboratives a unique Web site address, Web site hosting on the Family Connection Partnership server, a standard Web site template, and a simple application for updating and managing their Web site—all at no cost to the collaborative.

Objectives this past year were to roll out Collaborative Webs, train coordinators on the tool, and establish Web sites for all collaboratives in the Family Connection network.



Coming in FY07

- Technical support for new coordinators in the fall
- Advanced training tips and conference calls
- Enhanced calendar functions, new spell checker, and new message board



Working Together

Cross-team collaboration works

Family Connection Partnership staff collaborated in a cross-team effort to roll out Collaborative Webs to all county collaboratives. The Public Affairs and Policy team developed workshop manuals and promotional materials, and coordinated the logistics for regional workshops. When they needed to find facilities to host the workshops in each region, they contacted local Family Connection collaboratives, who used the power of their network to find regional computer labs. The Community Support team learned about Collaborative Webs in order to test workshop manuals, facilitate the workshops, and provide technical assistance in their regions. The Finance and Administration team kept a close eye on the Family Connection Partnership server, working closely with the developer to make necessary enhancements.



Achieving Results

137 new Web sites built with Collaborative Webs

Collaborative Webs officially rolled out at the Family Connection Winter Training Event in Atlanta in February 2006. The Family Connection Partnership Public Affairs director gave a presentation to 300 attendees and the technical assistance team delivered its first Collaborative Webs workshop to 20 coordinators. In April and May, the technical assistance team hit the road to deliver 13 workshops across Georgia—one to each Family Connection region and one make-up session. The results of this collaboration exceeded the team's expectations—200 people attended Collaborative Webs workshops, which resulted in collaboratives developing 137 new Family Connection collaborative Web sites.

The art of Promoting...

Collaborative Webs offers free Web sites with a branded design and a standard Web site address: www.gafcp.org/fcnetwork/countyname.



**Will Doss, Executive Director
and Doris Breland, Assistant**

Spalding County
Collaborative Authority for
Families and Children, Ga.

Seated l-r: Joanne Todd, Will Doss, Doris Breland. Standing: Eddie Whitlock, Joseph Walker, Eddie Goss.

Our collaborative had a well-established Web site that received more than 7,000 hits a month, so we were reluctant to move to Collaborative Webs. But when we learned that updating our existing site would cost \$300-\$600, we decided to take a closer look.

We attended a Collaborative Webs workshop and discovered how easy it was to update text and photos, post our events on a calendar, and share documents—all by using a simple program we could access from our Web browser. We also liked the idea of being able to update our site without having to pay a Web designer. But the one thing that really won us over was learning that we would be able to keep our existing Web site address by using an inexpensive forwarding service. That meant our existing partners could still find us at www.SpaldingCollaborative.com, while others in the Family Connection network could find us by entering www.gafcp.org/fcnetwork/spalding.

We worked together with our old Web designer and the Family Connection Partnership technical assistance team to make a smooth transition. When our collaborative Web site was finished, we promoted it by having a ribbon-cutting ceremony and sending e-mail announcements to our partners, with links to specific pages that highlighted the new features.

Promoting our Family Connection collaborative takes a team effort. We thank Family Connection Partnership for offering Collaborative Webs, and our partners who have been so supportive, especially the Griffin-Spalding County Chamber of Commerce, City of Griffin, Spalding County, and Griffin-Spalding County School System.

More and more, funders and partners expect organizations to have Web sites to show examples of their work and the results of their efforts. Our collaborative had been paying \$350 a year for two Web sites and e-mail accounts. So when Family Connection Partnership announced Collaborative Webs, which included a free Web site for each collaborative, it seemed like a money-saving idea.

I like the Collaborative Webs layout because it is simple, clean, and easy to find information. The branded design helps associate our collaborative with the Family Connection network, which helps establish our credibility.

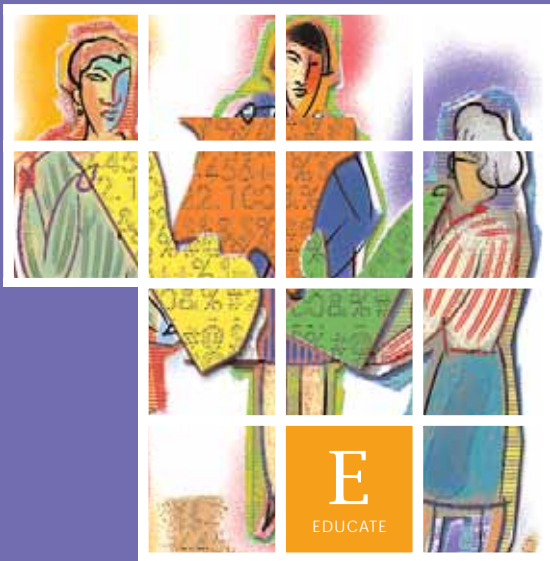
My personal vision is to tell the story of our Family Connection collaborative through our Web site, because if we don't tell the story, no one will know it. Part of my plan is to use our Web site to promote our partners' work in the community. One such partner is Rope of Hope Outreach Ministries, which works to unite the efforts of many groups. We plan to work with Rope of Hope Outreach Ministries to promote its 5th Annual Community Outreach Health Fair, a major event in our county.

