

MISSION



MADE POSSIBLE



Available online at
www.nationalfamilyweek.org

View and download
the new materials of
the NFW 2006 Toolkit.

Examples of NFW events
and activities held in 2005.

Objective:

To make a difference in the lives of underserved and marginalized children and families. For a growing number of Alliance for Children and Families members National Family Week (NFW) is an increasingly valuable tool for accomplishing this objective.

Background:

Last year, more than 300 Alliance members and partner organizations participated in NFW events or activities that involved an estimated 35,000 people across the United States. This year, those figures should be even higher, as a record 111 Alliance members applied for funds to support their NFW efforts. All were awarded mini-grants, worth more than \$115,000 total. The mini-grants are made possible thanks to the generous support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, NFW's principle funder.

In addition to this seed funding, the Alliance also provides NFW participants with tools and templates that facilitate the development of meaningful and systemic change within their communities.

Alliance members, says Paula Purcell, director of special projects and NFW program director, have different strategic goals, resources, and time constraints. Purcell says we recognize this, which is why "our efforts at the national level are geared towards making it easy for our members and their local partners to participate.

"We don't dictate to participants that they do specific activities or events. Instead, we encourage participants to select from a wide range of options; options that best fit the needs of their communities and their strategic plans. We offer suggestions, but we don't tell participants that they have to do something."

Purcell adds that while we encourage members to celebrate NFW during Thanksgiving week, we recognize that for some members this is difficult. Accordingly, NFW efforts may take place during other periods of the year and in some cases as part of other scheduled events or activities.

"Our advocacy awards program is a good example of this," Purcell adds. "Some members give these awards during special events or board meetings. We emphasize the value of giving out these awards instead of when they are presented, thus giving NFW participants a lot of flexibility."

Available Resources:

TOOLKIT

Uses: Planning, development, information

Each member of the Alliance receives a National Family Week toolkit that features information and templates to help facilitate the planning and development of NFW events and activities ranging from public policy forums to health resource fairs to research on mental health care provider capacity within the community.

Included in the toolkit are a NFW planning guidebook full of ideas and suggestions;



National Family Week Advances Your Agency's Agenda

fill-in-the-blank templates for news releases and announcements, letters to the editor, and public service announcements; letters and information on requesting proclamations; general National Family Week brochures in English and Spanish; a National Family Week poster; tips for obtaining media coverage; and a CD with ready-to-use media tools and promotional letters.

ADVOCACY AWARDS

Uses: Create bonds, relationships

All Alliance members and especially those new to National Family Week are encouraged to present 2006 National Family Week Advocacy Awards to individuals who significantly contribute to state and local advocacy efforts on behalf of children and families.

These awards, which are prepared and produced at no cost to our members, are an excellent vehicle for members to recognize the outstanding efforts of community leaders, and provide organizations the opportunity to establish or enhance relationships with the award-winning leaders.

National Family Week Advocacy Award kits contain a framed, customized award certificate; a fill-in-the-blank news release that agencies can use to announce the recipient; two National Family Week mouse pads; and two National Family Week lapel pins. Presenting agencies are asked to limit their requests to two certificates. One frame per agency is available.

PROCLAMATIONS

Uses: Raise awareness, increase credibility

Last year, as United States presidents have done for a number of years, President George W. Bush issued a proclamation identifying November 20–26 as National Family Week. In addition, more than 38 governors and 76 mayors proclaimed National Family Week in their state or community.

Every year, NFW participants are encouraged to raise the credibility of their local NFW observances by requesting proclamations from their governors, mayors, county executives, or other key leaders. This is a no-cost activity that can stand alone or be incorporated into an agency's larger National Family Week plans. Requesting proclamations is a great way to raise awareness and create or grow relationships with these leaders.

In addition to awards and proclamations, those agencies that have celebrated National Family Week in previous years are encouraged to build on activities that focus on reaching the masses, educating the public, and partnering with nonprofits, leaders,



policy-makers, and other local groups. Doing so will boost agency visibility and garner the greatest impact in influencing positive change for children and families.

Agency Involvement:

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF WAYNE COUNTY Detroit, Michigan

Catholic Social Services of Wayne County (CSSWC) presented its first National Family Week Advocacy Award to Detroit Free Press journalist Jack Kresnak during its celebration last November.

CSSWC wanted to honor an individual who had spent a large portion of his or her career advocating for children and families. "We presented the award to strengthen ties to the community," says Patrick Heron, president/CEO of CSSWC. "We wanted Mr. Kresnak to know that his efforts are working and have not gone unnoticed."





“Participating in National Family Week allowed our agency to reach out to our neighbors and celebrate the benefit of strong families of various sizes and structures in our community,” Curcio says. “The Board of Child Care’s experience in our first National Family Week celebration has prompted us to plan an expanded event for 2006.”

the forum brought forward other issues that citizens face daily in their community, such as teen dating violence, and funding for youth employment and youth violence.”

FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY Phoenix

During its most recent National Family Week event, Family Service Agency responded to the area’s unemployment problem by hosting an inner-city picnic, information fair, health fair, and job fair during National Family Week.



The award ceremony was incorporated into CSSWC’s annual board orientation. “The National Family Week Advocacy Award opened up many new avenues for our agency and a potential long-lasting partnership with Mr. Kresnak,” Heron notes. “We will continue searching for other individuals who have a compatible mission with CSSWC to honor them with the National Family Week Advocacy Award.”

BOARD OF CHILD CARE Baltimore, Maryland

Board of Child Care in Baltimore experienced the benefits of obtaining a National Family Week proclamation. “Seeking National Family Week proclamations from Baltimore County Executive James T. Smith and Maryland Governor Robert Ehrlich Jr. helped further our initiative toward building stronger ties between the community, the public sector, and the many services offered by the Board of Child Care,” says Thomas L. Curcio, president/CEO.

THE VILLAGE FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN Hartford, Connecticut

With the knowledge that reaching key community leaders and educating the public are two important factors of a successful National Family Week event, The Village for Families and Children hosted a policy forum entitled “Health Matters.” The Village’s policy forum was attended by members of the greater Hartford community, legislators, and individuals from the medical profession. Physicians addressed the audience and answered questions concerning health care access for low-income residents and children.

Llonia Gordon, government relations coordinator at The Village, says, “The issue of accessing health services continues to be a significant concern that faces many families in Hartford. Many working families continue to struggle with the problem of having no health insurance,” Gordon explains. “Healthnet, a managed care company, continues to partner with The Village to raise awareness regarding the Healthcare for Uninsured Kids and Youth (HUSKY) program, the state’s insurance program for low-income children.”

Gordon was pleased with the outcome of the policy forum and the opportunities it presented. “As a result of the policy forum held during National Family Week, The Village has been asked by key leaders in the legislature to partner on other initiatives,” she states. “The dialogue at

“Our agency already knew that unemployment was a significant community issue, especially for the ex-offender population,” says Sorrel Bowman-Rodgers, president/CEO. “The job fair gave us a chance to showcase potential employers and to create a platform for those employers to connect with potential workers.”

In addition, the agency presented a NFW Advocacy Award to Dave Berns, Arizona director of economic security. “Presenting the National Family Week Advocacy Award created a heightened awareness of our agency’s presence in the community with Mr. Berns,” says Bowman-Rodgers. “This allowed for future dialogue to begin with him about the emergent needs in our state.” ▲

For more information on National Family Week call 800-221-2681 or contact Paula Purcell at ppurcell@alliance1.org or Brian Balistreri at bbalistreri@alliance1.org.

