The Wichita Crisis Nursery program strengthens families by promoting safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments to ensure strong starts. The Wichita Crisis Nursery is a respite care program that provides quality child care for families facing an emergency that may jeopardize the safety and well-being of a child. Case management is provided to assist families in accessing a wide range of resources to address a family’s needs, including medical and mental health referrals, and parent education.

**STRATEGIES**

- Quality child care with licensed providers
- Overnight respite care in licensed homes
- Parent training and support
- Connection to community providers

“This is a really high-risk group of children and families, and we’re there at a critical time in that family’s life.”

- Vicky Roper, Director, Education and Awareness
  Kansas Children’s Service League
CHALLENGES

- A 2013 community needs assessment found that parents lacked a safe place to leave their children between the start of their employment and when their subsidized child care begins.
- In 2016, Wichita had approximately 12,000 low-income working families with children.\(^2\)
- In 2017, 23% of Wichita children were living in poverty.\(^3\)
- Sedgwick County has only three Early Head Start spaces for every 100 children living below the poverty line, compared with the statewide average of ten spaces.\(^1\)
- Sedgwick County has only 13 Head Start spaces for every 100 children living below the poverty line, compared with the statewide average of 47 spaces.\(^1\)

SOLUTIONS

- Connect families with safe, licensed daytime and respite child care to provide children with nutritious food, nurturance, consistency, and a stimulating routine.
- Provide advocacy, resources, and referrals to help resolve emergencies or crisis situations.
- Create ongoing referral and case management services.

COLLABORATION

- Worked closely with homeless programs to help clients transition to stable housing, secure employment, and find safe, licensed child care.
- Provided referrals, as needed, to mental health, substance abuse, public health programs, and family court judges.
- Fostered relationships with Rainbows United and Screen for Success to help ensure appropriate placements for children with special needs.
- Partnered with a home-based child care provider who provides care in the evenings and on Saturdays to help fill a growing need for parents working outside of typical office hours.

SPECIAL POPULATION OUTREACH

- Provided program outreach at a faith-based food bank located in the zip code with the highest poverty levels.
- Worked closely with domestic violence shelters and victim advocates to share referrals and coordinate services.
- Served on the Fatherhood Coalition in Wichita to help promote fatherhood groups and events.
- Recruited women through specific outreach efforts in inpatient and outpatient treatment facilities, single parents, and military parents.

EVIDENCE BASE

Emerging and Evidence Informed: The Wichita Crisis Nursery is modeled after and adheres to the curriculum of Relief Nursery, Inc., an evidence-informed model.
OUTCOMES

The number of families who scored a three or above increased between pre- and post-test on the following subscales of the PFS-2 (n = 38):

- Family Functioning/Resilience by 35%*
- Social Supports by 21%*
- Caregiver/Practitioner Relationship by 16%**
- Nurturing and Attachment by 4%*

*Results significant at the (p < .01) level
**Results significant at the (p < .05) level

NUMBERS SERVED

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<th>Caregivers</th>
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TOTAL FUNDING: $174,269

CBCAP $126,741
ECBG $31,685
MATCH $15,843

“Our case manager has an excellent working relationship with [a new program for homeless families]. Together both programs are working to help clients move to stable housing, secure employment, and safe, well-established, licensed child care.”

- Pam Noble, Family Services Manager, Wichita Crisis Nursery