The Circle Project: Creating Social Capital for Students and Families Mary K. Laska, Ph.D National Children's Advocacy Center Alabama A&M University

Social Capital
Social Capital can be described as social resources, or the number and intensity of social relationships
Social Capital provides interpersonal resources for people to use to deal with daily life, seize opportunities, and reduce uncertainties
These resources are contained in the ties between individuals

Types of Social Capital

 Bonding Social Capital: strong ties that exist between family members and close friends

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- **Bridging Social Capital:** weak ties between individuals across diverse groups
 - Bridging Social Capital is crucial to the wellbeing of persons in places of poverty because such capital allows them access to resources outside their immediate neighborhood

Program Description

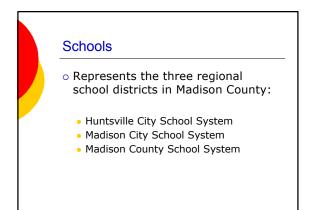
Children dwell within the circle of family; families and schools reside within the larger circle of community. The Circle Project brings these concepts together into Full-Circle Schools, schools that realize that the goal of educational excellence cannot be met until the entire community in integrated into the circle of support for students and families.

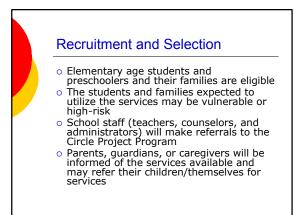
Program Goals

- Coordinating services for children and families
- Overcoming the accessibility issue by bringing services TO children and families
- Increasing capacity of existing quality services
- Building Social Capital in the school environment

Personnel Circle Project Coordinator: overall project management from central location Circle Project Assistant: onsite

- management of daily activities at the school
- Subcontractors:
 - Mental Health Counselors: come to the schools to meet with the children/families
 - Department of Human Resources workers: come to the school to meet with the children/families
 - Big Brothers/Big Sisters: mentoring and tutoring at the school

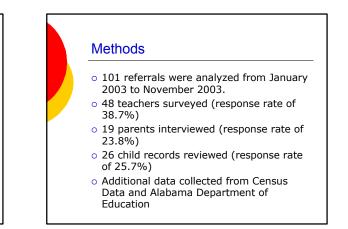




Research Questions

What is the condition of the neighborhood surrounding the school?

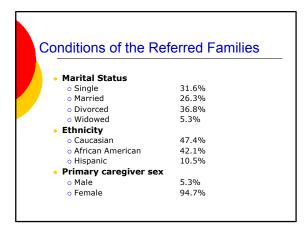
- o What is the condition of the school?
- What are the characteristics of the children and families being served by the Circle Project?
- What referrals are being made through the Circle Project?
- o What is the impact of the Circle Project?
- Is there evidence that the Circle Project is building social capital?

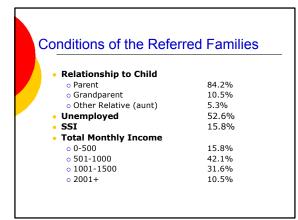


	nborhood Demographics		
	Madison County	Madison City	Huntsville City
White	94.1%	70.2%	14.9%
African American	2.9%	25.7%	82.1%
Households with individuals under 18	43.0%	40.3%	42.6%
Adults over 25 high school graduate or higher	66.3%	88.0%	75.6%
bachelor's degree or higher	10.5%	32.0%	14.7%
Median Family Income	\$39,357	\$53,831	\$35,082
Families below poverty level	9.0%	8.3%	15.1%
Families with children under 18 below poverty level	11.5%	14.6%	19.1%

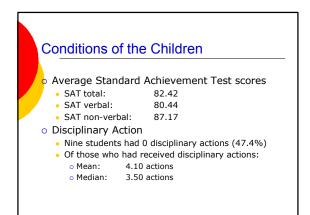
	Madison County	Madison City	Huntsville City
	Representative School	Representative School	Representative School
Year of founding	1949	2001	Approx. 1960
Enrollment	625.9 students	203.9	404.7
Spending per student	\$5614.58 per student	\$5704.08 per student	\$6993.87 per student
Eligibility for free or reduced lunch	49.4%	17.2%	84.7%
Percentage of teachers with Masters degree	50.0%*	54.3%*	46.9%*
Percent of classrooms with internet access	6.6%	4.9%	8.8%
Safety and Discipline	0 incidents reported	1 incident reported	12 incidents reported

Academic	cademic Status					
	Madison County Representative School	Madison City Representative School	Huntsville City Representative School			
Academic Status 1999- 2000	Clear	n/a (not in existence)	Alert 1			
Academic Status 2000- 2001	Clear	n/a (not in existence)	Alert 2			
Academic Status 2001- 2002	n/a	n/a	n/a			
Academic Status 2002- 2003	Clear	Clear with Watch	Watch with Priority			



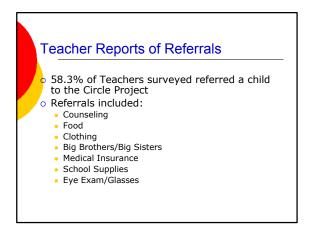


Conditions of	the Children	
Household Cha	racteristics similar to	parents
o Sex of Child		•
 Male 	53.9%	
 Female 	46.2%	
 Ever enrolled in 	n Special Education	42.3%
 Qualifies for free/reduced lunch 		84.6%
 Covered by here 	alth insurance	73.1%



Refe	erral Pa	itterns				
School	Big Brother/Big Sister	Mental Health	Food	Clothing	Insurance	Glasses
Madison County School	23.1%	11.5%	34.6%	11.5%	50.0%	19.2%
Madison City School	38.3%	72.3%	6.4%	8.5%	12.8%	2.1%
Huntsville City School	21.4%	42.9%	17.9%	10.7%	17.9%	3.6%
o-value	0.209	0.000	0.008	0.870	0.005	0.016

	Reasons for not receiving Circle Project referred services				
N	Reason	Percent			
	Does not qualify for services	1.0			
	Missed appointments	1.0			
	Moved	3.0			
	No contact	3.0			
	Parent declined services	1.0			
	Parent did not return paperwork	5.9			
	Transfer	1.0			
	Unable to come out because of new baby	1.0			



	Percent
Did the services you received meet your needs?	94.7
Were you aware of all the services offered by the Circle Project prior to this interview?	31.6
Does your child enjoy participating in Circle Project activities?	63.2
Would you utilize the Circle Project again?	100.0
Would you recommend the Circle Project to others?	100.0
Did the services you received meet your expectations?	94.7

