

PLTI Curriculum Overview

PARENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING INSTITUTE CURRICULUM

Retreat: **Creating a Caring Community for Children**

Discuss issues affecting children and milestones in child and family development.

GOAL: To develop a parent group and understanding of when and how a community cares for children.

Civic Skills: Public speaking, listening to a group and recording views, group analysis of social and economic factors; reflecting on community, a look at strong and differing belief systems, self-awareness as forefront for leadership

Class 1: **Thriving with Diversity in the Group Process**

What do we look like now? What will Americans look like in the future? What are the strengths of separateness and integration?

GOAL: To acquire knowledge regarding diversity, ethnic, class and race differences.

Civic Skills: Understanding different views, observing group dynamics, facilitating dialogue when content leading with emotion or intellect and why is strong or historically charged.

Class 2: **The Change Process**

Look at change within our own experience, focusing on the tools we can use to change our environment.

GOAL: To understand what creates change within self, family and community.

Civic Skills: Group facilitation, observation of group dynamics, the use of story to create a coherent group dynamic, how shared activity can reveal commonalities and differences, a critical understanding of change, its potential, and the natural resistance to it.

Class 3: **Parents as Change Agents**

How do our own experiences in family life influence our notion of the right to be a parent leader? What is our own self-image?

GOAL: To help parents perceive themselves as change agents and to understand obstacles to leadership.

Civic Skills: reflecting on family and parents as a source of public strength and will, understanding the role and use of power as an effective parent leader, observing and analyzing the role of parents as an effective constituency for good child outcomes.

Class 4: How to Define a Problem and Work Toward a Solution

A look at community needs from the parent perspective.

GOAL: To begin working through problems with developed strategy and conflict resolution skills.

Civic Skills: active listening, community problem solving, goal setting for a community, public policy analysis, benchmarking community solutions.

Class 5: The Intentional Use of Language, Context and Frameworks

What are forms of communication, and why do they matter? Focus on active listening and constructive ways to make a point.

GOAL: To understand the importance of using language to create a framework and express viewpoints.

Civic Skills: public speaking, active listening, critical analysis of social, economic and demographic factors in society, understanding social context, conveying language for the public in explicit and intentional ways.

Class 6: Learning How a Community Works

How to use and maximize community resources. Who has the resource information? How do community meetings work?

GOAL: To begin mapping communities with increased understanding of assets, resources and communication flow.

Civic Skills: asset-based community assessments, analysis of social and economic contexts of communities, convening meetings, developing consensus, group facilitation, community conversations.

Class 7: How Local Systems Work and How to Interact With Them

Who makes the decisions in the city, in the schools, at the library? How do policies develop?

GOAL: To increase awareness of the structure of local institutions and systems through attention to budget, policy and communication.

Civic Skills: Looking at agencies as a system for children, selecting an expert presenter for further information and dialogue, the role of agency in a town for families, how community agencies and town programs can work together for children, how to partner with programs and town agencies for children, what to do if a program forgets the consumer.

Class 8: Networks and Coalitions

How to think about who should become part of the change effort. How to expand your partners.

GOAL: To further access goals for children and enable partners to reach goals.

Civic Skills: Bringing groups together to reach a shared goal, linking resources and networks for a purpose, how informal and formal networks help families, the challenges and gains of working with several groups.

Class 9: The Power of the Media and How to Use it

How to use television, radio, print and social media. Parents as messengers for children.

GOAL: To increase understanding of print and electronic media, how it works and how to access it.

Civic Skills: public speaking, using the media to tell a story, critical analysis of trends impacting media, use of Letter to the Editor to respond formally and in the public eye to issues, informal constituent debate, facility with different views and opinions, group skills facilitation.

Class 10: Using Your Voice

How to speak publicly. How to present public statements with success.

GOAL: To bolster confidence, self awareness and the impact of self presentation.

