

Family and Community Engagement Meeting  
Minutes  
June 24, 2015

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- Attended: Suzanne Burnette, Grace Boswell, Jillian Perry, Shonda Laurel, Deborah Johnson, Kate DiMemmo, Vincent Costanza, Monica Townsend, Paula White, Brenda Tift, Barbara Andrews, Barbara Pugh, Danielle Armstrong, and Heather Martindale.
- Updates from the field:
  - On Tuesday, June 30, there is a “Celebrating Fatherhood!” event, which is a FREE event featuring speakers, workshops and resources related to responsible fatherhood and parenting. There will be relevant information for human service providers, fathers and mothers and anyone interested in celebrating fatherhood. This year, several sessions will highlight issues concerning youth and young fathers. The event is being held 26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY. New Jersey will be having their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual “Celebrating Fatherhood!” even in December 2015. In December, this committee could help provide and inform parents of the NJ County Councils.
  - County Council Update – We now have all County Councils up and running in New Jersey. Attached is a list of all the County Councils and their upcoming events. Bergen, Burlington, and Middlesex have now convened and had their kick offs. On June 23, the County Councils will submit their “reporting forms” which will capture certain information from each council.
  - Grace will post the list of County Councils to the NJ Council for Young Children webpage: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/njcyc/>
  - The New Jersey Regional Achievement Centers have administered their Climate and Culture survey to 229 schools (Focus and Priority School in New Jersey). The goal is to get 25 percent parent participation. A challenge with the survey has been having the survey translated into different languages.
- Discussion on how the County Council’s are recruiting:
  - Atlantic County (County Council) developed a contract form for potential members. Members will sign that they will commit to the council for a year. Recruitment has been ongoing. There are many different methods of recruiting; some include flyers in churches/WIC offices/YMCA/Child Care Centers/Hospitals/Schools/Family Success Centers/Head Start/Central Intake. In addition, some County Councils have also knocked parent doors. Some County Councils have Facebook pages and Somerset has a website.

- Shonda and Grace will talk to Grow NJ Kids Team about adding the County Council Contact Information and Facebook info the Grow NJ Kids Directors' Orientation videos.
- Overview of responses and suggestions from each Parent Focus Groups:
  - Commercial Township Focus Groups comments:
    - The parents spoke about how the only resource around them is Family Success Center because of lack of transportation.
    - Committee should remind Superintendent and School Boards that they could use their Title One money to provide transportation.
    - The parents recommended dividing the document up into 3 or 4 sections. (Infant/Toddler, Preschool, School Age)
    - They wanted information about drug addiction and what resources are out there for them added to the document.
  - NJ Head Start Committee Focus Groups
    - The parents thought the document was too wordy.
    - The parents suggested taking out the words like “medical home” and “prenatal care” and changed to “doctors and dentist” and “pregnant.”
    - They wanted a list of parenting trainings.
    - The parents liked the document, but also said it should be broken up into sections.
    - They suggested that we have a YouTube Video where parents talk about sections of these documents. We can also track how many times the video has been viewed.
    - The parents also talked about adding strategies that combat stress. For example, if you are over stressed you could exercise, read a book, etc.
  - Sewell Parent Focus Group –

**Family Engagement Parent Focus Group Responses**  
**Southern Regional Child Care Resource Center/EIRC**  
**Wednesday, April 8, 2015**

**What would your parents say about this document?**

1) A lot to read
2) Consider literacy issues
3) Explain abbreviations

Possible name: National NJ Parent Resource Booklet: Raising Safe & Healthy Children

**Can this document be improved? Explain**

1) No title pages: include titles on the top of pages
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2) Explain titles
3) Less pictures/smaller pictures
4) How will it be distributed?
5) After baby, add something on post partum depression; shaken baby syndrome
6) What is an intake hub?
7) What does county councils do?
8) Intro page does not need to be separate sheet; too much paper

**Do you think your families can or will use this as a resource? Why or Why not?**

1) Yes but must be made aware of it; will need support to use resources
2) It could be in our family worker packet
3) How would my center get it?
4) How would other providers get it?
5) Can be told about it at parent night/parent-teacher conferences
6) CCR&Rs can add to their packet
7) School teachers need to know about it/PTOs

**Do you have any other thoughts?**

1) <i>National Parent Resources for Raising Healthy Children</i> could be the name
2) We should sign that we received a copy or know about it
3) We need it
4) It does not replace the resources from our family worker
5) All additional resources are helpful
6) Make sure there is support for using the document

- Vineland Focus Group –
  - Parents want to be reached out to by going door to door or by mail.
  - They want to host a big community event to bring families out to learn more about the initiative.
  - They recommend spreading the information through word of mouth from counselors or community leaders instead of using the paperwork.
  - Document is too lengthy.
  - Parents want to voice their concerns through the CCCYC.
  - Parents recommend reading out and collaborating with the local churches and schools where the families are in the community.
  
- Sharon Budka’s Café meeting:
  - The parents wanted the document in Spanish.
  - The document and survey are now translated into Spanish.
  
- Jersey City Parent Focus Groups – did not have the document to look at.

- Next Steps:
  - The Committee will promote and conduct more Parent Focus Groups. The goal is to be finished all focus group and close the survey by August 2015.
  - Committee members will send Suzanne and Grace a list of future Parent Focus Groups. (Grace will send the list out to the Committee).
  - Reminder: Please give the document to the lead at the Parent Group, who will give out the document to parents ahead of time. This is so that when Suzanne arrives, the parents are ready to give comments and suggestions, as well as fill out the survey. Also, please make sure that the sign-in sheets are legible so that the Committee can send out “Thank you” letters to the parents (the parents could add this to their resume to show they are involved in initiative.)
  - Add an acknowledgement to “Parents of NJ” in the document.
  - Barbara Andrews will edit the health section of the document.
  - Grace will ask Sharon Rawlins to send out survey results so far.
  - Vincent will share this document and information about Family and Community Engagement at Superintendent Round Tables.
  - Below are the volunteers who will help divide up the sections of the document:
    - Paula White and Heather Martindale will work on the School Age section
    - Grace Boswell and Monica Townsend will work on the Preschool section
    - Suzanne will work on the Infant and Toddler Section\* (Please email Grace if you would like to volunteer to look/work on any of these sections).
  - In August, we will make edits based on all Parent Feedback and Survey Money results. This Committee needs to look closely at the entire document to see if it is family friendly. Committee also needs to review the document and make sure it is below a 9<sup>th</sup> grade reading level (our goal is to make it around a 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading level).
  - Once document is finished, we will contact parents to film a YouTube Video.
  - Grace will send out a Doodle Poll to poll the group on a future meeting date before July 29.