



**BACKGROUND:** The *Smart & Secure Children (SSC)* is a product of the Satcher Health Leadership Institute (SHLI) Neighborhood Healthy Child Development project that is designed **with** parents through a community participatory study to increase quality parenting as a way to strengthen vulnerable families raising children 0-5 years old who may have been exposed to negative childhood experiences. Research has shown that quality parenting can help to lessen up to 50% of the negative impact of poverty on children’s development. To date, approximately 167 parents have completed SSC trainings in Atlanta, Georgia, Tennessee, and Mississippi.

**SSC Communities:** NPU L, T, V, X, Y and Z & AUC neighborhoods

**OBJECTIVES:** SSC parenting sessions will be evaluated to learn its direct impact on quality parenting, child behavior health and pre-school ability, we aim to accomplish the following:

1. **Quality Parenting Knowledge:** Parents who complete the SSC curriculum will demonstrate an increase in knowledge across the components of quality parenting .
2. **Quality Parenting Skills:** Parents completing SSC will demonstrate an increase in competence and confidence in parenting skills as measured by expert observation, peer feedback, and self-report.
3. **Parental Mental Health:** Parents participating in the SSC curriculum will demonstrate an improvement in mental well-being.
4. **Healthy Child Brain Development:** More than half of children ages 0-5 of participating parents will meet or surpass the age-appropriate cut-off score in at least 3 of 5 developmental areas for assessing preschool ability (communication, fine motor skills, gross, motor skills, problem solving and personal-social skills).
5. **Healthy Child Emotions:** More than half of children ages 0-5 of participating parents will be below the age-appropriate cut-off score in these areas of social emotional health: self-regulation, compliance, communication, adaptive, autonomy, affect and interaction with people.

**APPROACH:** This learning experience is structured to randomly group 3 parent leaders with 1 mentor so they can facilitate social participation in a conversational learning environment that activates parents to improve their own habits as parents which in turn, improve their children’s brain development and emotions. SHLI provides 3-day leadership training for all parent mentors (PM) and parent leaders (PL). PMs mentor their 3 PLs for up to 16 hours on SSC content and delivery. Then the PLs go on to facilitate conversational learning with up to 5-6 parent peer learners (PPL) on the ten SSC curriculum modules for 12 weeks.

**Recruit/Train in 2014-2015-** We are actively recruiting **140 new parents (PPLs-parent peer leaders)** from NPU/zip codes above who have a child age 0-5 and receive any public assistance or free lunch. Sign up is NOW!!!

**Interested?** Click this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GHSX25C> if you have any questions, contact program manager, Mrs. Ferguson 404-752-8698 or [aferguson@msm.edu](mailto:aferguson@msm.edu) or project director, Dr. Cassandra Kirkland 404-756-8910

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