







## Power of Parenting Program

*Power of Parenting* is a comprehensive program that increases positive outcomes for families. Families First and partners collaborate to recruit parents for the 16-week program, where parents come to build strong relationships with their children and meaningful connections with other parents.

### Program Highlights:

-  Interactive, research-based parenting workshops
-  Discussion-based Parent Café sessions
-  Parent leadership development & training
-  Families First mobile app
-  Connections to community resources & incentives
-  Six months of recruitment & retention support

## The Need for Parenting Support

Early childhood experiences matter because...

**One**  
stable & responsive  
relationship  
helps kids overcome  
adversity.<sup>1</sup>

**80%**  
of brain development  
happens in the  
first 3 years  
of life.<sup>2</sup>

**Every**  
\$1 spent  
on early childhood  
programs saves  
**\$4 - \$9**  
in social costs.<sup>3</sup>



## Program Goals

### Overall Goal:

By empowering parents with knowledge, skills, and support around parenting, the **parent-child relationship** is improved and families are able to nurture and guide the next generation, readying them for **lasting success**.

The program aims to build the **Five Protective Factors**:<sup>4</sup>

- ✓ **Goal 1:** Build knowledge of parenting and child development in parents
- ✓ **Goal 2:** Build children's social and emotional competence through parents
- ✓ **Goal 3:** Build parental resilience
- ✓ **Goal 4:** Build social connections between parents
- ✓ **Goal 5:** Partner with agencies that provide concrete support in times of need

## Target Audience

- Parents of children from **birth – age 8**
- Parents in **under-resourced communities** who lack access to parenting support

## Partnerships & Communities Served

- We work primarily in Greater Boston, with a focus on high-need neighborhoods like **Roxbury, Dorchester, and East Boston**.
- Programs are delivered in collaboration with organizations that share our mission and have strong connections to parents.

### KEY PARTNERS:



# POWER OF PARENTING OUTCOMES

## Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development & Social and Emotional Competence of Children

A knowledgeable parent is able to better understand and therefore better support the needs of his or her children.



Parents reported the following improvements:

### BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR CHILD

- Understand the “why” behind behaviors
- Better understand my child in general

### COMMUNICATION & DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES

- Know to step back/walk away when overwhelmed
- Stay calm
- More talking, less yelling
- Listen and encourage children more
- Be open minded in conversations

### POSITIVE PARENTING TACTICS

- Make a schedule for morning routines
- Give choices
- Take time for self (parent timeout)

