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Sept. 9, 2009

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University Relations

Georgia State receives \$1.3 million CDC grant to explore training to prevent child abuse

ATLANTA — The National SafeCare® Training and Research Center (NSTRC) at Georgia State University's Center for Healthy Development has received a \$1.3 million grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to examine what works in coaching others to teach parents skills needed to prevent child abuse and neglect.

SafeCare is a structured parent-training intervention that teaches skills in three areas relating to child abuse and neglect: health, safety, and parent-child interactions. These three skills can help parents to prevent medical, environmental and emotional neglect.

The CDC grant will allow researchers to compare two main types of coaching — expert coaching, in which coaching is given to directly from the NSTRC itself, and two types of local coaching to practitioners of the SafeCare model.

“The study will help us understand how to translate science to community practice in an effective and efficient manner,” said the project’s principal investigator, Daniel Whitaker, director of the NSTRC and professor of public health.

There is a strong push to have community practitioners conduct evidence-based programs like SafeCare, but moving community practitioners to evidence-based programs is difficult, especially for behavioral interventions like the SafeCare parenting program.

Research literature shows that training must include ongoing feedback from those with expertise in the practice, Whitaker said.

“This study will help us understand the most efficient ways to provide that ongoing support and feedback,” he said.

The NSTRC is housed at the Center for Healthy Development as part of Georgia State’s College of Health and Human Sciences. The CHD includes the Center for Leadership in Disability.

The CLD recently received a \$2.6 million, five-year grant and designation as a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Research and Service. The UCEDD grant is funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

To learn more about the Center for Healthy Development, the National SafeCare Training Resource Center and the Center for Leadership in Disability, visit <http://chhs.gsu.edu/chd>.