

Great Start Coalition

Strategic Planning for 2011-2013

Present: Marcia Campbell, Susan Chowen, Nina Wager, Jill Haan, LuAnn Ameluxen, Mandy Peterson, Theresa Simons, Shirley Gillespie, JoAnna Kolodziej, Devanie Argetsinger, Mary Martincheck, Barbara Jaqutth, Carolyn Belknap, Pat Fralick, Jennille Whisler, Sommer Poquette, and Audrey Shapiro.

1. Opening activity: Each group answers their question and uses the blocks to build a house.
2. Each person in the group identifies the different hat(s) that they wear.
3. Each group shared their question and the parts of their house.
4. The “House” analogy idea was shared with the group. We are building an Early Childhood House. We need to be on the same page so we are building the same house not one a two story and one a duplex.

Table 1: “What does an early childhood system need to have to be successful?”
Resources, collaboration with community partners, parent involvement, connectivity.

Table 2: “What does a child need to succeed in school and life?” Preschool, Supportive Other, Quality Child Care, High Quality Environment, Opportunities to play with others, be read to by others, quality programs.

Table 3: “What basic needs and economic security and safety do we provide or need to provide for young children and their families?” Less Loop Holes, Good Advocacy, Nutritional Needs are met, Health Care.

Table 4: “What in our community do we need for young children and their families to be physically, socially and emotionally healthy?” Family support, Children’s Museum (science/nature), Infant Mental Health.

5. Each person talked about the item they selected from the table, why they chose it and what it says about them.
6. SWOT: Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Each group will work on identifying these things in relation to Great Start. As a group we will then vote on them and they will become our goals and strategies.

Child Safety, Basic Needs and Economic Security:

Strengths: 1. A lot of social service agencies and programs. 2. Good community support for entrepreneurship 3. Good safety system for children such as car seat checks, CPS, bumper sticker campaign, finger prints.

Weakness 1. State policies that prevent programs. 2. Lack of transportation 3. Lack a good living wage due to seasonal work.

Opportunities: 1. Nationally and locally big push for education. 2. Business recognition/workforce development. 3. Local access to programs that we do have.

Threats: 1. current economic conditions. 2. Family systems falling apart. 3. Falling behind in many areas from the rest of the world and state.

12. Parenting education and parenting support:

Strengths: 1. Opportunities for parents to connect (HS policy council support/connections). 2. Awareness of offerings of parent support/PD 2. Different levels of engagement for parents to be involved.

Weaknesses: 1. Getting the word out, not enough representation. 2. Accessing funding streams outside of agencies to provide training and PD for parents to incorporate as many as possible. 3. The limited funding for PD. 4. Transportation.

Opportunities: 1. Offering collaborative events (agency) to parents. 2. We give parents the opportunity for their voices to be heard. 3. Helping parents gain knowledge of available resources in the community. 4. Collaboration with other agencies.

Threats: 1. Parents are intimidated by the unknowns/overwhelmed. 2. Lack the life skills/tools needed. 3. Missed opportunities for agencies etc. to network due to less staff, more jobs etc.

13. Early Care and Education:

Strengths: 1. Some free preschool opportunities 2. Access to an associate degree to train teachers of young learners. 3. Some PD opportunities for providers and preschool teachers.

Weaknesses: 1. Not enough affordable and accessible high quality opportunities (preschool, daycare etc.) for birth to five. 2. Higher education and PD for providers and teachers to participate due to barriers. 3. Lack of availability for birth to 2 care.

Opportunities: 1. Private Preschools in the area (30 total). 2. We have PD opportunities online and through Teach Scholarships. 3. We have coordinating agencies.

Threats: 1. Financing at private preschools for those children that surface after tuition free sites are full. 2. Privately run transportation in schools to help with busing. 3. Lack of follow through after PD.

Statistics: 1,475 0-5 year olds on Great Start Network. 664 three and four year olds on Great Start Network. 328 being served in Head Start or GSRP.

14. Social/Emotional:

Strengths: 1. Some local resources. 2. Strong HV programs.

Weakness: 1. Hard to get into CMH 2. No Infant Mental Health. 3. Few Parenting Classes. 6.

Opportunities: 1. Parenting Classes. 2. Frey Foundation grant. 3. Training.

Threats: 2. Public lack of awareness of resources. 3. Public lack of awareness of the need for resources.

Physical

Strengths: 1. School and rural based centers. 2. Professional know each other and networks. 3. Getting Kids Outdoors initiative in Emmet County.

Weaknesses: 1. No Pediatric Specialists including obesity. 2.No research dollars. 3. Lack opportunities to play (in and out door related to physical activity, ties into obesity).

Opportunities: 1. Medical Homes. 2. We try to draw research money. 3. We have technology and PD learning to do more with less.

Threats: 1. Poor school nutrition. 4. Political Climate. 5. Budget/Michigan Economy.

Each group was assigned one of the weaknesses to create a goal and objectives.

Guidance for creating goals and objectives were shared with the group. They are as follows:

Time Frame – by ..., Behavior – action (identify, secure), Condition - location, Criteria - #, %

The top 5 Weaknesses:

1. Affordable, accessible, high quality educational opportunities.

Goal:

By 2013, every child 0-5 in the Charlevoix, Emmet and Northern Antrim Great Start area will have access to affordable, high quality early childhood services and programs.

Objectives:

By 2013, we will secure \$50,000.00 of donation money for scholarship funds for three and four year old children so they may attend a private early childhood program.

By August 2011, we will identify in each local school district 1-5 private early childhood programs that participate in scholarship funding for three and four year old children.

By December 2011, we will research the feasibility of having 1-5 classroom spaces reserved for children aged three to four who are identified mid-year as needing a private preschool program.

By 2013, we will disseminate information regarding scholarship partners and the scholarship process to collaborating agencies.

By 2012, we will connect with county transportation groups to explore the feasibility of transportation for three and four year olds to their preschool setting.

2. Obesity

Goal: To increase individual family and community awareness of obesity as a health risk to children 0-5 and their families.

Objectives:

Increase awareness of nutrition information (physical activities/opportunities and strengthen the connection between nature & outdoors).

3. Infant Mental Health

Goal: Advocate for increased access and availability of an array of mental health services for children 0-5 and their families.

Objectives:

Increase access to behavioral and parenting (daycare, playgroups, trainings) information by July 2011.

4. Transportation

5. 0-2 Care

Goal:

Increase childcare for the 0-2 age range.

Objectives:

Identify incentives for providers to increase infant/toddler care.

6. Parenting Education & Family Support

Goal:

Enhance and develop ways to effectively support the parenting of children 0-5.

Objectives:

Increase caregiver involvement through providing 5 opportunities for parenting education each year.

Provide 211 with a detailed list of parenting supports available in our counties.

Partner with the Frey Foundation to establish parent navigators to enhance parent education.

Connect with directors of child care centers to provide access to parents.

A note: The CCEP has been dissolved. The need is still here, how can we bring it back to the table?