

School Readiness Committee
Minutes from August 30th 2010 Meeting
Held at American Red Cross – Niagara County

Michael began the meeting by welcoming participants and calling for introductions. He then reviewed the session agenda including the review of the environmental scan results to date and a discussion of results statements and population indicators from other communities based on the Annie E Casey Foundation study and a brief review completed by United Way staff.

Diane provided a preliminary review of the environmental scan survey results. These materials were based on 73 organizational responses. There are still a number of programs that have yet to respond to the survey. Diane will work with her interns to clean the survey database and refine the list of non-respondents. She will provide committee members with a short list of people to follow-up with over the next several weeks. Jill will check with the Buffalo Public Schools to see who will replace Diane Collier as the BPS Early Childhood representative and will work to secure needed information from them.

Diane followed this with a cursory review of the Anne E. Casey Foundation study, “Using Data to Promote Collaboration in Local School Readiness Systems” which was released earlier this month. She indicated that the Erie and Niagara County project appears to be following the same trajectory as the groups included in the national project. This is a helpful confirmation about the work being done locally. Diane also shared information gleaned from a review of other communities not included in the Casey study/project. Common results statements and indicators included:

Results Statements	Key Indicators
Children are healthy	Births to Teenagers Access to Health and Dental Services Immunization Infant Mortality Low Birth Weight Physical Fitness and Body Weight Prenatal Care Teen Sexual Health Timely Prenatal Care Women Initiating Breastfeeding
Children are ready for school	Children With Special Education Needs Entering Schools Early Childhood Educational Opportunities Child Care Availability School Readiness Third Grade Reading and Math Scores
Children are safe	Prohibited Behavior in Schools Child Abuse and Neglect Foster Care Injury Hospitalization Drug, Alcohol, and Cigarette Use Juvenile Felony Arrests Child and Adolescent Deaths (including Suicide) Youth Feeling Safe At and To/From School Unintended Injury/Mortality Youth Substance Use Youth Obesity (Weight/Height) Home Care of Youth With Severe Behavioral Health Problems Out-of-State Hospitals or Residential Treatment Programs
Children Are Nurtured in a Stable, Caring Environment	Poverty Child Poverty Family Self-Sufficiency Levels Housing Affordability Children Who Are Self-Supervised Domestic Violence Use of Income Supports (TANF, WIC, Food Stamps)

Following this, committee members had an in-depth discussion regarding possible results statements and community indicators for Erie and Niagara Counties. Members suggested that local indicators should be similar to other efforts so that regional/national comparisons can be made. Members were also concerned with the lack of literacy, language, and special needs indicators in use.

Group members also had some logistical/general questions:

- What is National Association for Education of Young Children's role in Committee's work?
- Should Committee tap into SUNYAB community needs assessment/State of the Region reports to help define results statements and identify key indicators? (Yes, we've discussed this as a committee in the past)
- Struggle with cost of program versus critical need (ie: QualityStars)
- Ultimate outcome should be joint/pooled funding strategy among community funders. Cited sample: Elmira's development of School Readiness System of Care (Yes, we've discussed this in the past)

Thoughts to keep in mind when developing indicator categories:

- Want to be inclusive of families and make attempts at educating families about systems
- Ensure the engagement of pre-perinatal indicators
- Include measures that capture special needs, mental health, and efforts towards inclusion

The Committee began discussions specific to our efforts:

- Should include three to five key results (ideally)
- Results statements/language needs to include:
 - Babies are born healthy and have their immediate needs met
 - Children are healthy
 - Children are safe
 - Children are ready for school
 - Families are Stable
- Diane agreed to draft some preliminary Community Results Statements to be forwarded to Committee members for review.
- Diane will ask her new interns to do some preliminary data collection on some measures of interest (based on the national data).
- Diane will work with her interns/AmeriCorps to clean the survey data and prepare the lists for follow-up calls.
- Next steps should include discussion of community forum conversation.
 - 8-15 people per engagement session
 - Script conversation and have committee members facilitate
 - Identify pre-existing community "groups"
 - Committee members will email Diane additional thoughts on engagement session

Michael wrapped up the meeting thanking everyone for their participation and commitment to this effort. The next committee meeting is scheduled for: September 27, 2010 from 8:30am – 10:00am at the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County. The October meeting will be held at Family and Children's Services in Niagara Falls.