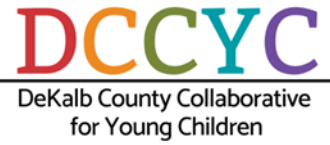




In partnership with



MEETING NOTES

Region 16 Joint Action-Family Council Meeting

Date & Time: March 21, 2023 at 3:00pm

Family Council Members present: Gretchen Sprinkle, Olivia, Samantha Balentyne, Jaclyn Rogers, Asheli Mann-Lofthouse, Diana Abraham

Action Council Members present: Samantha McDavid, Amanda Christensen, Jennifer Johnson, Beth Prestegaard, Courtney Hill, Larissa Vander Kuur, Meryl Kleiner, Jud Curry, Tiffany Powell, Teri Spartz, Andrea Cossey, Lindsay Jezek

Action Council Members absent: Kay Chase, Rose Malloy, Kiara Jones, Audrey Cook, DeKol Austin, Emily Reilly

3:00pm Introductions (10)

Notes: Each member introduced themselves

3:10pm Family Council Panel and Discussion (60)

Notes: below are the questions that guided the conversations between the Action Council and the

- What questions do you have for Action Council?
 - Via RCM, Family Council input is brought to the Action Council which adds to the Regional Scan
 - DCCYC is cautious in taking action immediately on recommendations based on future funding concerns
- Which areas of our county would most benefit from a child care center?
 - Southern end of county between Sandwich and DeKalb
 - Northside of DeKalb in Annie Glidden North area
 - Really anywhere
- How do you define “quality” child care and how would you address issues of quality with your provider?
 - Attitude and excitement of working with children
 - Engaging with children
 - Feel children are safe with them
 - Quality care definition is different for everyone
 - Empowering for parents when they can address concerns
 - Ratio is conducive to proper care
 - Developmental milestones are being met
 - As long as there is trust, licensure is not always an indicator of quality

- o Cost is the biggest reason why some may choose family child care or family, friend, & neighbor care over a center
- Do you feel local child care options are inclusive in regard to disability, race/ethnicity, language, etc.?
 - o Inclusive with language but not equipped to work with disabilities
 - o Difficult to find care for children with disabilities
 - Autism
 - Physical disability that affects mobility
 - ADHD
 - o Either staff are uncomfortable/unqualified to provide the care needed or the setting is inaccessible for a child with a physical disability
- Have you, or anyone you know, passed up on work opportunities because of the availability?
 - o Yes!
 - o Several have lost job opportunities because waitlists were too long and the opportunity was no longer available
 - o Want to work outside the home but finding the appropriate care for child with disabilities has been impossible
 - o Caregivers considered jobs in ECEC but the cost of child care was still too great even with a discount
 - o Several caregivers have transitioned to single-income households to accommodate child care needs
- How do you budget for child care?
 - o Difficult every month
 - o Child care gets a higher priority because if its not paid they will lose their spot
 - o Try to pay ahead when they receive larger sums such as tax refunds because then they can breathe a little easier for the next month or two
 - o Budget knowing they are going to need to use credit to pay for other necessities such as groceries, knowing they are going into debt each month
- What resources have you used to make child care more affordable?
 - o Some centers offer discounts if you work there but the cost is still so high that it's not cost-effective
 - o Just don't do many things because of the cost
 - o 4-C and CCAP have helped to make things more affordable
 - o Rely on family to help with child care/lower cost
 - o Based on our income, would not qualify for any assistance or would have to stop working and make lots of changes

- o Use to run my own in home child care for 10.5 years because of child care costs
 - o Gone to a public space such as a library where the children can play and can get some work done
- What are the most important lessons about child care you'd want to share with new parents?
 - o Apply when you find out you're pregnant and even then there are not always slots available
 - o If your child misses too many days you can lose your spot
 - o If your child is sick and can't go to the child care you may still have to pay out of pocket because CCAP doesn't reimburse and you could lose your slot if you don't
 - o Licensed child care providers cannot expel your child due to a disability
- Is there anything we haven't asked about that you feel is important to share?
 - o Resources and where they're being provided for families
 - o Being able to access more resources but a lot of people do not know about them or how to obtain them
- Follow-up questions and discussion
 - o When the child tax credit increased and became a monthly payment, did it impact your care cost?
 - Used it to pay co-pay and was able to go back to work for a while
 - Paid ahead on child care
 - o As a parent with a child with disabilities, what would ideal child care look like?
 - It looks different depending on the disability
 - Autistic child needs space such a calm-down room and staff that know how to support them through difficult behaviors
 - Child with a physical disability and limited mobility needs smaller ratios of staff to children, greater safety precautions, and teachers with high qualifications
 - o Other ideas included combining coworking spaces with child care activities and promoting a greater "it takes a village" mentality

4:20 Adjourn

Next steps: please review and give feedback on the Regional Scan sections in the Google folder shared with you.