



2008 Year-End Report

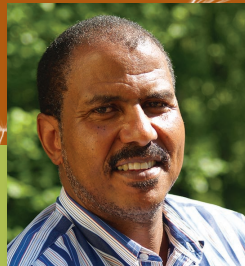


**on the road to  
better outcomes**



“The Georgia Family Connection collaborative model has become a **proven practice** other states and countries are interested in replicating. I've observed **how we've grown** from 15 counties in 1991 to the largest statewide collaborative serving 159.”

— Albert Wright, Board Chair  
GEORGIA FAMILY CONNECTION PARTNERSHIP



## From the Board Chair

Looking back on the past year I am constantly reminded of the challenges associated with the endless pursuit of improving the lives of children and families in Georgia.

Just when it seems we might catch a breath, the economy falters, budgets are cut, and the task that lies before us seems even greater. At this moment I say to you, do not panic. Panic is for those who have little faith and have not learned to cope. Now is the time to examine ourselves and our processes, to trim the fat and streamline our vital organization.

Georgia Family Connection Partnership's responsibility in times like these is to find ways to do more with less. Focus on those areas where we can have the greatest impact. Make sure our planning is in place while being at the forefront of advocacy for those we serve. Tough tasks in tough times require dedication, vision, and most of all, action, if we are to continue our vital mission.

During my tenure as Board chair, I was always proud of the manner in which you, the staff, the collaborative organizations, and the many volunteers have operated in tough times. It is my hope that you continue to strive to complete the mission and goals of the Partnership. As I've stated in the past, you can always tell when you're on the right path because it's uphill. When it's easy, little is being accomplished and we stop honing our skills.

Never lose sight of the fact that there will always be those in need. And never lose sight that you can have an impact on the outcomes for children and families in Georgia. It's vital that you continue the data-gathering process so we can understand that impact.

I'm proud to have served as your Board chair, and even though distance separates us, I continue to monitor your progress. You bring me the most pride and hope for our children, families, and communities. Remember always, what you do for yourself dies when you die. What you do for others lives on.

I wish you continued success. Georgia is depending on you more than ever.

  
Albert Wright





## From the Executive Director

Six years ago I described Georgia Family Connection Partnership (GaFCP) and our work with three words— purpose, passion, and power.

Our purpose is clear. GaFCP is the state-level organization that supports collaboration at all levels to improve outcomes for Georgia's children and families. We also advocate for state system changes and data-driven decision-making. We share a passion for the future of Georgia's children, families, and communities that compels us to persevere when we know the journey is long and the challenges appear insurmountable. Our power is in our numbers—the Georgia Family Connection network is 159 counties strong—and in our data.

Now, a fourth “P” has emerged. We’ve *proven* that collaboration and public/private partnerships work. Local collaborative organizations leverage their dollars five to one, and regional partnerships are flourishing. We’ve also proven that we’re a reliable resource. More state and national partners are seeking information about our collaborative organizations’ priorities from their community plans, and more policymakers and counties are using our Georgia KIDS COUNT database to make informed strategic decisions.

We’ve taken a bold move this year to further prove our value. We worked vigorously with input from our Board, and from local, state, and national partners, to develop our Theory of Change Outcome Map. This innovative approach provides a high-level lens for ourselves, our funders, and our stakeholders to measure and study the work we accomplish each day to drive positive change in Georgia.

We’ll follow this roadmap over the next three years as we continue to deepen our commitment to build capacity and foster collaboration at the local and state levels.

I’m so proud of this organization and our Board for embarking on this journey, which I’m certain will pay off for us, and more significantly—for Georgia’s children, families and communities—in ways we cannot yet see.

*Gaye Morris Smith*  
Gaye Morris Smith



“We must stay true to our principles of **local decision-making** and **results accountability**.

*At the heart of our work is collaboration, which also is our business mode, where **we hold each other accountable** for results and all of us own the success.*”

—Gaye Morris Smith, Executive Director  
GEORGIA FAMILY CONNECTION PARTNERSHIP



“Change forces us to rethink our goals in order to keep in step with our mission. We need the **right people**, in the **right positions**, doing the **right things**. Georgia Family Connection is all about performances to plan. When I look at your result areas, what is so impressive is that you perform around your plan.”

