

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you the importance of Parent Child Centers in our communities. As you may know Vermont's Parent Child Centers have been under-funded for decades; staff wages continue to be 30% below market rates to comparable positions. We are requesting a Master Grant funding increase by \$8million to close the salary gap, with a 3-year phased approach. The Master Grant is an ongoing effort between the Parent Child Centers and the Department for Children and Families to build consistency in service delivery and outcome measures across Vermont for the essential state services that the PCCs are delivering on behalf of the state.

Let me share with you why Parent Child Centers Are The Answer and why it's imperative to fully fund the Master Grant to \$10million/year by the end of the 3 year phase. PCC programs offer holistic, wrap around supports to children and families; we are able to keep a finger on the pulse of the community and respond to the needs such as providing free parenting workshops and support groups. Raising a child is hard for everyone! PCC's help to make it possible to be successful in raising strong and healthy families, our communities are stronger and more resilient. PCC prevention programs and services ensure that parents have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to care for their children, we can strengthen families and the communities they live in. Every dollar invested in building healthy communities reduces the demand on our health care system and helps to ensure that more people will be healthier for longer periods of their lives.

I live here in Franklin County and have worked for the Parent Child Center of NCSS for 13 ½ years because I'm invested in our children and their families thriving in the beautiful Northwestern corner of VT. I have run into many families which I have worked with through the PCC and I love to hear the stories of how the programs through the PCC have positively impacted their child and family's lives and the outcomes their child has achieved because of the support of the PCC. I would like to end with a quote from a parent they shared on an annual PCC program survey:

"If you do not know the impact you have on the families you serve, then please let me just remind you: What you do most certainly matters, and our family will never forget the part you have played... You gave our child the best start."

Thank you, Nicole Noel, Supervisor in the Parent Child Center of NCSS