



## **ALABAMA NETWORK OF FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS – Comprehensive – Entrepreneurial – Preventive –**

### **FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS: A FRAMEWORK FOR CREATING JOBS**

In the current economic crisis, Alabama's Family Resource Centers are in a unique position to help provide a comprehensive framework for creating and maintaining jobs in Alabama. There are fifteen Centers in the Network that are located strategically throughout the State of Alabama. Each one is organized as a non-profit agency with strong community based support.

Here is the framework within which we work:

1. **SELF-SUFFICIENCY.** Family Resource Centers are designed to assist individuals and families reach self-sufficiency by providing comprehensive strength-based services that work with them toward this goal. Centers do this by providing staff members who help to guide participants through an individualized strengths-based process. Staff works with the family/individual to identify goal/goals they wish to meet and helps facilitate the process toward that end. Whether the individual or family needs to find a job; to finish high school; get their GED, to obtain post secondary education; to obtain basic needs for their family; to learn how to be a better parent; to obtain health care, or any number of other self-sufficiency needs, the Centers stand ready to help assist participants in reaching self-sufficiency and independence.
2. **COLLABORATION.** Rather than operating in isolation or within a silo, Family Resource Centers are founded on the principle of collaboration. Centers have the ability to help state and local agencies reach their goals since we do not have a single mission but rather our mission is to find what the individual or family needs to become self-sufficient and work within existing agency and community resources to reach that goal.
3. **CAREER DEVELOPMENT/JOB CREATION.** Family Resource Centers pride themselves in using resources to help families find and keep jobs through their own career development centers or through the use of other local job helping resources. Not only do Family Resource Centers help families find employment outside the agency, but many times centers provide a training ground for individuals who need experience in a job by providing an on-the-job training site for program participants. After the training is complete, when opportunities are available, the agencies many times are able to hire the trained individual. For example, HIPPIY (an early intervention home based education program for young children and their parents) trains parents to be Parent Educators and pays them for their work in the field. Early Head Start parents are given opportunities to go to school and then many times are hired in the same program that they participate in as a parent. At least one Family Resource Center has a small business incubator as part of its array of services. Many more examples of this economic development strategy occur within the family resource center framework throughout Alabama.

4. **ON SITE JOB TRAINING/PLACEMENT.** Many of the Network's Centers have educational (GED, Work Keys) and employment preparation services on site, or they work closely with those agencies who do provide these services. There is strong collaboration with local DHR offices to provide employment readiness, classes that teach interviewing, basic computer skills, job search, and job retention skills. It is not unusual for a Center working with a family to connect with five or six other agencies in the community to "wrap around" the family with the necessary support to help the family achieve independence, or self-sufficiency. Center staff often become the facilitators of multi-disciplinary or multi-agency intervention with families who are working toward a goal of securing and retaining employment.
  
5. **CASE MANAGEMENT.** A unique service offered by Family Resource Centers is case management and an array of support services that help individuals overcome barriers to employment. Centers are very connected locally to businesses and agencies throughout their respective communities and have a network of contacts who provide job shadowing/job experience placements, employment opportunities and work related supports.