

# NW CHILDREN'S FUND

Making hope work.

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## Childhood Trauma and Toxic Stress

### NW Children's Fund Forum Highlights Essential Resilience-Building Work

*"We know more than ever before about how to help children and families who have experienced trauma ... this is the great moment."*

Early adversity can dramatically impact the brain's architecture, influencing the ability to respond to and withstand physical, intellectual and emotional stressors throughout life. At the January 29 **NWCF Forum**, keynote speaker Dr. Linda Chamberlain shared brain-based strategies to build resilience in children – both as a defense against future adversities, and to repair damage from trauma that has already occurred.

#### **Community Resilience-Building:**

Resilience, which refers to the ability to manage stress and cope during tough times, grows in the context of relationships. "The more we learn about resilience, the more we recognize that it is the *systems* around us – family, school, neighborhood, church, friends and community – that influence the ability of both children and adults to be

resilient," said Dr. Chamberlain. Parents, teachers and communities can integrate knowledge of how to strengthen young brains and develop resilience into their work with kids.

#### **The Mind-Body Connection:** Dr.

Chamberlain champions interventions that stimulate primitive areas of the brain to release tension patterns and teach self-regulation skills. Increasingly, scientists are recognizing meditation, breath work, yoga and other mindfulness techniques as critical to post-trauma neurological repair. And this repair can occur throughout the lifespan: While the earliest years of brain development provide the best opportunity to develop lifelong resilience, Dr. Chamberlain emphasized that "we never lose the capacity to change our brains ... that is something not to be lost in the story of trauma and recovery."

**A Two-Generation Approach:** A recent national review of evidenced-based practices underscored the importance of employing a two-generation approach in working with children exposed to trauma. This means that caregivers have a critical role in helping children to develop self-regulation and other resilience-promoting skills, but also that service providers need to help parents address and heal from their own traumatic histories in order to stop

the intergenerational cycle of dysfunction. As Dr. Chamberlain explained: "Trauma is a package deal, and when we work with families together, we get much farther ahead than when we are isolated in our interventions."

#### **The Strategies at Work**

There is extraordinary work being done in our area to help children and families who have experienced trauma. Following the keynote presentation, clinicians from three NWCF-supported programs presented illustrations from their own practice of these resilience-building strategies at work.

*Continued on page 2*



*Dr. Linda Chamberlain  
Photo by Daniel Johnson*



### Childhood Trauma (continued from page 1)

Susie B. Winston, LICSW, of **Sound Mental Health** described the *Children's Domestic Violence Response Team (CDVRT)*, a cross-system collaboration to help children and families impacted by domestic violence. CDVRT engages therapists, child advocates, community advocates and non-abusive parents to work together to support healing and break the cycle of abuse.

Liann Smith of **Encompass** presented a vivid example of *Parent-Child Interaction Therapy*, in which parents receive in-the-moment coaching via an ear bud as they interact with their child. This evidence-based intervention is aimed at restructuring the relationship to empower the parent to support the child's healthy development.

Megan Beers, PhD, and Jenn Sparr, LICSW, shared how **Wellspring Family Services** is employing *Reflective Practice* as a framework for building resilience in its Early Learning Center, which serves homeless and at-risk children. Reflective Practice focuses on awareness of the caregivers' state of mind to enhance relationships that can buffer children against toxic stress and promote healthy brain development.

One of the top takeaways from the Forum is that these issues – childhood adversity, brain science and building resilience – are everyone's business. Susie Winston aptly

Visit [nwcf.org/events/forum](http://nwcf.org/events/forum) for the Forum video, PowerPoint deck, resources from the speaker presentations, and links to additional reading and videos about brain development and trauma.

quoted this African proverb in her remarks: "If you wish to go quickly, go alone. If you wish to go far, go together."



Nearly 400 members of the child welfare community gathered for the NWCF 2016 Forum – from law enforcement to health care workers, researchers to educators, advocates to service providers. Here are some of their comments about the event:

*I appreciated seeing a broad array of stakeholders gathered together to address a common problem.*

*Presenters were obviously top-notch and well prepared with lots of great information to share.*

*I took copious notes, connected with folks I've not seen in years, and generated ideas for new projects and refinements.*

*Great networking opportunities ... love the science/research presentation followed by how it is put into practice.*

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Presented by F5 Networks

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Friday, September 16, 2016

For sponsorship and participation information, contact us at 206-407-2163 or [events@nwcf.org](mailto:events@nwcf.org).

## Spring Announcements

Stand with NWCF during Child Abuse Prevention Month! Visit our website to find out how to participate in our "I partner with NWCF to ..." campaign in April.

NWCF is looking for talented, energetic board members who are interested in child welfare. Contact Victoria Helm at [vhelm@nwcf.org](mailto:vhelm@nwcf.org) for details.