— Timothy S. Mescon, President  
COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY



## Changing Direction

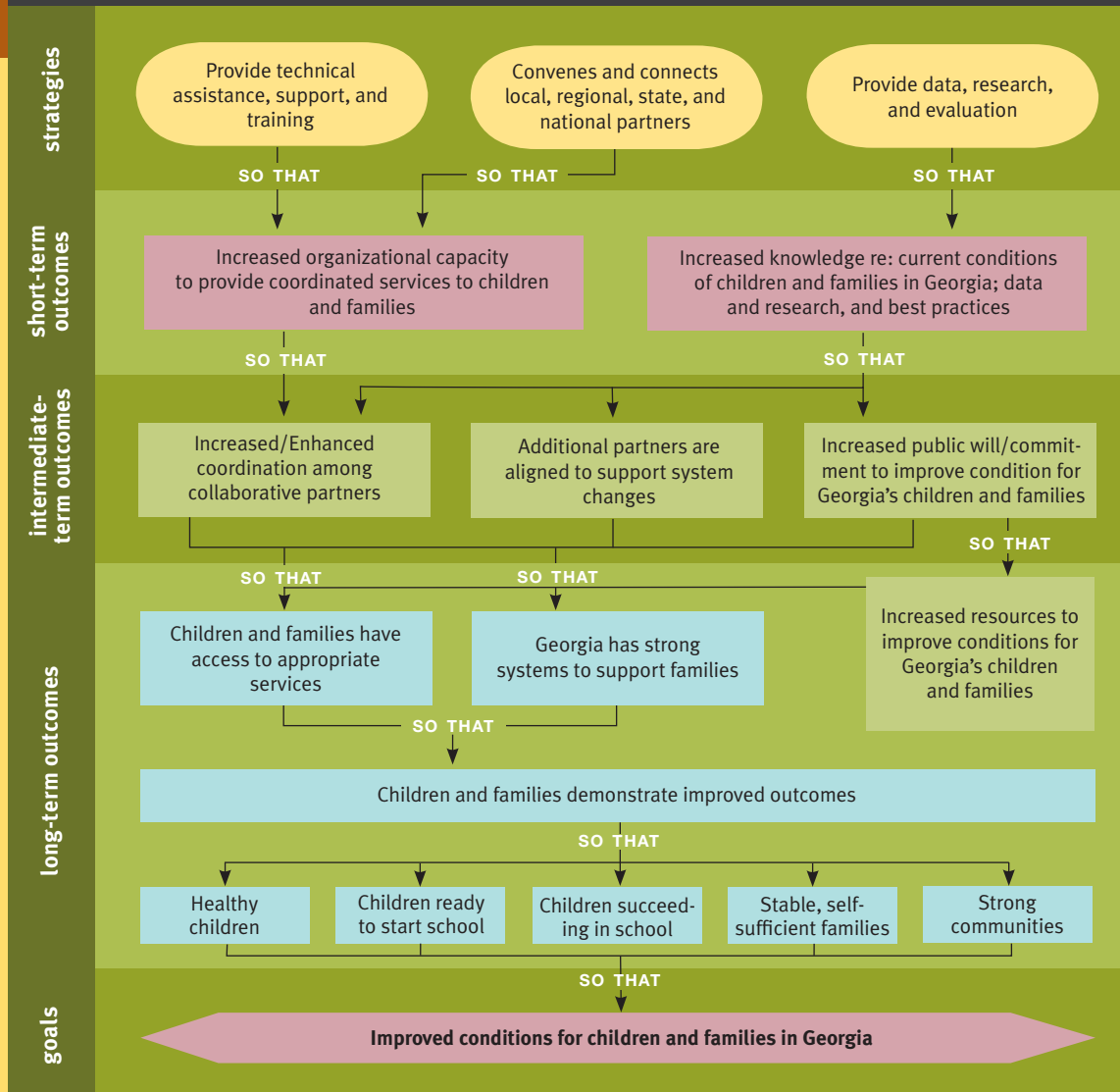
At Georgia Family Connection Partnership (GaFCP) we made one of the most aggressive and challenging decisions in our history this past year.

We've redefined ourselves before we hit our peak by intentionally questioning everything we believe and do to ensure that we're innovative while remaining true to our mission.

The Theory of Change Outcome Map we developed, with input from our local, state, and national partners, serves as a roadmap that clearly connects our work at the state level to our desired outcomes of improved conditions for Georgia's children, families, and communities.

We will follow this roadmap over the next three years as we continue to build capacity and foster collaboration at the local and state levels to ultimately improve the well-being of children — something we've always intuitively known and now are proving.

