



Family Council Meeting

Date & Time: February 13, 2024, 6:00pm – 7:45pm

Notes

6:05pm: Welcome and Review Community Agreement (10 minutes).

Notes:

- Regional Council Manager, Valerie Varju shared about her attendance at the Governor's local press conference at Easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley in Villa Park, where he reiterated the importance of our Early Childhood Collaborations.
- Reviewed Community Agreements and acknowledged the importance of self-care during conversations about Mental and Behavioral Health moving forward.

6:15pm: Overview of Data Literacy (15 minutes).

Notes:

- Discussed the differences between quantitative and qualitative and their respective benefits and limitations.
- Discussed how data sets can use a variety of labels and Birth to Five Illinois' commitment to using person first language.

6:30pm: Mental Health Activity (10 minutes).

Notes:

- Shared positive affirmations of ourselves using Jamboard and the importance of acknowledging our own mental and emotional states.

6:40pm: Overview of Data and Mental and Behavioral Health Introduction and Discussion (60 minutes).

Notes:

- Introduced data on the need for, and locations of, Mental and Behavioral Health Services in DuPage County. However, it was noted that most of the data is only available for adolescents and adults.
- Council members discussed:
 - Their thoughts on the data maps presented and why they feel certain areas of the Region have higher access to Mental and Behavioral Health Services than other areas.
 - What Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health means to them.
 - How one Council member witnessed cultural differences in the interpretation or need of Mental Health for young children while working in the ER throughout the pandemic.



- Questions regarding how NAMI gets the data for the reports that were viewed. A walkthrough of how to utilize and filter the data map for NAMI was provided.
- One family's experience with an Early Childhood Center's focus on Social and Emotional Learning both within the school and for families in their homes. These resources are also provided in Spanish, which helps to dismantle language barriers. The school also provides monthly workshops for families on a variety of topics while providing dinner and free child care while the adults attend the session.
- The referral process taking more than a year and a half to find a mental health professional who would see their young child. The member shared how they faced a lot of bias from medical professionals on both mental health and the foster care system. The member also shared that she has found Lurie's Children's Hospital Mental Health Program to be the most trusted resource she has found, as well as her religious community.
- One family's experience of having finally come to the understanding and acceptance that their child needed Mental and Behavioral Health resources, with their child asking for help, and then having to wait several months before they could be seen. Cultural barriers were noted as a challenge.

7:40pm: Next Steps (5 minutes).

Notes:

- Council members were encouraged to utilize the Google Forms to provide additional input, especially if they are unable to attend the next meeting.
- Family Council members are encouraged to refer families that would be interested in sharing their stories and experiences with the Mental and Behavioral Health landscape.

Next meeting:

Thursday, February 29, 2024, 6:00pm – 8:00pm Birth to Five Illinois Mental and Behavioral Health Survey