Civic Skills: public speaking, prioritizing issues of importance for action, summarizing experience and knowledge publicly, moving forward in educational opportunity, speaking in front of a group, sharing views in front of a camera, assessing community leadership skills.

Class 11: The Life Cycle of the Child and the Functions of the Family

How does the life cycle of the child intersect with the life cycle of the family and family functions?

GOAL: To attain a beginning understanding of family function, family structure, and child development.

Civic Skills: Understanding the importance of the family to good child outcomes in a community, social analysis of demographic trends and their impact on the family; understanding family structure and family functioning as they impact family outcomes.

Class 12: Social and Economic Trends Affecting Children and Families

How to understand the demographic, economic and social trends. A look at the life cycle of the child and the functions of the family. What are the assets and needs of children and families in our region?

GOAL: To understand the social, economic and demographic factors affecting child health, learning, safety and care-giving.

Civic Skills: Trend analysis; how social, economic and population trends impact the family; the link between trends and public policy.

Class 13: What is Public Policy?

A look at the role of government in democracy, the meaning of policy, types of policy, and how policy happens.

GOAL: To understand public policy as a vehicle for democracy, citizen input, and change for children.

Civic Skills: An understanding of what public policy is, how to access and understand public policy, the importance of public policy in civic change for good child outcomes.

Class 14: How the State Works

A look at state government – structure, communications, resources, policy impact, and governance.

GOAL: To understand how government can be utilized by citizens to affect dialogue and change for the public good.

Civic Skills: Understanding what state government does, who the key elected and appointed leaders are (and how to contact them), and how parents can affect change on the state level.

Class 15: How a City Works

A look at town and city structures, policies, and resources.

GOAL: To understand how parents can interact with elected officials, city departments, and school boards to communicate and affect change for the public good.

Civic Skills: Understanding who the key elected and appointed leaders are in county government, and how to contact and partner with such persons.

Class 16: How we Understand the Law

An overview of children's law to assess the impact of state and federal code in protecting and enhancing the lives of children.

GOAL: To demystify law with increased comfort reading children's law.

Civic Skills: Familiarity with state and federal laws impacting children and families; practice leading group discussion on law; further understanding of the role of the public in law and how laws change.

Class 17: Budgets – From Wallets to State – It’s all Money and Priorities

An introduction to budget design and analysis within state, city, and schools.

GOAL: To increase comfort level with fiscal analysis of children’s policy and programs.

Civic Skills: How to access, read and interpret state and local budgets: Who writes the budget and the mechanisms for public discussion on dollars. How money is raised and distributed for a budget. How to prioritize dollars based on value and outcomes for children.

Class 18: Evaluation, Outcomes and Accountability

An overview of goals in policy and a program to improve outcomes and public accountability. What is an outcome measure, a benchmark, a social health index?

GOAL: To gain a beginning understanding of benchmarks and evaluative longitudinal tools.

Civic Skills: Leading by learning results. Asking for benchmarks and outcomes to see if community and state programs are working for children. Learning to ask about and find trend data that shows how children are faring. Discussing with parents and policy leaders how to turn a curve with proven practices if a trend is going in the wrong direction for children.

Class 19: The Magic of the Unexpected: Forming New Alliances

Forging new alliances and expanding partnerships to create substantive, broad impact for children.

GOAL: To increase understanding of the dynamics of policy change, coalition-building, and social climate.

Civic Skills: Beginning to understand intentional use of partners, language, frameworks and story to move a policy or program forward for children. Learning to appreciate strategic planning to meet a goal.

Class 20: Language: Packaging and Moving Agendas

How to design initiatives: how to clarify goal, purpose, outcomes with vigor, art and impact.

GOAL: To improve understanding of media and language and its impact; and to recognize the connection between language and clarity of goal and constituency.

Civic Skills: Public Speaking, creating a cogent and coherent message for children, being filmed with message for the public, planning the activities of a group, summing up learnings.