## Georgia Family Connection Partnership Theory of Change Outcome Map



“Georgia Family Connection Partnership is a **one-of-a-kind asset** because it reaches into every corner of the state, including the smallest counties, and stimulates groups of local residents to come together to make their communities **better places for parents and kids to live, work, and play.**

GaFCP has managed to do what very few organizations can, in that it maintains a hard-headed view on **tracking quantifiable results while also mobilizing individuals** in all the ways that numbers cannot measure.

GaFCP is the source of a treasure of data for the state of Georgia.”

—John Bare  
Vice President for Sports Philanthropy and Affiliated Funds  
**THE ARTHUR M. BLANK FAMILY FOUNDATION**



“Our partnership with Hall County Commission for Children and Families (HCCCF) has been invaluable in helping to research and benchmark **how our county compares** to the state and national statistics of concern to our residents. It will provide us with an ongoing measurement of key issues and whether we are **moving the needle** and improving areas of concern for Hall County.”

—Carol Williams, Senior Vice President  
**COMMUNITY IMPACT FOR  
UNITED WAY OF HALL COUNTY**



**G**eorgia Family Connection Partnership strives to help communities use data in planning to inform their

collaborative work and engage partners at every level to improve outcomes for families. The technical assistance and support we provide to Hall County Commission for Children and Families (HCCCF) led to an internationally recognized initiative the county collaborative organization spearheaded.

The Hall County community has worked for years to coordinate and improve services for children and families. In 2006 HCCCF stepped in and assembled various sectors of the community representing education, government, business, health care, housing, and social services, to discuss their needs for consistent and useful information to make a difference in their county.

The group agreed there was substantial overlap in the kinds of data they were seeking and felt much could be leveraged from a collaborative effort to identify and acquire the data that involved the entire community. After considerable discussion and researching other national projects, the group embarked on what is now known as the *Hall LIFE Report Project*.

The 2007 *Hall LIFE Report*, which Hall County Commission for Children and Families and United Way of Hall County co-presented at the Community Indicator Consortium's Sixth International Conference in June, offers strategies to improve results in the same five areas Georgia Family Connection Partnership identifies at the state level through Georgia KIDS COUNT:

- Healthy Children
- Children Ready for School
- Children Succeeding in School
- Stable, Self-Sufficient Families
- Strong Communities



The 2007 Hall LIFE Report: Public Status Report on Children and Families in Hall County, Georgia, published by HCCCF and United Way of Hall County, establishes a measure of accountability for the entire community, and gets programs and systems to work together to achieve common results.

“These community indicators show us where we stand today, and where we’ve been,” said HCCCF coordinator Mary G. Parks. “They provide us with information about something that is important to us, but that we can’t directly see. They don’t provide a comprehensive illustration of an issue, but rather, expose one essential element of the story.”

According to Parks, the indicators reveal that the county has continued to make positive strides in the health and well-being of its children and families since the mid-1990s. However, despite the gains in the quality of life, racial and ethnic disparities indicate a need for focused improvement in several areas.

More than a useful tool to align resources with needs and to stimulate strategic planning discussions, the *Hall LIFE Report* also exposes what has not worked and stimulates debate.

“Challenge the data,” said Parks. “Demand new and better indicators that will tell of community life from your perspective.

In many cases we found that the existing data does not describe important community issues as well as we would have liked. In some cases we realized there are important elements in our community that are extremely difficult to quantify. We intend to improve these areas in future reports.”

The *Hall LIFE Report* calls on community members to familiarize themselves with



the indicators, use them in their work and conversations, share the information, advocate for positive change, and get involved in the community to make a difference.

“As Hall LIFE addresses the issues that affect the quality of life of all its residents, it is our sincere desire that community leaders and representatives will use the *Hall LIFE Report* to inform current policy discussions and decision-making toward a shared vision of our community,” said Parks. “We hope this is just the beginning of an inclusive and broad community dialogue, because children, parents, and the community working together can mean a brighter future for Hall.”

READ THE *HALL LIFE REPORT* ONLINE AT  
[WWW.HCCCF.ORG](http://WWW.HCCCF.ORG)





“Education is key to building the kind of quality workforce our state needs to attract continued investment. Georgia Family Connection Partnership serves a critical purpose as our state **strives to ensure a quality education** for every one of its children. Working together, GaFCP, the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, and Communities in Schools are able to **ensure a holistic approach to improvement** that takes into account students’ needs at home, in the classroom and in the community—all three of which influence their ability to succeed.”