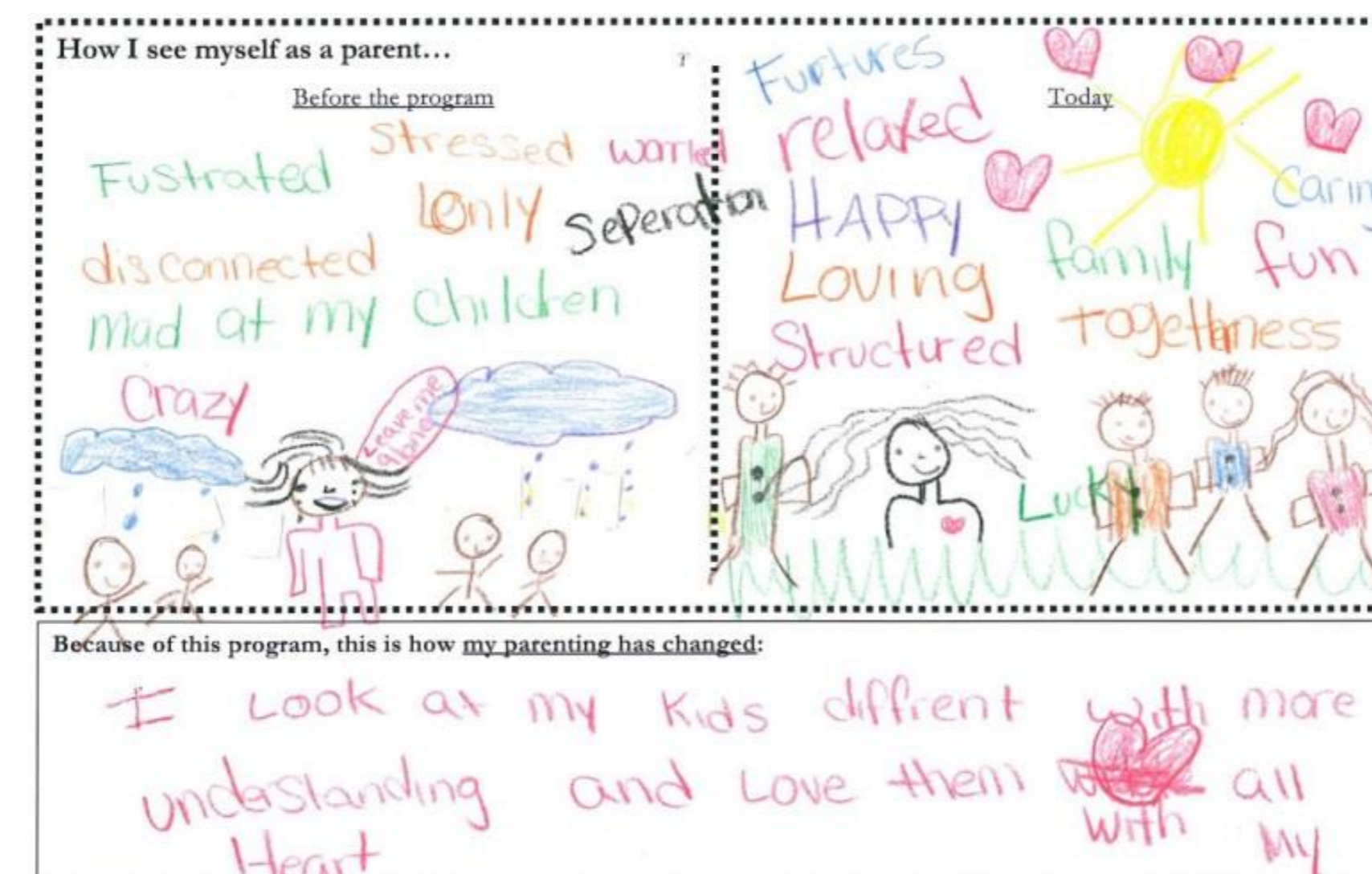
## Parental Resilience

A resilient parent manages stress and functions well when faced with parenting challenges.

Three areas we assess in our programs are:

- Confidence in parenting
- Awareness of how stress affects a parent’s relationship with their child
- Use of strategies to manage parenting stress

### One parent’s story:



Before the program, this parent mentioned a lot of negative emotions, but after, she had a new outlook. With the knowledge she gained to better understand her children, she saw their future together in a much more positive light.

## Social Connections

A parent who is connected to other parents is able to grow his/her network to support his/her family.

### Parents shared strategies with one another

- “Take 5 mins, breathe and then go back to what needs to be done.”
- “Ask a question why he's crying or why he is mad.”

### Parents became more open to others' advice

- “In the beginning, I need to keep him close...but now I need to let go and let others give me advice...Now I am willing...to take it.”
- “I sit back more freely and take what people say that applies to [my daughter].”

### Parents connected on a deeper level





- “We’re a sisterhood, a family.”
- “[After my grandmother passed], I needed support and I received it when I was away; they took care of my children. It opened my eyes; it’s not only about blood relations.”

## Concrete Support in Times of Need

A parent whose basic needs are met is able to focus more on his/her family.

Partnering with strong community organizations allows us to expand beyond parenting support to meet additional family needs.

Our partner organizations provide:

-  Housing support
-  Financial literacy training and assistance
-  Interview support and attire
-  College credits

“Before the program, I thought I had it all together.  
Today, I trust and respect my child.”

