

PLTI

Parent Leadership Training Institute - A Connecticut Commission on Children Civic Leadership Initiative

Mission Statement The Parent Leadership Training Institute enables parents to become leading advocates for children. Parents' opinions are often unheard. They lack advocacy skills, but not the motivation and will to change their children's lives. The PLTI teaches parents, who wish to improve the lifelong health, safety and learning of children, how to become practiced change agents for the next generation. Parents define the curriculum and participate in its evaluation and outcomes. Family supports, such as child care, are included. Each class of parents mentors the next class, creating a pyramid effect of community caring and developing a coalition of parent leaders.

The Core Learning of Parent Leadership

- Work with diversity; • Define needs; • Assess and define problems; • Speak publicly; • Utilize the media; • Review child and family data; • Evaluate a program; • Understand personal history and its impact on self- image and empowerment; • Form useful coalitions; • Collect and utilize data; • Reach successful outcomes; • Become familiar with state and federal law; • Understand ordinances; • Strategize for action; • Plan for whole agendas using a step-by-step process.

Parents are offered four phases of training.

1. A retreat to develop group and define mission;
2. A 10-week course on parent leadership;
3. A 10-week study of politics, policy and media; and
4. A community project to practice the learning within a community context.

General Program and Purpose: The PLTI program is a two-generation strategy to bolster parental involvement while promoting the lifelong health, safety and learning of children. The program integrates child development leadership and democracy skills into a parent curriculum. Parents attend a 20-week program. The application process is competitive. Family supports such as child care, meals and transportation are provided. Each class mentors the next class, creating a pyramid effect of community caring and a developing coalition of parents. The classes are evaluated by parents for both short and long-term outcomes.

What We Have Learned About Children's Learning: • The parent (family) is the first and most influential teacher. • The home is where language begins and values are nurtured. • The research establishes that parent engagement has a positive impact on students' academic achievement, behavior in school, and attitudes about school and work. • When parents are involved at school, not just at home, children do better in school, they stay in school longer and they go to better schools. • Families, schools, and community organizations all contribute to student achievement; the best result comes from all three working together. Schools that connect to their communities have higher achievement and graduation

rates. • Children learn best when their parents are able to play four key roles in their children’s learning: Teachers (helping their children at home), supporters (contributing their skills to the school), advocates (helping children receive fair treatment), and decision-makers (participating in joint problem-solving at every level). *Connecticut State Department of Education.*





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