



5th Meeting - Minutes

Region 4 Family Council Meeting

Zoom: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlqd-6upjkeE9UnMJTF_jEDtXm2SFXhGHNK

Meeting ID: 86707682591

Passcode: 797590

Date & Time: Tuesday, February 16, 2023, 6pm-8pm

Attendees: Kelly McNeal, Livia Bane, Lisa Coen, Becky Durick , Amber Merrimon, , Jennifer Simms, Megan Kerr, Megan Schultz, Ursula Sobattka, Teresa Fillers, Jessica Olmo, Trisha Brondyke

Absent: Catherine (Camie) Richards

- I. **Welcome & Icebreaker** (10 min) Facilitator(s): Livia Bane, Regional Council Manager and Kelly McNeal, Family & Community Engagement Specialist
 - Welcome and reminder of key role of Family Council members.
 - Recap Community Agreement

- II. **Recap of last meeting** (10 min) Facilitator(s): Kelly McNeal, Family & Community Engagement Specialist
 - Regional Scan
 - Slot Gap

- III. **Access to Childcare Discussion** (40 min) Facilitator(s): Kelly McNeal, Family & Community Engagement Specialist



How accessible do you feel childcare is? Is it affordable, accessible, etc.?

General comments:

- Too expensive
- Uses grandparent for child care so accessibility is not necessary for one member.
- non-traditional childcare options are lacking.
- It is often difficult to determine who is a good provider.
- Single moms have more resources available to them than married women.
- Married individuals do not receive CCAT.
- Y care does not offer enough time availability.
- Parents struggle to find care close enough.
- If within 1.5 miles from school, bus does not provide a ride,
- If a snow day, there are often no child care options so parents forced to skip work.
- Is a public preschool option even available?
- Transportation issues are a challenge.
- No before school care offered.
- More locations needed.
- Choosing to stay at home also affects mental health (both good and bad).
- Childcare keeps Jennifer out of the workforce. Once child care is paid for, her check would equate to \$100 extra per week. It's not worth it to return to work.
- Kids often get breakfast fast, lunch offered at school. When there is no school there is food insecurity.
- There is no benefit to working after child care expenses.
- Summer childcare is expensive, and enrollment is limited.
- Only part time day camps aren't convenient for working parents.
- Have to shuffle to pick up and drop off.
- YMCA and YWCA locations are not always in accessible locations.
- Virtual classrooms are difficult for children and teachers.

What local resources are you aware of?

- Workforce Connection
- There is a need for additional mental health resources.
- Need to consider services available to single dads as well as moms.
- Need housing assistance.
- Catholic | Lutheran Services
- Need more doctors to offer assistance and referrals in a timely manner.
- Can pregnant youth continue to attend school?
- MELD



- I-Ready
- Dept. Human Services
- Trinity House- pregnant women assistance
- Dept. Human Services
- Personal Support workers - Door's advocate.

General comments:

- Do not always know how to receive help finding information.
- Need help for anxiety.
- Rural areas don't have a lot of support.
- YWCA and CCRR - * Child-Care after-hours list is available.
- Local mum groups offer support.
- Time it takes to receive services/referrals is too long.
- There are often waitlists and delays.
- There is an immediate need for services.
- Disconnection of resources is a challenge for parents.

IV. **Break** (5 min)

V. **Effects of Covid on ECEC Discussion** (35 min) Facilitator(s): Kelly McNeal, Family & Community Engagement Specialist

- Impact of Covid to ECEC is at a critical state.
- ECEC intervention via zoom is frustrating and difficult for many.
- Lack of referrals when needed as it is difficult to judge need for intervention on zoom.
- Fewer slots avail during covid due to staff shortage.
- No transportation offered to and from.
- Have lost staff due to covid and they have not returned.
- K-12 lack bus drivers.
- Classrooms not safe because of not enough staff
- Cost of everything has increased.
- Money is not going as far due to inflation.
- Kids delayed and learning stalled.
- 6th graders reading at a 3rd grade level.
- Social development has stalled as there hasn't been as much opportunity to engage with others.
- self-study learning / all digital
- during pregnancy no resources were available



- need for services changed at a time when services were readily available or shut down.
- babies missed interactions during prime development.
- brain development delays
- mental health of parents affects children, too.
- lack of mental health resources for children and parents.
- missing human interactions

VI. **Individual Takeaways** (10 min) Facilitator(s): Kelly McNeal, Family & Community Engagement Specialist

What is needed?

- Additional mentors and grant writers
- Child care centers that are held to parent schedules and not vice versa.

Watching the Governor's State of Illinois address gave hope for the future of ECEC for their kid and grandkids.

Next Meeting:

Date: March 14th, 2023

Time: 6:00pm -8:00pm

Location: Zoom