



## AGENDA

### **Region: 1-B-D Cook North Family Council Meeting**

**Location:** [ZOOM](#) or in person

**Date & Time:** Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup> 3:00-5:00 pm

**Members present:** Charlotte Erickson, Arisbet Figueroa, Molly Mejia, Nancy Salvador, Najma Nishat

**Members absent:** Lizz Merdinger, Wendy Mamola, Betty Willams, Nancy Corza, Julie Center, Sharmishtha Goel, Saffiyyah Hassan

#### **3:00 pm: Welcome/ Review Community Agreements/ Housekeeping (30 minutes)**

Update on the Regional Scan

Icebreaker: How are the children video and discussion

**Video:** [How are the children?](#) (15 minutes)

#### **Discussion Questions ([Jamboard](#)):**

1. In what ways are children well in the communities in which you are active or reside? Furthermore, what evidence supports that children are well?
2. In what ways are children not well in the communities in which you are active or reside? Furthermore, what evidence supports that children are not well?
3. Based on the messages in the video, in the designated communities or regions in which you are active or reside
  - a. how are children's well-being being measured?
  - b. how are organizations collaborating to ensure that your child(ren)s well-being?

**Facilitator:** Irene Di Minervino

**Notes:** Irene welcomed Family Council members and reviewed the agenda for the day. A few housekeeping items were discussed. Irene introduced the icebreaker activity and invited participants to watch the short video. The Jamboard links were shared for the discussion questions. **Highlights from our discussion...**



1. The children are doing well when: children are out in the community (playing at the park, at the library), children and parents are connected
2. The children are not doing well when: getting neuropsych evaluations at young age (5yr), isolated/not out in community, difficult behaviors, developmental delays, unstable housing evidenced by family financial struggles, families are tired and stressed
3. (a) Well-being measured by: attachment/parent-child enjoyment  
(b) Organizations collaborating to ensure wellbeing: Religious institutions creating a sense of community, Maryville Crisis Nursery

### **3:30 pm: Summary/Reflections from Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Programs and Services (25 minutes)**

Update on Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC)

Share <http://www.partnerplanact.org/webdev/ppa/resources/videos>

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- What stands out to you about the programs that exist in our region?
- What barriers exist for families when considering what childcare supports to access?
- What has been most surprising about ECEC programs and services offered to families in our region?
- What changes in our region have you seen, in the last 5+ years, in early childhood education and care (ECEC)?
  - If you're new to the community (2 years or less), what challenges have you faced in finding early childhood care or services?
- What is your vision for change for ECEC for children and families in our region?
- Why is it important to include this information in the scan?

Facilitator: Irene Di Minervino

**Notes:** Irene shared resources about DSCC (Division of Specialized Care of Children). Further, Irene shared the Illinois Action for Children short ECEC program videos for parents to access as needed.

Ilinca invited Family Council members to share Focus Group Flyers with their groups to recruit family voice.



Irene reviewed the ECEC map with the location of programs across the region and used a cascade method for the reflection questions about the ECEC programs.

#### Some of the reflections included:

##### **Programs:**

- There are areas with very little programming.
- Few programming for the number of children that live in our region.
- The programs are not equally distributed. There are only a certain amount of programs or if any in certain regions and more in other regions.

##### **Barriers:**

- You may not qualify, expense, lack of availability (program does not exist, does not have space, or is not offered at a time you can participate)
- Times of service or the cost of services if you do not qualify for a free program.
- Where to find ECE services

##### **Surprised you the most:**

- The general lack of availability of programs and services
- There are areas that do not have anything offered at all.
- How children still manage to do okay in schools with the lack of programs.
- “ I will get kicked off aide if I take one better-paying job so I am working a few jobs that are low paying to keep my childcare subsidy. “
- There is a disparity between needs.

##### **Vision for change:**

- I would love to see more home daycares, subsidies for childcare for middle and higher income,
- More evening and weekend programming for family activities
- To have programs available for everyone with not so many restrictions
- There is a need for a transitional program. Don't want to just be “kicked off”
- More science related education/ spending more time outdoors

##### **Changes over time:**

- Little changes in: availability, cost of childcare, access due to income and how ECEC programs and activities are promoted especially if new to the area.



### Why include this in the scan?

- On paper it might look different- lots of programs to help people but compared to the cost of living right now, there's not. It's hard to see that on paper.
- Early childhood is a very important stage in a child's life and there are not many programs to help child thrive.
- Programs that only support families until child is 5, should increase to 8.

### 4:20 pm: Break (5 minutes)

### 4:25 pm: Action Council Update/Feedback to the Action Council (15 minutes)

Presenter: Ilinca Wallace

Ilinca gave an update from the Action Council and shared topics discussed. The schedule of topics will be updated to meet a new deadline for the Regional Scan.

### 4:45 Slot Gap Discussion (13 minutes)

#### Discussion Questions:

- Have you had a child on a waitlist or know someone who has?
  - How limited are the slots?
  - What are the requirements to get childcare (ie. Special needs, income, etc?)
- Why do you think there are not enough publicly funded childcare spots for children in our region that are eligible for those spots?

**Notes:** Irene shared the total number of children(69,387) in Cook North and that there are only 14,076 available slots. This leaves 55,311 children without a slot in an early childhood education and care system. Two graphs were shared for each breakdown.

- For publicly funded slots there are two breakdowns: eligible children birth to 2 yrs and eligible children 3- to 5-year-olds.
- For 0-2 eligible children: 1,106 children with slots; 6,356 children without slots.
- For 3-5 eligible children: 3,327 children with slots; 4,213 children without slots.

#### Highlights from the discussion:

- On a waitlist but others were getting priority for income, number of siblings, 4yr olds because they lost a year of education.



- Unacceptable that my child lost a year of preschool; enrolled into the park district. People were running in to get in line to get a slot (requirement - that you're a resident).
- There are not enough public slots for families. It's so competitive.
- As a parent- I'll take whatever for my child to be involved in a program and socialize, so I will deal with the inconvenient hours and short program hours.

Why do you think there is a gap in services? Funds are going somewhere else; ECEC are seen as not a priority.

How are the kids coming into kindergarten? Children with no prior experience are coming in with "problems", not emotionally ready/unable to regulate.

Facilitator: Irene Di Minervino

**4:58: Questions/Comments/Reflections (2 minutes)**

Facilitator: Irene Di Minervino

**Notes:** Irene thanked the Family Council members for sharing their experiences and opening up; she reviewed the office hour schedule and alternative methods of sharing input when having to miss a meeting. Irene demonstrated how to "star" a folder in the google drive folder with all our data and information.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 15, 2023, 12:30- 2:30 pm

Date: March 15, 2023

Time: 12:30-2:30 pm

Location: Virtual Zoom link or In-person