

## **Central Place Family Resource & Community Education Center**

Educational systems are a natural place to implement strategies to address the concerns of parents who have survived adverse childhood experiences, as well as prevent a new generation from succumbing to the effects of similar difficulties. The primary goal of school systems is to ensure students are successful academically so they can graduate, and in turn become productive adults.

However, not all children enter school equally ready to learn. Some come from families where there are a host of physical, emotional, financial, legal, and safety concerns that are caused, in part, by adverse childhood experiences. How well parents are able to address those issues impacts their children's organic capacity to learn, as well as the child's ability to consistently attend school and focus on learning. Thus, the parent's difficulties affect the child's future.

The Southeast Polk Community School District, through its own programs and through partnerships with local organizations, works to address the holistic needs of children so they can become better students, and thus have a better future. We do this through offering services to both students and their families, in an effort to provide services that not only prepare the child for learning, but heal the parents so they can in turn better support their children.

For example, the district supports Central Place Family Resource Center, which coordinates school- and community-based behavioral health services; a free, high-quality children's health clinic; intensive support for families with issues related to mental health, homelessness, domestic violence, and other serious concerns; assistance with basic educational materials such as school supplies and shoes for physical education; assistance with accessing food and rent/utility assistance; transportation to appointments; and out-of-school time programming to enrich the child socially, emotionally, and academically.

As a school system, we can and should provide students and their families with these very basic strategies with the aim of preventing a new generation of children from adverse childhood experiences.

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