

Region 19 Discussion Notes

DuPage

General Comments

- I am surprised by the number/percentage of children in poverty.
- I did not expect such high numbers.
- Very few Early Head Start (EHS) programs.
- Some areas have no access to quality Early Childhood Education.
- underserved areas coincide with areas with low Early Intervention (EI) providers and school staff.
- There's been growth in the number of publicly funded programs since 2016, but it doesn't meet the need.
- The data is accurate/reflects my experience.
- Families have limited care options.
- We need more qualified teachers.
- We need diversity trainings.
- There is a clear picture of inequity in the region.
- We need to learn more about barriers for parents.

Strengths/Assets

- Multiple program and resource options.
- Diversity.
- Lower poverty than the State average.
- Highly-rated public schools.
- Numbers child care services.
- Many Head Start programs.
- Highly educated/well-funded community partners.
- Resources for low-income families.
- Community collaborations.

- Public school services.
- Nonprofits.
- CCR&R.
- Strong Early Intervention Child & Family Connections.
- Library.
- Mental health consultants.
- Advocate programs.
- Funding.

Needs/Challenges

- Cost of care for families just above the poverty level.
- Affordable care.
- Better communication and coordination between organizations.
- Funding support for low-income families.
- Families aren't made aware of services offered.
- Unfair distribution of public school funding.
- Quality care/education.
- High English as a Second Language (ESL) population that is not being well-served.
- Transportation.
- Mental health services for Medicaid families.
- Housing.
- More educators.
- Services for foster children.
- Improved education of pediatricians and caregivers re: programming and screening.
- Need more family involvement.
- Child care options and support for children with disabilities/special needs.

- Challenge due to COVID.
- Teacher retention.
- Need more equitable distribution of resources.
- Racism and mostly white leaders in community groups.
- Diversity in teachers.
- More public-funded slots.
- Culturally diverse programs/curriculum.
- Need for proper nutrition.
- Flexible care hours for shift work.