Our new Web site is a lot like our Family Connection collaborative—it is a work in progress. We look forward to developing our Web site and using it to promote our work.



**Charles Everitt,
Executive Director**

Lanier Commission for Children,
Youth and Families, Inc., Ga.



Organizing learning activities, sharing best practices, and building strong leaders are distinctive characteristics of the art of collaboration. With county collaboratives spread across Georgia, Family Connection needs opportunities to come together to share best practices and lessons learned.

Collaborative events are regularly scheduled to meet those needs. The 2005 Family Connection Biennial Conference was hosted by Family Connection Partnership, October 16 – 18, in Athens, Ga. The conference featured three exceptional speakers who inspired attendees to return to their work as “hope brokers” to Georgia’s children, families, and communities; 45 workshops led by staff, collaboratives, and partners; 44 exhibitors representing partners and state agencies; a celebration dinner; and an awards luncheon that recognized Family Advisors, Family Connection coordinators with five and 10 years of service, and the People’s Choice Award winners voted as outstanding achievers in their field by conference attendees.

The 2006 Winter Training Event was hosted by Family Connection Partnership, February 20, in Atlanta, Ga. It featured state partners who shared inspiring messages, and made available their latest initiatives,

work, and resources to Family Connection. Mavis Moore, director of Terrell County Department of Family and Children Services, delivered the keynote speech, and six partners led workshops: Education GO Get It!, Communities in Schools, University of Georgia Fanning Institute and Georgia 4-H Youth, Georgia Partnership for Youth Investment, Truancy Intervention Project, and Family Connection coordinators.

The 2006 Family Connection Day Breakfast, held February 21, in Atlanta, Ga. offered a special treat this year for state partners and legislators. Three young Georgians shared their visions for what they want their communities to look like in the future and what they are doing to turn their visions into realities. Youth speakers included 9-year-old Alexa Sheets from Henry County, 18-year-old Christopher Jackson from Forsyth County, and 18-year-old Daphne Burden from Lamar County.



Working Together

Committees and staff roll up their sleeves

The Family Connection Conference was organized by a committee comprised of Family Connection family representatives and coordinators, and Family Connection Partnership staff and board members, who worked together for more than a year, meeting once a month to coordinate the logistics, develop the program, and solicit sponsorships and exhibits. When the three-day conference took place, the conference committee and the entire Family Connection staff worked the conference, collaboratives and state partners led the workshops, and more than 1,200 children contributed essays and artwork on the topic, “What I want my community to look like in the future.”



Achieving Results

More than 1,200 partners experienced learning opportunities

The objectives for the conference and Winter Training Event were to provide networking and learning opportunities, and to celebrate success, both of which were met. More than 600 participants attended the conference, and 300 participants attended both the Winter Training Event and Family Connection Day Breakfast. Family Connection Partnership was able to host these events thanks to the collaborative work of our committee and partners, and thanks to our many sponsors whose generous contributions made these events possible.



Coming in FY07

- Winter Training Event
Feb. 20, 2007
- Family Connection Day
Feb. 21, 2007
- Family Connection Conference
Oct. 24 - 27, 2007

The art of Learning...

Collaborative events offer the best opportunity to learn from peers and partners, share best practices, and take leadership roles.



**Tara Jennings,
Coordinator**

Bryan County Family
Connection, Ga.

Working on the conference committee was a unique process that exemplified collaboration; a lot of diverse people brought their talents and ideas to the table. At times it seemed overwhelming, and I'm sure we all wondered how the big picture would come together, but piece by piece, we worked the puzzle and the end results were truly amazing.

When we brainstormed ideas for conference workshops, we talked about featuring community best practices. Bryan County's Juvenile Diversion program was unique and successful, so I took that idea back to my county to see if they thought it would make a good topic, and they suggested I lead a workshop.

