

Task Force Planning Session

October 20, 2010

Through Smart Start Program

The group gathered at Butler Community College Welcome Center on October 20, 2010. There were approximately 25 people in attendance from different agencies across the regional area of Butler County.

The beginning of this workshop was a mechanism to build trust and communication between the participants and facilitator. The Ground Rules for a Climate of Trust was used as well as David Kolb's **Learning, Thinking Working Styles**. It is important to understand where all people are coming from – to start where they are...This tool allows us to understand how we all process or take in information.

The group was asked to gather around the "TimeLine" and were asked questions that took the group through the years of early childhood development – when did they become involved in this endeavor and what was happening in our communities or the nation that had an effect on this issue.

The group went through the process of looking at the **Strengths and Issues** of their task force and what were the gaps they could see.

Strengths

*Strong Support – Many partners
Comfortable with each other
There is a desire to collaborate
Willingness to advocate
Ability to do a lot with a little money
Quality services
Leadership to get the job done
Variety of knowledge & experience
Shared goals with quality of service
Years of data that has been collected
Inform while reaching families*

Issues

*Inadequate funding sources
0-3 Home visitation program
Get other communities involved
"Missing" partnerships
Need a stronger connection with Medical Professionals
not utilizing technology to the fullest
Lack of Time
FUNDING – competition for dollars
Collision of different goals
Reaching all families
Look beyond the current grant year
Reduce the stigma for asking for help*

Once the timeline was complete and the group talked about the ***Strengths and Issues***, the group then had to come up with 4-5 goals they were committed to working on in the next year. These will be obtainable and will have the feeling of accomplishment.

Goals & Action Plan

1. Community Partner/Collaborations

- a. Fill the gaps in community development to move forward
- b. Get different people involved
- c. Re-engage, energize and educate partners
- d. Create some type of "tag line" – a short statement that everyone can know

2. Look at the level and quality of service

- a. Constantly work on QUALITY! Being focused on “early” services for children
- b. Have appropriate data to back up what is being delivered or vocalized
- c. Educate everyone what “quality” means in the form of “service”

3. Leadership/Knowledge/Advocacy

- a. Respond to issues with the businesses, elected officials and families
- b. **ONE VOICE/ONE MESSAGE**

4. Reaching and Serving all Families and other agencies

- a. Reach children at an earlier age
- b. Utilizing technology – don’t forget flyers/posters, etc.
- c. Come up with ways to give information while reducing the stigma for asking
- d. Agencies relay information on events they know about & the Task Force should be there

5. LOOKING LONG TERM...

- a. Always look for a new funding stream
- b. Continued advocacy
- c. Using the resources that are available and on hand to meet the vision/mission of the Task Force
- d. Continue to look for ways to make all of the items stated better and more productive.

These 5 goals are what was chosen by the group. In order to see that your group obtains these goals, consider tackling or discussing one goal at each meeting. Asking what have YOU done to achieve this goal? The hardest part about a collaborative group is creating an understanding that everyone must play a part to make these goals come to fruition.

This summary and report was presented by:

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