—George M. Israel, III, President & CEO  
GEORGIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## Driving the Work



**A**t Georgia Family Connection Partnership (GaFCP) we always have provided leadership by holding ourselves accountable for fostering collaboration among public and private organizations, promoting local decision-making, and providing family supports and services. Here are some highlights of fiscal year 2008 reflecting the core values that ground our work.

GaFCP summoned 500 practitioners, researchers, and policymakers from across the state to Athens in October 2007 to participate in the **ninth biennial Georgia Family Connection Conference**. The conference theme, Community Improvement: Tools of the Trade, was in response to Family Connection county collaborative

organizations and partners calling for practical tools to better equip their coordination and support to children and families.

Family Connection collaboratives, partners, community leaders, and public officials congregated again in Atlanta in February for the 2008 Georgia Family Connection Summit, **The Heart of Collaboration**—

**Working Together.** Participants learned about the latest initiatives and resources in Internet safety, linking economic development to our work, and meth in Georgia. Collaboratives representing 112 counties from across the state converged on the Capitol during the Summit to acknowledge legislative leaders for their ongoing support.

GaFCP also developed and hosted a new one-day conference this summer, **Engaging Latino Families—A Learning Day**. Latino families, educators, service providers, businesses, community leaders, and community-based organizations explored the multitude of issues Latino communities struggle with in Georgia, and shared ideas on how to address those challenges.



Issues ranged from the damaging effects of misinterpreting information to the importance of non-immigrants understanding their own culture and biases before working across cultures.

GaFCP **trained 2,000 collaborative members in Results Based Facilitation** and expanded new coordinator training in 2008 to include collaborative chairs and other members. While all counties met standards, six achieved Proficient designation for the first time. Family Connection collaborative organizations from Lumpkin, Meriwether, Richmond, Spalding, Warren, and Wilkes counties received the **newly established Etta Reteneller Award**, a one-time monetary grant of \$1,000 to support their work. Proficient status means these collaboratives exceeded expectations in demonstrating their commitment to developing and sustaining the collaborative



structure and processes that led to improved outcomes for children, families, and communities in their counties.

Among our work with partner organizations this year, GaFCP and Voices for Georgia's Children received funding from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation to produce a video focusing on health-care challenges for Georgians. **"Cover All Georgia's Uninsured Kids"** portrays real families telling why health care is indispensable in raising children to be successful contributors to our society.

And finally, **GaFCP captured second place in the 2008 Community Indicator Consortium (CIC) Innovation Awards** in June for our promising indicator project, "Georgia Indicators of Child, Family, and Community Well-Being: Decision-Making by the Numbers." Sponsored by the Urban Markets Initiative of the Brookings Institution, the Innovation Award recognizes the top community indicator projects in the United States and around the world that best demonstrate positive change in their communities and the power of indicators to drive that change. GaFCP was chosen from among 28 international applicants, and was recognized for its success in convening strong community partnerships and using data as a catalyst for positive change in Georgia.



“Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education highly values its relationship with Georgia Family Connection Partnership. We share a common goal of **addressing education challenges** that impact students in Georgia, and we have a mutual vision and desire to significantly improve the academic achievement in public schools. We sincerely believe that the **Georgia KIDS COUNT data** draws attention to important child and family issues in communities throughout the state. Together our organizations will realize accomplishments with enormous social value.”

— Stephen D. Dolinger, President  
**GEORGIA PARTNERSHIP  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION**



“Improving conditions for children and families is an **overwhelming task**. The only way to accomplish that is the way we’re already doing it—by finding specific targets, then picking away. Success has to occur **one household at a time**. The baby steps we take in the right direction ultimately will lead to **community-wide impact**.”

— Doug Reid, Incoming Board Chair  
GEORGIA FAMILY CONNECTION PARTNERSHIP

## Looking Ahead

Our Theory of Change Outcome Map led us to conclude that as the KIDS COUNT grantee in Georgia, and the keeper of the largest repository of data on child well-being in the state, we must not simply report on the condition of children, but assist others in strategically using that data. We can accomplish this task by remaining true to our core values that ground our work in the challenging years ahead.

We were highly concerned about the increasing number of low birthweight babies in Georgia. It is our hope that by shining light on this negative trend in 2009 and introducing new ideas in how to address it, more communities will focus on improving this indicator, which impacts health outcomes as children grow. We’ll begin this discussion in December thanks to funding from Healthcare Georgia Foundation and Kaiser Permanente when we host a Low Birthweight Promising Practices Forum with RAND Corporation and the Promising Practices Network.

