Parents Who CARE

Become Parents Who LEAD

at Home, in Community, in School, and Beyond

NPLI is the national outreach and growth replication arm of Connecticut’s Parent Leadership Training Institute.
Our Mission
The National Parent Leadership Institute (NPLI) exists to coordinate and increase the civic skills and impact of diverse parents to improve child and community outcomes as they build caring communities.

What We Do and How We Do It
We are developing the field of parent leadership by embracing a cross-race, cross-class, parent-informed and pro-social learning approach to building parents as a constituency for community and recognizing children as the beneficiaries. NPLI works with and trains parents, agencies, community organizations, local/state governments and other systems to partner with parents as valuable leaders and assets working to build caring communities.

The PLTI Model
A critical gap exists between parental desire to improve conditions for children and capacity. Many parents care passionately for the health, safety and learning of their children, but may lack the civic skills to catalyze desired changes. The PLTI integrates family leadership and democracy skills. Families learn the importance of public policy, outcome measures, how to speak publicly, define need, frame an agenda, work together across class and race, anticipate challenges, and create coherent community and public information strategies. State and local leaders meet with the parents. Civic projects are designed by the parents. A community of parent leaders is built. Child care, dinner and other supports are provided to remove barriers to participate. Each class of parents mentors the next, creating a pyramid effect of caring and a developing a coalition of parent leaders.

So, what happens when parents lead? Parent graduates improve neighborhoods, bolster community, and strengthen programs and policies. Among PLTI parent leaders, approximately 40% focus on education, 30% on social health and 30% on community and economic development. Outcomes from recent PLTI Graduates show an increased use of civic skills including consensus building skills and community organizing skills and increased participation in civic activities.

Before participating in PLTI:
- less than 50% of participants understood how budgets or state laws are made, or who represented them in state and local government.
- 42% of participants knew their elected State representative.
- just 33% of participants would speak at public meetings

After participating in PLTI:
- 84%-91% of parent leaders reported knowledge of these processes
- 86% of parent participants knew their elected officials.
- 56% speak at public meetings

“We strive now to create true dialogue with families, listening before we speak, asking before we answer and thinking about the problem – whatever it may be – before we go straight to a solution because the expertise no longer lies within the organization but in cultivating and equipping the parent leaders and advocates already present in our school community.”

Quote from New Visions for Public Schools, our NYC Sponsoring agency and partner on the system impact of parent leadership