

Prevent Child Abuse Completes Impact100 Essex Grant

Prevent Child Abuse NJ (PCA-NJ), our 2020 Impact Grant Recipient, just completed their grant to address childhood trauma and adversity with the **Children’s Wellness Initiative**. The multi-faceted approach equipped schools, children, and families with tools to build resilience, adapt to stressors in a healthy way, promote social-emotional awareness, and experience support from a more nurturing school environment.

Children’s Wellness Initiative

The Children’s Wellness Initiative addressed the needs of the entire community in five Essex County schools/childcare centers located in Orange, East Orange and Newark. The project provided professional development to teachers, resources to support staff as well as parent workshops to develop a trauma informed and healing centered climate. Specific offerings for the children and teachers included:



Peaceful practice session at Roseville Charter

- 112 Calm Down kits distributed to teachers to promote mindfulness and help children alleviate stress.
- 40 Children’s Peaceful Practice sessions led children through simple mindfulness, breathing and yoga practices aimed at fostering self regulation. Guidebooks were also provided with illustrations.
- 8 Wellness Walks created to help children take a break and reset their emotions.
- 5 Parent Education Workshops and creation of a 3-part instructional video series to reach more parents due to in-person challenges presented by Covid.

Impact

Schools were transformed as teachers learned how trauma/toxic stress affects a child’s brain, and as parents increased their confidence to address challenging behaviors. The number of teachers and children reached exceeded the goals set at the beginning of the project. PCA actively worked with schools and parents to regularly gather feedback and revise the program to meet their needs. Both teachers and parents indicated they were more confident in their ability to recognize and respond to children experiencing trauma after being trained and employing their new tools and knowledge.

All of the PCA offerings (Calm Down Kits, video trainings, etc) provided for children, parents and teachers remain available in the coming years further broadening the reach of the initial Impact Grant.

