



Family Council Meeting:

Date: Monday, February 12th, 2024.

Time: 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Location: Virtual - Zoom

Attendees:

Present: Jessica Palencia, Raquel Young, Victoria Theodossopoulos, Laura Kimmel, LaToya Johnson, Maliha Afridi, Juanita Quezada.

Not in attendance: Heather Ramirez, Jessica Barclay, Krista Escamillo, Norma Romo, Takara Jalowiec.

Guest Speakers: Mary Valerious – Social and Emotional Consultant, Child and Family Connections #15/Early Intervention
Christine Sparks – Manager of JumpStart, Home Visiting Program
Ellise Boyd-Johnson – Executive Director of Anointed Childcare Academy, Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant

Agenda:

During the meeting:

- Recap of the previous months.
 - Recap of year one and transition into year two.
 - Overview of language.
 - Mental Health/Wellness Check-Ins.
- Group Agreements and Introductions.
 - Shared community agreements with Family Council and asked if there was more to add.
 - The Council introduced themselves and their family information to the guest speakers.
- Guest Speaker/Panel:
 - Three guest speakers were invited and presented at the Family Council Meeting:
 - Ellise Boyd-Johnson, Executive Director of Anointed Childcare Academy, Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant.
 - Mary Valerious, Social and Emotional Consultant, Child and Family Connections #15.
 - Christine Sparks, Manager of JumpStart, Home Visiting Program.
- Child and Family Connections:
 - Region 56 shared with the council members a few questions surrounding Child and Family Connections (CFC):



- What is CFC?
 - Mary Valerius, Social and Emotional Consultant, Child and Family Connections #15 shared in the meeting:
 - Offers resources, information, and supports for families.
 - Educates and trains people with disabilities, families, and professionals, among other supports.
- What services exist in our Region?
 - Shared information on services that are provided in our Region.
 - Mentioned that there are limited numbers of providers in different disciplines that are available to support families.
 - Explained that there are not enough services/supports to help with family needs.
- What have been your experiences with CFC?
 - Learned about the EI-specific supports.
 - The Family Council Members shared some lived experiences surrounding Child and Family Connections, services, and relevant supports.
- How could Home Visiting and CFC services be improved to better support the mental and/or behavioral health needs of children, families, and caregivers?
 - CFC provided information to council members as an Early Intervention family guide, as well as a How I/ECMHC works in Early Intervention.
 - Service coordinators meet with families to give information on the program, however, there is only a certain amount of time to provide information to the families. There is a lot of crucial information that is missed.
 - Possible idea to have all entities to come together as a group, building out as opposed to duplicating.
- Home Visiting:
 - JumpStart:
 - Christine Sparks, Manager of JumpStart, Home Visiting Program.
 - Start before birth.
 - Families in Illinois can enroll when prenatal.
 - Funded through the Illinois State Board of Education.
 - There are different types of funded Home Visiting Programs in the state.
 - Barriers connecting to others who may need the program.
 - Work on the attachment piece for the parent and the child.
 - Mental Health in Home Visiting:



- Postpartum depression.
 - Life challenges that make spending time with their children challenging.
 - Mental Health Consultants provide in-home support to the parent/child.
 - Most families are referred by agencies or other parents who have received the services.
- Region 56 asked the council what Home Visiting is.
 - Family Council members shared lived experiences with Home Visiting, positive and negative experiences.
 - Council Member questions:
 - Why are there no parent councils?
 - There are parent advisory groups.
 - Mentioned that it seems Birth to Five Illinois: Region 56 (Will County) is one of the first to do the Action/Family Councils.
 - Building on the capacity that parents/families will want to be a part of advisories and councils' long term in the future.
 - Is this program for only first-time parents?
 - The program is open to every family dynamic, no matter first-time parents, caregivers, multiple children, age, etc.
 - Enrollment visits include eligibility based on family challenges that take priority.
 - Is there a way this information can be shared with pediatricians across Illinois to gauge parents' and families' interests?
 - The pediatricians have their mandates and limited time.
- Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant (I/ECMHC):
- Ellise Boyd-Johnson – Executive Director of Anointed Childcare Academy, Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant.
 - Misconception is the children are receiving mental health, it is for the adults that work with the children, to help with prevention, and provide success.
 - Improve emotional functioning and find out what is hindering growth.
 - Mental Health Consultations meet with teachers and parents and find out what the barriers are.
 - Identify barriers before age three years old.
 - Questions:
 - How do I find these services?
 - Go onto Illinois Gateways, Parent Connections, find a consultant, and find one that fits.



- Debrief – Pop in the chat/follow-up email:
 - Region 56 asked a few questions about the presenters in chat and to be sent as follow-up questions:
 - One new thing you learned.
 - Who is not being served by these programs, and why?
 - What do professionals need to be successful?
 - Strengths.
 - Gaps.

Wrap up:

The next council meeting:

Thursday, March 21st, 2024.

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm.

Virtual - Zoom

Summary of Notes

On February 12, 2024, Birth to Five Illinois: Region 56 (Will County) held the February Family Council meeting. Region 56 reviewed the region's previous months, group agreements, language, Mental/Behavioral Health Wellness Check-Ins, welcomed guest speakers, went over the data of Child and Family Connections, Home Visiting, I/ECMHC, and debrief questions. Region 56 wrapped up with the next meeting details, and follow-up emails for the next meeting.