# Key Lessons Learned

## Parent Outcomes

- All parents who graduated reported stories of change as a result of the program
- Longer-term programming resulted in...
  - Increased **knowledge**
  - Deeper **connections** being formed
  - More opportunities for **follow-up**

## Program Innovations



Parents enjoyed the Parent Café discussion-based sessions



Parent leaders began to play a role but could be better utilized in the future



The app is a great opportunity to connect parents to one another and the Parenting Educator but improvements are needed to best fit parents' needs

## Recruitment & Retention

- Recruiting and retaining parents is challenging; we have built strategies to address these areas and will assess progress in the coming years

# Future of Power of Parenting

The *Power of Parenting* program is at the center of Families First's new three-year business plan. Guided by the following strategic priorities, the organization will scale the program to serve even more parents.



Deepen and expand partnerships with key, mission-aligned organizations



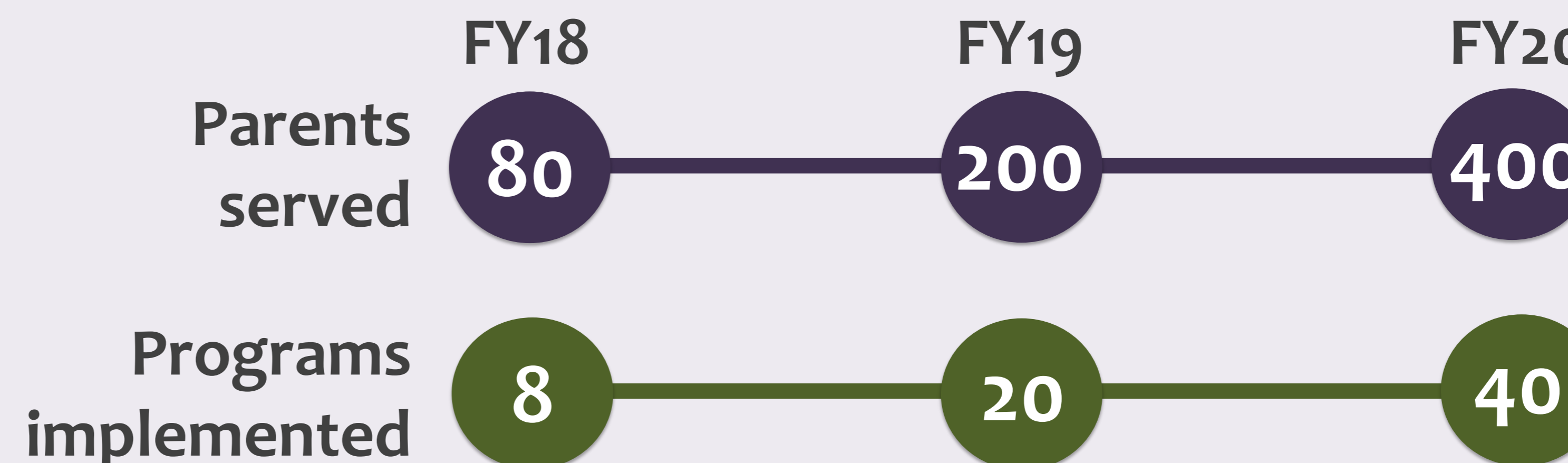
Deliver Families First's *Power of Parenting* programs to more families



Grow Families First into a sustainable, regional-based leading parenting organization

## From 2018-2020...

Parents served will increase while we build key partnerships.



<sup>1</sup>Harvard Center on the Developing Child, "From Best Practices to Breakthrough Impacts" (2016)  
<sup>2</sup>Ludy-Dobson, C. & Perry, B. "The Role of Healthy Relational Interactions in Buffering the Impact of Childhood Trauma" (2010)  
<sup>3</sup>Harvard Center on the Developing Child, "Five Numbers to Remember About Early Childhood Development" (2017)  
<sup>4</sup>The Center for the Study of Social Policy, Strengthening Families™, "Protective Factors Framework"