

My name is Josh Miller and I am the Executive Director of the Janet S. Munt Family Room in Burlington. Parent-Child Centers, 15 of them which run statewide, are the Hub for families in need and many families in the community. We are very accessible for all families with young children who are looking for connection, support, education and in some cases, crisis intervention. We create an environment that is welcoming and we are built to be suited to our specific communities. Our staff are well trained and have the trust of the people in our communities, families and collaborators. We provide services targeted at strengthening a family's protective factors, building resiliency, treating and preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences and helping families build their own networks of support.

Parenting is a challenging no matter who you are or what economic status you might have. It becomes exponentially more difficult when one doesn't have enough money or the support to raise his or her children in the way he or she would like to. Parent Child Centers provide the support and resources that alleviate some of the stresses that parents experience when they are struggling. We know that struggle can quickly turn into crisis if help isn't available. We strongly believe that the support that PCCs provide parents and families, will give children in Vermont a more hopeful outlook on life and help Vermont families be resilient and healthy. We all need hope!

I come to you tonight to request that it is critical for us to increase the Master Grant funding by \$8 million dollars over the course of the next 3 years. The PCC staff wages are 30% below market rates to comparable positions in education and state government. Many PCCs are not able to offer adequate benefits for their employees and in some cases, PCCs cannot afford to pay their employees any benefits. Families NEED us to continue providing the services they come for and we are expected to provide high quality services by the State.

We are also requesting \$1.5 million in one-time funding to cover overdue capital expenses and "catch up" on deferred administrative costs that have been put off for years.