



## MEETING NOTES

### Region 56 Action Council Meeting

**Location:** Zoom

**Date & Time:** January 26, 2023 at 11:00am-12:30pm

Council Members present: Amy Martin, Sherry Coe, Debrah Clark, Stephanie Thompson, Hassan Von Schlegell, Ellise Boy-Johnson, Elizabeth Kaufman, Cherita Tousson-Bowens, Kathy Fudge-White

Guest Speakers: Rebecca Anderson, All Our Kids

Council Members not in attendance: Sandifer Thomas, Stephanie Budziak, Paula Kennedy, Amy Loy

#### **Welcome (11:00am-11:15am)**

Notes: Region 56 welcomed everyone into the Zoom call, briefly went over the agenda for the meeting, and introduced the guest speaker, Rebecca Anderson from All Our Kids.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

#### **Agenda Review (11:15am-11:20am)**

Notes: Region 56 shared the agenda review with everyone on the Zoom call.

Rational Aims:

- Learn about AOK
  - Provide community supports to Council.

Experiential Aims:

- Dive deeper into how this information impacts your family.
  - Connect with other family council members.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

#### **All Our Kids Presentation (11:20am-11:50am)**

Notes: Guest speaker Rebecca Anderson presented on All Our Kids (AOK).



The All Our Kids Early Childhood Networks program is an initiative to promote healthy pregnancies and the positive growth and development of all children birth to five and their parents/caregivers by assuring a high quality, well-coordinated, easily accessible system of services and supports. AOK Networks use a data-driven approach to understand disparities and root causes of locally identified priority issues. The goal of the initiative is to improve outcomes for children and families through the implementation of evidence-based strategies that promote an effective local early childhood system.

Rebecca Anderson asked the Action Council members to introduce themselves and where they work. Rebecca shared a power point presentation.

Within the presentation Rebecca explained IRIS (Integrated Referral and Intake System), which is a web-based communication tool to help organizations connect the families they serve to the right resources in their community.

IRIS was launched in Will County in February 2020, before the pandemic. IRIS is in other states as well, Utah, Missouri, Kansas, and Illinois. Currently there are 15,593 number of unique individuals of families served in a referral through IRIS. There were 26,738 total number of referrals made. A referral in Will County's community standards is accepting or rejecting the referral within three business days. IRIS is HIPAA compliant. IRIS tracks referrals and finds out what the income is. IRIS is different from 211, where 211 anyone can call to receive a resource. IRIS alerts the person at the agency receiving services through email.

Rebecca shared how to make an account in IRIS and how to navigate the website, community documents, community data, community referral reports, and utilizing searchable features and how to make a referral.

Questions were asked from the council: "How do we get your agency to help our youth development agency? Specifically pregnant parenting teens." Rebecca shared her email to the members to contact her on the needs for the youth development agency. Any program would need to sign an MOA and can start with the program within the next day. Rebecca Anderson's email is [randerson@willcountyhealth.org](mailto:randerson@willcountyhealth.org) – Will County area.

Another question asked, "have you noticed any needs or trends?" The answer given was there a lot of requests for needs for housing and homelessness.



An Action Council member also shared, "I recommend representatives from the housing community attend the Action Council meeting which would include Morning Star Mission, Catholic Charities, Joliet Housing Authority, etc. The agencies can also provide information regarding transitional housing opportunities that may be available." As well as another Action Council member also shared "One of our programs just started a division for housing and we have a homeless liaison whom is leading this. We had our first housing meeting this morning and we are trying to tackle many of the issues we are seeing in our population. I can bring our information forward as we move forward." We will be looking forward to looking into the information.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: Share the websites for IRIS with the Action Council members.

[IRIS Referral Network \(willcountyhealth.org\)](http://willcountyhealth.org)

[Home | Connect with IRIS](#)

### **Demographics Review and Feedback (11:50am-12:05pm)**

Notes: Region 56 presented on the regional data review, review of questions, and feedback. Two main systems were introduced. IECAMs (Illinois Early Childhood Asset Maps) which started in 2006 through University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, funded by ISBE and ISHS. The link to IECAM is [IECAM \(illinois.edu\)](http://IECAM.illinois.edu). The type of data found in IECAM is Early Childhood Education and Care Programs, demographics, geographic regional data such as state, county, municipalities, zip code, etc., as well as formats which are tables and maps (visual), blogs, social media, and news. The program data includes PFA, PFA-E, PI, EHS, HS, EI, and various home visiting. The demographics come from the Census and are centered around Early Childhood Education and Care. Region 56 showed a screen shot map of our county verses the Birth to Five Council and explained how the data is collected within the county. An explanation was given to the Action Council members on the ROE (school district) versus the county, and how some of the percentages fall outside the county.

A slide map from IECAM for Council Race and Ethnicity was presented. Region 56 explained the map legend and had a small discussion on the map presented. Region 56 Will County is majority non-Hispanic White population with small clusters of Hispanic or Latino population and Black or African American population. An Action Council member explained that this data may be out of date, due to a certain areas they have seen change within the last few months. The map and data shown was produced in the year 2020. Region 56 presented a slide graph shown of Children Under 5 by Race and Ethnicity to the Action Council members.



Region 56 presented the Public Transportation slide. On the slide, the public transportation is plentiful in the middle part to upper part of Will County, however, lower Will County is missing any type of public transportation. Will County has 21 major highways and four different Metra commuter rail lines that all connect to the Chicago Loop. However, the lower part of Will County does not have those connections or public transportation.

A few of the council members shared:

- I think this is way out of date there is less than this currently because pace has a hard time with driver.
- School liability insurance does not cover non-school aged children on school buses.
- Most day cares no longer even have buses due to staff shortage and the cost to maintain.
- This is why we no longer offer this service: lack of staff.

Region 56 explained that there are two bills that Senator Meg Loughran Cappel is drafting a bill to increase support to address the needs and barriers that transportation plays around access to Early Learning. They are tapping into us to help them understand the realistic daily challenges of transportation. We are asking the council members to give us some information on needs and barriers.

The council members gave some information such as:

- There is need across the board. Child care centers do not have funds nor do they have staff.
- But if we fix transportation, we need staff to operate the classrooms so that there are slots.
- Teenage parents in centers have no transportation.
- Transportation needed for children with specialized needs.
- Getting strollers, diaper bags, school bags, and babies on and off city buses is a struggle if there even is a city bus. No sidewalks in some neighborhoods for safe transport. Parents of teens with babies may be working/unhoused/etc. so cannot get them there.
- Give a transportation stipend to families.
- Each township gets a budget for vans and personnel. Schedule pickups and drop offs.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A



**Preview of Slot Gaps (next meeting) (12:05pm-12:15pm)**

Notes: Region 56 explained that the next meeting will be centered around slot gaps. The google slides were shared with the council members and asked to look over the questions and be ready to discuss at the next meeting.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

**Conclusion (12:15pm-12:30pm)**

Notes: **Next Meeting Schedule Information**

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023– 11:00am-1:00pm

Location: 2455 Glenwood, Joliet, IL 60435

Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 – 11am-12:30pm (via Zoom)

- Guest speaker Cindy from Early Intervention

Follow-up/Next Steps: A follow up email will be sent out to each council member on questions asked, links requested, and next meeting dates, and Zoom links.