Like most best practices, ours began with a problem: Bryan County had 320 juvenile cases and one case worker. It involved collaboration: Representatives from law enforcement, juvenile justice, the district attorney, the juvenile court system, and Family Connection worked together. And it ended with measurable results: Three years later, more than 275 students completed the program with less than 8 percent recidivism, math and English grade-point averages increased by 1.5, and absentee levels decreased by three days per student.

Best practices don't always come from books—sometimes they come from real life. I challenge collaboratives to share their best practices so we're not reinventing the wheel. The conference is the perfect opportunity to step up to the table.



Family Connection Day Breakfast

Youth Keynote Speakers



"I challenge my generation to help public areas by planting flowers, placing trash cans, forming recycling plans, and repainting buildings with bright colors. I encourage youth to get involved and write to city officials, go to town hall meetings, and go straight to the mayor. In the future, I'd like my community to have a large youth center with a library, art room, movie room, and lounge open to children after school and on the weekends."

Alexa Sheets—Henry County Student



"In the future, I'd like to see my community keep its small town appeal, even though it is transitioning from a farming community to a bedroom suburb of Atlanta. I challenge youth and adults to work together to solve transportation and pollution problems—two areas that impact the environment. I also encourage youth to vote once they turn 18. Voting not only puts people in office, it affects decisions on how the community works."

Christopher Jackson—Forsyth County Student



"Now that I'm older and have worked in my community for many years, I see a lack of youth involvement in my community and I want to do something about it. I challenge adults to bring youth to the table to discuss concerns related to the community. I challenge youth to go beyond the status quo and aim high for excellence. Working together, youth and adults will accomplish even greater things in Georgia."

Daphne Burden—Lamar County Student

Collaborative Supports

Ensuring that all work is mission-focused, with measurable objectives and adequate resources, is vital to the art of collaboration. Through our work at Family Connection Partnership, we build the capacity of collaboratives and partners, promote the work of Family Connection, support state initiatives and projects, show accountability for our work, and maintain effective operations.



Technical Assistance and Training

- Delivered *Results Based Facilitation™* training to 410 participants.
- Updated *New Coordinator* training and delivered training to 67 new coordinators and fiscal agents.
- Delivered technical assistance and professional development training on topics including cultural responsiveness, board development, strategy development, contract reporting, and CIMS to more than 2,500 participants.
- Developed and delivered Web-based training on quarterly financial reporting for fiscal agents and coordinators.
- Provided technical assistance to all Family Connection collaboratives on finance, funding, evaluation, and plan review. Made more than 300 site visits; provided technical assistance to more than 2,000 attendees.
- Developed resources and targeted technical assistance for indicators frequently not met on standards review, including family engagement and financing strategies.
- Supported meetings with partners, Family Engagement, Peer-to-Peer network, CIMS, Standards Reviews, and Collaborative Webs, totaling more than 1,100 participants.
- Provided phone support and technical assistance to 100 collaboratives submitting the FY06 Electronic Quarterly Report.
- Reviewed and provided input to collaboratives regarding their result reports and evaluation plans.
- Provided more than 50 evaluation consultation visits to counties.
- Made presentations to 21 groups at the request of partners on topics such as family engagement and collaboration.

Collaborative Standards

- Managed work with the statewide Standards workgroup to make decisions about and guide the standards process.



- Implemented *Family Connection Standards for Excellence in Collaboration and Community Decision-Making*; supported collaborative efforts to achieve the *meets standards* status.
- Implemented “Collaborative Member Survey” required of all Family Connection county collaboratives.
- Finalized *proficient* status for FY07 implementation and disseminated to collaboratives.



The art of **Building**...

Family Connection Partnership builds the capacity of Family Connection collaboratives and partners.



Evaluation/Results Accountability

- Revised annual Self-Assessment and used it for the first time to measure collaborative compliance with Standards.
- Began sub-county data analysis in two metro counties and one rural county to examine specific collaborative strategy impact on specific targeted populations.
- Conducted *structural equation modeling analysis* of outcomes for two indicators: teen pregnancy and high school completion.
- Implemented revised and new indicators of child and family well-being created last year with state partners, and presented data on the Family Connection Partnership KIDS COUNT Web site.



- Awarded and supported five new grants and continued four grants initiated last year to collaboratives pursuing strategy-level evaluations.



