

Changing Children's Worlds Foundation Grant Update

In November of 2021 AASBCR® approved a grant request from the Changing Children's Worlds Foundation (CCWF) to develop a program they titled: "Best Start for Military Veterans/ First Responder Families". This program is intended to support the social & emotional needs of families of veterans and first responders. As a result of that grant, the CCWF developed and launched the Best Start for Military Veterans/ First Responder Families program.

In March, April and May of 2022, CCWF hosted monthly parent/child learning group sessions for parents, and they plan to offer additional sessions in July, August and September of 2022. An average of 9-12 parents and caregivers have participated in these sessions - most are Veterans and active Military, with 1-2 First Responders, and their children. CCWF has also formed a working relationship with the Kane County Courts. As a result of that partnership, 2 parents, largely struggling with substance abuse disorders, have been welcomed into these sessions as well.

These programs serve to strengthen parent-child and other relationships within the family. The goal is to provide children with the support they need to feel safe, loved, and to thrive and achieve their potential. Families learn how empathy, positive communications, setting positive boundaries, focusing attention, and teaching children self-control lead to stronger family relations and better outcomes in school and society.

The St. Charles Veterans Center is hosting the program for parents, with a special space available for children to receive positive play and social/emotional support from CCWF staff. Each session begins with a family meal and a 1.5 hour facilitated conversation. Trained facilitators are veterans or first responders themselves, who are attuned to the issues facing the participating families, helping them build resilience to overcome the challenges they may face at home.

You should be proud that your ongoing membership has enabled AASBCR® to financially support efforts such as the Best Start for Military Veterans/ First Responder Families support group provided by CCWF. We are always on the lookout for other deserving organizations and the next article provides information on how you could help such an organization submit a grant request.