



National Center for Families Learning Applauds Congressional Resolution on Family Service Learning

Two-generation Family Service Learning Highlighted for its Results

Louisville, Ky. (September 13, 2016) – This week Members of Congress, led by Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) and Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) in the Senate, and Congressman Sam Johnson (R-TX) and Congressman John Yarmuth (D-KY) in the House of Representatives, introduced a resolution acknowledging the broad benefits of Family Service Learning. The Resolution designates the week of September 12 through 16, 2016 as “National Family Service Learning Week.”

Family Service Learning is a multi-generational method developed by the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL). Through this approach children and families learn and solve problems together with active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of their community. It is focused on children and families solving community issues together and applies 21st century college and career readiness skills for children and relevant workforce training skills for adults.

Among its many benefits, Family Service Learning improves workforce and literacy skills while enabling parents to become stronger teachers and role models for their children.

"I am pleased to see Congress recognize the importance of Family Service Learning," NCFL President and Founder Sharon Darling remarked. "Whether addressing crime, fostering health and nutrition, or helping people reclaim their communities, when families—especially low-income families—are treated as an integral part of the learning process, children, families, schools, and communities all stand to benefit. Family Service Learning equips family members with employability skills to improve their socio-economic status. And it creates stronger ties between low-income populations and their own communities," she added.

“There’s no better way to learn than by doing, and family service learning does just that. It encourages active participation in our communities while helping families solve problems together,” said Rep. Yarmuth. “I’m proud to join Rep. Johnson in introducing a bipartisan recognition of National Family Service Learning Week, and I thank the National Center for Families Learning for their dedication to this important work.”

“I speak from experience when I say that strong families make for a strong country,” said Rep. Johnson. “My wife, Shirley, and other POW wives fought to educate the public about the inhumane treatment my fellow POWs and I experienced in the Hanoi Hilton. If not for their strength, determination, and patriotism, I likely would have been left in solitary confinement with the ‘Alcatraz Gang’ far longer than the 42 months I endured. Worse, I might never have returned home with my compatriots. Families are each other’s best support systems, and they are the backbone of America. That is why I am proud to support the *Family Service Learning Resolution*. It encourages multi-generational family literacy, community service, and other learning experiences. I’m pleased that Third District companies like Plano’s Toyota are a major partner of the NCFL, and I hope this resolution encourages the further strengthening and empowerment of all American families.”

Results from an independent evaluation have found that Family Service Learning can:

- Expand voice, social capital, and networks of participating adults;
- Expand self-efficacy and self-confidence;
- Increase formal learning, including content knowledge, research, and academic skills;
- Increase technology skills;
- Increase opportunities to develop work-based skills; and
- Improve employment status—46% of participating adults secured a job or improved their existing work status.

About the National Center for Families Learning

The National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) is a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing our nation's literacy challenges by engaging all family members in learning, with a primary focus on parents and children living in poverty. Pioneered by NCFL, the two-generation family literacy approach harnesses the power of parent-child bonds to help those who are most at risk of failing economically, emotionally, and socially reach their full potential. Family Service Learning is NCFL's latest innovation on its two-generation family learning model. This approach to community building, currently being implemented in 20 U.S. communities, was developed with generous support from Toyota, NCFL's partner in family literacy and education efforts for 25 years. This approach also has gained funding support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Skillman Foundation, PNC Grow Up Great, the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, and the William R. Kenan, Jr., Charitable Trust.

NCFL develops and utilizes innovative programming and tools that focus on empowering families. Its programs are evidence-based and have been shown to improve student attendance, achievement, and behavior (including decreased absenteeism) while simultaneously building adult capacity for college and career readiness.

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