Partnerships and Initiatives

- Developed new partnerships with Hands On Georgia, Georgia Budget and Policy Institute, Truancy Intervention Project, Certified Literate Community Program, Department of Community Affairs—Communities of Opportunity, and others.
- Served on the following steering committees, planning committees, or boards: Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) plan, Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (G-CAPP) Kellogg Grant, Georgia Afterschool Investment Council, Communities of Opportunities, First Lady's Foster Care Summits, Born Learning Campaign, Better Beginnings, and Voices for Georgia's Children.
- Continued partnership with Department of Education as member of Title I Parent Advisory Committee planning group and as member of Reading Leadership Team.
- Participated in planning and development of new training materials developed by the Better Brains for Babies initiative.
- Coordinated, evaluated, and provided match funding for graduate intern pilot program with Valdosta State University and six community collaboratives.
- Partnered with Voices for Georgia's Children, and Georgia Budget and Policy Institute to track outcomes linked to budget.

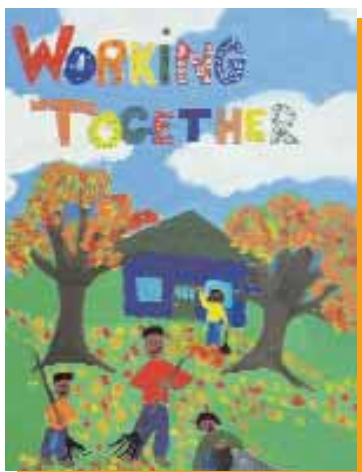


In the FY06 Year-End Report, we featured five stories that illustrate our major initiatives and work this past year. In this section, we highlight milestones in our ongoing projects, initiatives, and work to support the Family Connection network and our partners.



Communications and Policy

- Developed and distributed the following publications: FY05 Year-End Report, Connected to Public Policy News Bulletins, Policy Practices Series on child abuse and neglect, preventing high school failure, and preventing teen pregnancy; and Best Practices Fact Sheets on all five result areas for collaboratives.
- Disseminated national KIDS COUNT data and products to more than 2,000, including legislators, media, state partners, collaboratives, and other supporters.
- Provided staff support to House Study Committee on Children Birth to Five.
- Supported and attended more than 20 collaborative policymaker events, meet-the-candidates forums, and annual meetings.



Working together, The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension's Candler Children Youth and Families At-Risk project and the Candler Family Connection Collaborative have strengthened the academic and personal assets of 43 middle school students. In 2005-2006 the students designed and painted a six-canvas mural on the "Six Strengths of Successful Families."

—Mary H. White, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent
The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension
Candler County, Putting Knowledge to Work for Families and Consumers



Technology

- Implemented Collaborative Webs, an Internet tool for creating individual Web sites for Family Connection collaboratives. Work included developing and delivering rollout presentation; developing training documentation; delivering regional training to 137 collaboratives; and developing and implementing a technical assistance process.
- Piloted Collaborative Information Management System (CIMS) to more than 20 counties and tested input of FY05 Self Assessment reports.
- Provided technical support on CIMS and Collaborative Webs via phone and e-mail to more than 250 contacts.
- Collected 100 percent of annual and strategic plans in Web-based system.



The art of **Building**...

Family Connection Partnership builds the capacity of Family Connection collaboratives and partners.



Fund Development

- Advertised 46 funding opportunities for collaboratives in monthly newsletter.
- Distributed and managed FY06 state grants of \$50,000 to each of the 159 Family Connection collaboratives.
- Received grants from several foundations for continued support: Robert W. Woodruff, Annie E. Casey, and UPS Foundation.
- Pursued opportunity with Voices for Georgia's Children for a Child Health Narrative grant.
- Partnered with the Supreme Court of Georgia to apply for federal Healthy Marriage Initiative grant with focus on child welfare, child placement and decrease in domestic violence caseload in court.
- Coordinated transition of Targeted Case Management Medicaid Services to Care Management Organizations with county collaboratives and Department of Community Health.



- Began Resource Mapping Pilot to assist collaboratives in identifying funds available for implementation of their collaborative plan.
- Expanded database to link FY06 community contact and plan information to Department of Human Resources contract and reporting processes, and relevant Standards indicators.



