



Kansas Children's Service League

Giving Kids Our Best. For Over 100 Years.

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Kansas Children's Service League is the Kansas Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America, a member of the Child Welfare League of America and the United Way. Accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

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New Program Assists Stressed Families

Lawrence, Kan. Struggling Douglas County parents and their young children now have access to a new early childhood program, Healthy Families. The program is being offered by the Kansas Children's Service League (KCSL) and will be housed at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department.

Healthy Families is a child abuse prevention program designed to help expectant and new parents get their children off to a healthy start. Families participate voluntarily in the program and receive home based instruction and referrals from trained staff. The program works with families overburdened by stressors such as unemployment, substance abuse, single and teenage parenthood and limited parenting skills. Healthy Families is a program of Prevent Child Abuse America (PCAA) of which KCSL is the Kansas state chapter.

"We are thrilled to have the opportunity to bring the Healthy Families program to Douglas County," said Janet Schalansky, KCSL's President and CEO. "Numerous studies show that intensive home visitation programs – like Healthy Families – promote positive parenting and healthy child development, as well as reduce the likelihood of future child abuse and neglect."

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department is a Community Service Partner with KCSL, providing office space and phone support to the Healthy Families program in partnership with its Maternal Child Health program. This partnership will help ensure coordinated services for first-time parents facing multiple stressors.

KCSL anticipates serving up to 40 families in 2009, employing three staff. The Maternal Child Health program has a team of four nurses currently serving more than 100 families.

"This partnership is a win-win for our community, especially young families," said Dan Partridge, Director of the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. By combining our resources, we will be able to restore services lost due to 2008 budget cuts."

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“Our goal is to enhance service levels without using local tax dollars,” Partridge continued. “Our focus will be to serve families in our community to improve health and developmental outcomes for children.”

Funding for this new program is through Early Childhood Block Grants awarded recently by the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund and distributed through the Kansas Early Learning Collaborative. As part of this grant, the KCSL will launch new Healthy Families programs in eight counties and expand current services in five, serving an additional 180 families statewide. Potentially, an additional 55 families may be added to this, bringing the total to 235, pending successful requests for Medicaid match funding through the Kansas Health Policy Authority. In addition to Douglas County, new counties to be served by KCSL’s Healthy Families include Bourbon, Cherokee, Crawford, Dickinson, Ellis, Finney and Leavenworth; expansions would occur in Johnson, Lyon, Reno, Shawnee and Wyandotte.

In 2008, the Kansas Legislature approved \$11.1 million in funding for early childhood programs. These funds are administered by the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund and distributed through Early Childhood Block Grants. The current award period is from Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2009.

KCSL’s Healthy Families program can be reached at (785) 843-0721 ext. 336. It is located at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, 200 Maine Street, Suite B, Lawrence, KS.

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For more information visit the following websites:

- Kansas Children’s Service League: www.kcsl.org
- Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department: www.ldchealth.org
- Healthy Families America: www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org
- Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund: www.kschildrenscabinet.org