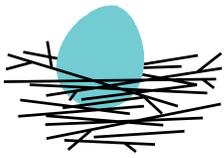


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Winter 2016 Grant Recipients

Agency / Program Description	Grant (\$)	Agency / Program Description	Grant (\$)
<b>Healing Abused Children</b>			
<b>Amara: Foster-Adoption Program</b> / Parenting and adoption services to create safety and permanence for at-risk and special-needs children.	12,000	<b>Vine Maple Place</b> / Comprehensive housing and support services for single parents and their children to build stability and self-sufficiency.	8,500
<b>Dawson Place</b> / Coordinated medical, mental health, advocacy, protection and law-enforcement services for abused children in Snohomish County.	13,000	<b>Vision House</b> / Transitional housing and integrated support services for homeless mothers and their children.	10,000
<b>Family Law CASA</b> / Advocates for at-risk children in high-risk custody cases.	13,000	<b>YMCA of Greater Seattle: Family Support Specialist</b> / Supportive coaching for parents reunited with their children after residential or foster care placement.	15,000
<b>Lutheran Community Services Northwest: Permanency Planning Foster Adopt Program</b> / Provides abused and neglected children with safe, secure and permanent homes.	12,400	<b>YWCA Pierce County: Children's Program</b> / Therapeutic and support services to mitigate the negative effects of domestic violence for children living in shelters and in the larger community.	10,000
<b>Northwest Immigrant Rights Project: Immigrant Child Advocacy Project</b> / Legal services and advocacy for abused, abandoned and undocumented immigrant children.	13,000	<b>Helping At-Risk Youth</b>	
<b>Pediatric Interim Care Center</b> / Immediate, short-term, medically supervised care for drug-exposed and medically fragile infants.	10,900	<b>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Island County</b> / Mentoring for low-income, high-risk and pre-teen girls in Island County.	7,500
<b>Secret Harbor</b> / Therapeutic foster care, in-home support and residential treatment services for young people who have experienced significant trauma due to abuse and neglect.	13,400	<b>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Washington</b> / Mentoring for children who are at risk for dropping out, violence, substance abuse and other juvenile problem behaviors.	12,000
<b>Sound Mental Health: Children's Domestic Response Team</b> / Specialized counseling services to help children and their supportive parent recover from domestic violence.	14,000	<b>Cocoon House: Transitional Housing Program</b> / Quality, safe and stable housing and wraparound support services for homeless youth and teen mothers for up to 18 months.	10,000
<b>Strengthening Fragile Families</b>			
<b>Domestic Abuse Women's Network</b> / Comprehensive, empowerment-based programs and services to help survivors and their children attain and maintain violence-free lives.	12,000	<b>Communities In Schools of Renton</b> / Mentoring and wraparound academic and support services for at-risk students.	12,000
<b>Encompass: Family Support Services</b> / Wrap-around services for vulnerable families including home visitation, family counseling, parent education and parent-child training.	13,500	<b>Friends of the Children</b> / Long-term professional mentoring to guide children with significant challenges to their greatest potential.	12,000
<b>HopeSparks</b> / Specialized counseling for children who have been abused or traumatized, family/kinship support and parent education.	20,000	<b>Friends of Youth: Youth Haven</b> / Crisis shelter, therapeutic case management and trauma-informed services for foster children and homeless and runaway youth.	11,500
<b>Housing Hope: ChildHope Child Development Program</b> / Therapeutic programming to help homeless and at-risk families overcome barriers to age-appropriate development for their children.	30,000	<b>Northwest Youth Services: Positive Adolescent Development Program</b> / Emergency housing and case management for homeless youth ages 13-17.	17,000
<b>Interfaith Association of Northwest Washington: Case Management Services</b> / Referral, support and advocacy services for families during and after their stay in emergency shelter.	10,500	<b>Seattle Education Access</b> / Higher education advocacy and opportunities for young people struggling to overcome poverty and adversity.	9,800
<b>Lydia Place: Parent Support and Family Services Programs</b> / Support services for homeless families, including parent education, children's therapy and case management.	11,500	<b>Skagit Valley Family YMCA: Homeless Teen Shelter</b> / Emergency shelter, case management and referral services for Skagit County youth ages 13-17.	12,000
<b>New Phoebe House Association</b> / Comprehensive recovery and reunification program for families who face multiple challenges and are involved with the child welfare system.	7,500	<b>Toddler Learning Center</b> / Education services and therapy in the home for young children and families with intensive medical, mental or social risk factors.	20,000
<b>Rochester Organization of Families</b> / Resources and services for children, youth and families to achieve a healthy, positive and drug-free community.	16,000	<b>University District Youth Center - Catholic Community Services</b> / Critical services for homeless, at-risk, runaway and/or street-involved youth.	10,000
<b>Solid Ground: Children's Program at Broadview</b> / Programs and support for children who have experienced homelessness and domestic violence.	10,000	<b>Youth Tutoring Program - Catholic Community Services</b> / After-school tutoring and enrichment program for kids living in Seattle low-income communities.	10,000
<b>Vashon Youth &amp; Family Services: Birth to Six Program</b> / Comprehensive programs to promote healthy physical, social and emotional development in infancy and early childhood.	6,000	<b>YouthCare: Adolescent Emergency Shelter</b> / Shelter, case management, service referrals and crisis resolution for homeless adolescents.	11,500

**\$437,500**  
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NW Children's Fund Gala & Auction

# Together

April 30 | 2016

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