We must seize every opportunity before us at Georgia Family Connection Partnership to continue to prove our vital role in assisting communities and stakeholders to achieve the results they seek. We must be a driver in making something happen and we must stay focused on the road to better outcomes.

### OUR PARTNERS

Georgia Family Connection Collaborative  
Organizations, serving 159 counties in Georgia:  
[www.gafcp.org/fcnetwork/collsearch.asp](http://www.gafcp.org/fcnetwork/collsearch.asp)

#### STATE GOVERNMENT

Division of Family & Children Services  
Division of Public Health  
Department of Juvenile Justice  
Department of Community Affairs  
Department of Community Health  
Department of Education  
Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of  
Early Care and Learning  
The Governor’s Office of Student Achievement

#### STATE GOVERNMENT COUNCILS

Georgia Children’s Trust Fund Commission  
Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Children and Youth Coordinating Council  
Georgia Rural Development Council



## From the Board Treasurer

and nonprofits may be the harshest in more than a decade. We have diligently worked to get ourselves in a steady fiscal position to ride out the current financial storm.

Navigating through these troubled economic times is challenging, but we're committed to supporting our staff and the 159 county collaborative organizations in our common mission to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities in Georgia.

Chief Financial Officer Don Walraven continues his expert and thoughtful leadership. Thanks to his staff's tireless

The current financial climate for families, corporations,

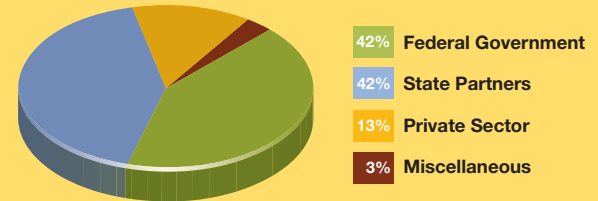
efforts to keep our financial functions strong and effective, our outside auditors gave us another above-average report. As we continue to diversify our funding streams, the ongoing blend of public and private funding is a positive sign. This balance of funding support reflects our funders' confidence in our pace-setting work.

Consistent financial support and fiscal stability are essential for any organization. I'm happy to report that once again we have achieved that milestone.

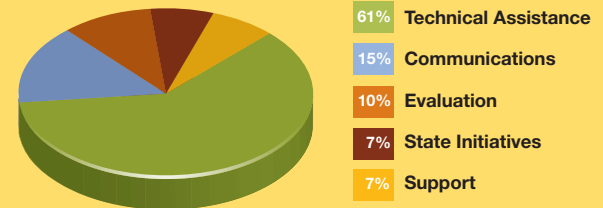
Yours in a Common Cause,

*Dr. Bob Patterson*

### SOURCES OF REVENUE FY 2008



### SOURCES OF EXPENDITURES FY 2008



#### UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

University of Georgia, College of Family & Consumer Sciences  
University of Georgia, Carl Vinson Institute of Government and Fanning Institute  
Emory University School of Law, Barton Child Law and Policy Clinic  
Valdosta State University, Division of Social Work

#### OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Smart Start Georgia  
Better Brains for Babies  
Appalachian Regional Commission  
Communities In Schools of Georgia

Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education  
Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention  
Georgia Center for Nonprofits  
Prevent Child Abuse Georgia  
United Way  
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia  
Voices for Georgia's Children  
Georgia Afterschool Investment Council  
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute  
Georgia Municipal Association  
Association of County Commissioners of Georgia  
Latin American Association

Sheltering Arms  
The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta  
Georgia Association on Young Children  
Georgia Bar Association Foundation  
Truancy Intervention Project  
Promising Practices Network

#### NEW PARTNERS

Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement  
Even Start Family Literacy Program  
Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation  
Office of Regulatory Services  
Morehouse College



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#### Stephen Dolinger

President, Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education

#### Ashley Meggitt

Senior Policy Analyst, Association County Commissioners  
of Georgia

#### Pat Willis

Executive Director, Voices for Georgia's Children

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Carlisa Beal

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Beverley Wright-Drakes  
Kathy Young

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Aubrey Harris, Director  
Natasha White

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*Region 3* Paula Semple  
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*Region 5* Nina Powers  
*Region 6* Sherry Witherington  
*Region 7* Marcell Johnson

*Region 8* Annetta Berry  
*Region 9* Santina Fryer  
*Region 10* Jenny Bostick  
*Region 11* Marion Jay Curry  
*Region 12* Lou Caputo  
*Statewide* John Bringuel  
*Statewide* Kathy O'Neal  
*Statewide* Kathy Wages

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William Valladares  
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Linda Lunsford  
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