

## The Family Support and Education Program

SCAN's Family Support and Education Program reduces the occurrence of child abuse and neglect by promoting positive parenting and improving parent-child relationships.

The Program provides twenty-eight free support and education groups each week. During the July 2004 – June 2005 fiscal year, SCAN 335 parents and 262 children, all from families that have experienced or are at a high risk of experiencing child abuse and/or neglect.

The adult groups for parents and caregivers provide a combination of education and support services that target and decrease risk factors that lead to abuse and/or neglect, including:

- **lack of knowledge regarding child development,**
- **poor problem-solving skills,**
- **social isolation, and**
- **poor parenting skills**

The children's groups run concurrently with each adult group. The goal is to provide a consistent and structured environment that fosters healthy development. The curriculum offers activities that help children cope with their experiences and develop positive relationships with peers and adults.

In addition to group participation, families in the Program are also eligible to receive a combination of services on an as needed basis including case management, assessments and referrals, and individual/family counseling.

### Unique Characteristics

The Family Support Program provides services that:

- **target high-risk populations**
- **employ a variety of intensive treatment interventions**

- **provide a family-focused approach**

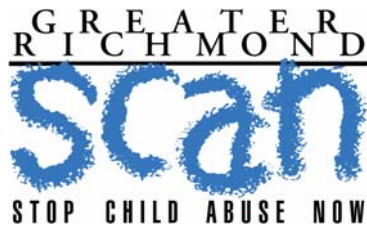
SCAN is able to help families considered hardest to serve by eliminating barriers to group participation. Unlike many other family services, which have sliding fee scales, SCAN provides all services to families at no cost. SCAN also provides transportation to families via taxi vouchers and bus tickets.

Since 1998, SCAN has developed and implemented specialty groups designed for families with specific needs. SCAN currently provides the only support group in the Richmond area for parents with a cognitive impairment. SCAN also has an adult group for custodial grandparents and other relatives caring for kin, a group for foster families and a group for Spanish speaking families. For those families who are interested in staying connected with the Family Support Program upon completing their initial 16 week series, an ongoing bi-weekly support group is available.

### Impact / Benefit

Violence within the family of origin is the one factor most strongly correlated with child abuse and neglect—a cycle of abuse is likely to continue as victims of abuse have their own children.

SCAN's Family Support and Education Program works to decrease the psychological effects of experiencing abuse and reduce the occurrence of current and/or future violent behavior. The education and support services are designed to enhance parenting skills, build positive social networks, increase knowledge of child development, and knowledge of community resources. Enhancing self-awareness, developing empathy and strengthening skills for managing stress and anger are components woven throughout the program.



## The Family Support and Education Program

By reducing risk factors associated with abuse and neglect and strengthening the beliefs & skills of parents and

children, families can be healthier and children can live in safer environments.

For more information about SCAN's  
Family Support and Education Program  
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