

# STRENGTHEN FAMILIES LOCALLY

## Spokane Citizen Journalist Workshop

2/24/21

### Attendee representation:

Foster parents, Community volunteers, Spokane Fatherhood Initiative, Family Impact Network, Partners with Families & Children, 211, The ZoNE, Spokane Regional Health District, Spokane County Safe Baby Court, Spokane Regional Domestic Violence Coalition, Family Service PC, Vanessa Behan, Amerigroup Washington, Community Minded Enterprises, Mockingbird Society

### Meeting Materials:

<https://dcyf.box.com/s/61aymm202bgub3gju367ow8zj1x25k63>

### Sensemaker links:

For stories in Spokane:

<http://ourtomorro.ws/Spokane>

For stories in other parts of Clallam county or Washington state:

<http://ourtomorro.ws/WADCYF>

### Sensemaker FAQ document:

(Check here for social media post/email wording)

<https://dcyf.box.com/s/mqkjyghhd9x6u7ilsz8n5igg0d57nfey>

### Discussion:

#### General thoughts and questions:

- There was some challenge with the links. We discovered that disconnecting from a VPN might be necessary.
- Spanish on tool – this problem should have just been temporary and should be corrected now.

#### What has helped you, or a family you know, find strength and support in a challenging time?

- Spokane Fatherhood Initiative:
  - o Camaraderie and fellowship in fatherhood classes
    - Men share that they felt isolated before
    - Working to create an atmosphere where social connections are developed
  - o Men receive mentoring services
  - o Concrete needs – one father received \$300 in supplies for his family
- ECEAP:
  - o Families rely heavily on schools for resources and supports – it's difficult to keep that connection during the pandemic
    - It's hard to connect and track families if they aren't there in person



Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

- “we have to work to find them, they won’t find us” – families don’t know about resources or have shame about accessing them
  - Families Resource Navigators in schools are very helpful
  - Spokane ECEAP opened part-time to fill in the need
- Safe Baby Court:
  - Mixed effects of Zoom
    - Families miss human connection
    - But, everyone is on the “same level” and the adversarial/power dynamics aren’t as emphasized. It feels more like they are on the same team
- The ZoNE:
  - Family advocates and community health workers have been the #1 strength and support
  - Providing small supports (like one-time concrete needs) can open doors and build trust with families so that they feel comfortable asking for more help
  - The ZoNE has 2 Family Resource Coordinators at elementary schools
  - Other family advocates also work in The ZoNE and coordinate around food and health needs
- SRHD: Airway Heights, place-base/asset-based program
  - providing connection to families and concrete resources
  - community activities and meetings
  - food bank
  - family game nights
  - everything has been put on hold since Covid
  - Community Health Workers also provide a lot of services and connection to families

**What frequent, unmet needs (related to health and safety) are families experiencing in your community?**

- Utilities and housing – if people are behind on rent, the average rent they are behind is \$2000
  - 70% were “slightly” or more worried
- Technology access also limits access to things like food or parenting classes because they have to log on to find or access resources
- Housing crisis in Spokane
  - How to expect people to make hard decisions when they are living day-to-day without housing
  - How to use community resources differently?
- Substance Use Disorder
  - High demand for services, capacity is low, waitlists are long
  - Need to “be there “when families are ready to make changes in both SUD and mental health cases
  - Programs have mental health assessments available, need more access to Domestic Violence and SUD assessment

**How can we better support families?**

- Need to better understand “who is doing what” – resource hub that is up-to-date and active.
  - Safe Baby Court (Alexis) is working on something for her team
  - Some services stay the same, but hard to know who has spots for new families, eligibility and timing of new programs
- “bridging” between basic needs and higher-level needs
  - being able to connect and check-in with families after they aren’t in crisis

Original Date: 2/24/21  
Family Support Programs Division

- Creating community across different families