



REGION 8 ACTION COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

1 p.m. Feb 1, 2023, Stewart Centre Freeport

ZOOM ONLY: Stephanie Lewis, Devan Spellman, Stephanie Koclanis, Emily Dixon, Amiee Schoenhaar, Jenine Patty-Anderson, Amanda Meyers, Kenny Lewis, Chandra Morris, Sarah Kuhlemeier and Kenny Lewis.

Regional Council Manager Lou Ann Hayes called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Lou Ann started with announcing our region was selected for one of the grants given out through Birth to Five Illinois in the recent grant cycle. A total of \$52,000 was awarded to the Northwest Illinois Early Childhood Consortium. United Way of Northwest Illinois will administer the funds which will pay to hire staff and fund the 2-1-1 community agency phone referral service for a year.

Lou Ann updated the group on a meeting she had with Fr. Diego, the pastor for St. Mary's Church in Freeport and director of Hispanic ministries, to help establish communication with the Hispanic community in our region. She will be speaking on March 19 after the Spanish Mass and then after host an outreach event at the parish center to distribute information on ECEC. A few of the Action Council members said they would represent their agencies as well and hand out information. We hope with Fr. Diego's involvement it will lend validity to Birth to Five Illinois' mission.

West Carroll School District is having preschool screening next week and Janine said Tri-County will be there to help give out ECEC information. Also, there was a newspaper story on the proposed ECEC center in Mount Carroll and Lou Ann provided a link to members.

Dean relayed the comments from the most recent Family Council meeting. He said there are similar stories from the members about the challenges they face in securing ECEC care. Members confirmed much of the thoughts regarding these mentioned at the Action Council meeting.



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Lou Ann asked Council members their thoughts on giving ECEC information and options to local doctors to hand out to parents. Most thought it was a good idea to try but the downside is relying on the offices to make sure the families get the information.

Lou Ann showed a power point presentation on regional collaborations that exist in our region. They are lacking in Jo Daviess and Carroll counties, but a strong one exists in Stephenson County. There could be overlap between some agencies and other difficulties include different overall purpose between agencies, limited amount of data that can be shared, different criteria needed and tracked among agencies. Benefits include all work toward common goal and familiar with each other to help work together and other counties could learn a lot by copying aspects of their collaborations.

Members agreed it would be helpful to arrange a networking event so Stephenson County people can meet counterparts in Jo Daviess and Carroll counties and exchange ideas and tips on collaborations. An event to allow home providers to meet each other also would be helpful.

The meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m. The next meeting is at 1 p.m. on Feb 15.

Todd McKenna
Administrative Support
Birth to Five Illinois Region 8