Events

- Planned, coordinated, and hosted the 8th Biennial Family Connection Conference in Athens, Ga., featuring 45 workshops, offered in nine subject tracks and four skill levels; 44 exhibits, the awards luncheon, and networking opportunities. More than 600 participants attended.
- Hosted the first People's Choice Awards at the Family Connection Conference. The following winners were voted as outstanding achievers in their field by conference attendees: David Westerfield, Laurens County, Outstanding Collaborative Chair; Connie Smith, Laurens County, Outstanding Collaborative Coordinator; Joyce Causey, Calhoun County, Outstanding Collaborative Partner; April Smith, Region 8, Outstanding Family Advocate; Lumpkin County School System, Brenda Branson, Outstanding Fiscal Agent.
- Planned, coordinated, and hosted the 2006 Winter Training Event, featuring 12 best-practice sessions led by state partners, Family Connection coordinators, and Family Connection Partnership staff. Nearly 300 participants attended, representing 120 Georgia counties.
- Planned, coordinated, and hosted the 2006 Family Connection Day, celebrating 15 years of Family Connection. Nearly 300 participants attended.
- Provided information, exhibits, and presentations for annual meetings and legislative events sponsored by the following organizations: Georgia Press Association, Georgia Rural Development Council, Georgia Municipal Association, Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, G-CAPP, and Office of Child Support.





Family Connection Partnership Finance Report



Bob M. Patterson
Board Treasurer

As treasurer and member of the Family Connection Partnership Executive Committee, I appreciate that collaboration is an integral component of our financial picture.

Many partners at the local, state, and regional level work with Family Connection Partnership to provide the financial support needed to maintain the important work of this initiative. State partners and private foundations provide funding and support for our pace-setting and ongoing work. And the Georgia legislative and executive branches provide continued support to Family Connection Partnership, which allows us to support the Family Connection network.

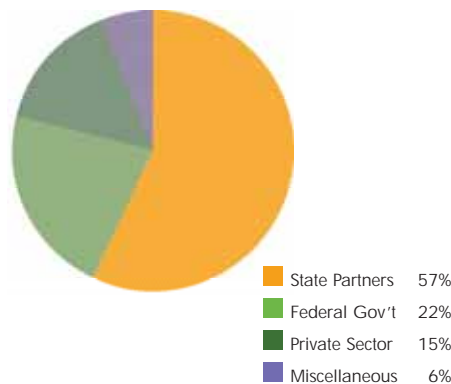
I am pleased to report that Family Connection Partnership ended Fiscal Year 2006 in excellent financial condition, as illustrated in the graphs below. For the fifth year in a row we have received an “unqualified opinion” on our audit. This opinion means there were no problems or areas of concern noted on the final report, which reflects well on the organization and the competency and professionalism of Don Walraven, our chief financial officer.

It has been a privilege working together with this impressive organization and seeing Family Connection continue to achieve results in communities across Georgia.

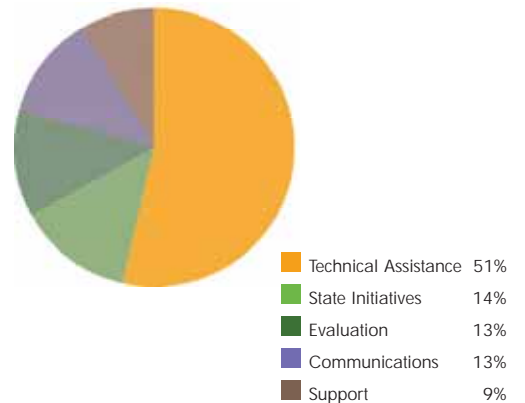
Yours in a Common Cause,

Bob M. Patterson
Board Treasurer

Family Connection Partnership Sources of Revenue FY06



Family Connection Partnership Functional Expenditures FY06



The art of Sustaining...

Family Connection Partnership sustains the Family Connection network in its work to achieve results for children, families, and communities in Georgia.

Family Connection Partnership

Family Connection Partnership is a public/private nonprofit created and funded by the State of Georgia and the private sector.

Our Mission is to work in partnership with communities, policymakers, service providers, businesses, advocates, and families to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities in Georgia.

Our Vision is for children in Georgia to be healthy, ready to start and succeed in school, have stable, self-sufficient families, and live in strong communities.

Our Goals as a nonprofit intermediary organization are to work closely with the network of county collaboratives, and state and national partners to:

1. Provide a framework for planning and collaboration to improve results for children, families, and communities in Georgia.
2. Build and maintain relationships with public and private agencies and communities to share and combine resources, link priorities, and improve services and supports for families.
3. Increase awareness, understanding, and commitment to improve results for children and families in Georgia.
4. Identify best practices of community collaboratives and develop capacity for conducting research and evaluation.
5. Sustain an effective, accountable organizational structure to support the mission of the Family Connection Partnership and leverage resources on behalf of the network of community collaboratives.

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 Carlisa Beal
- Community Support**
Aubrey Harris, Director
 Natasha White

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 Region 3 Paula Semple
 Rita Morgan
 Region 4 Joey Mullins
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