

STRENGTHEN FAMILIES LOCALLY

Bremerton Citizen Journalist Workshop

3/4/21

Attendee representation:

Parent volunteers, Scarlet Road, Kitsap Regional Library, New Life Community Development Center, DCYF Foster Care Recruitment, DCYF Prevention

Meeting Materials:

<https://dcyf.box.com/s/fkg8vjeiimfblzzy9mm83cxs5nxw3dr8>

Sensemaker links:

For stories in other parts of Stevens and Ferry Counties or Washington state:

<http://ourtomorro.ws/WADCYF>

For stories in Bremerton:

<http://ourtomorro.ws/Bremerton>

Sensemaker FAQ document:

(Check here for social media post/email wording)

<https://dcyf.box.com/s/mqkijyghhd9x6u7ilsz8n5igg0d57nfey>

Discussion:

Where do families find strength and support in a challenging time?

- From the ability to be together, cultural mindset of sharing in the community
- When you can find where their strengths are - not just focus on your own personal strengths and values, but help them to grow and see where they are
- Working with a specialized trauma - having a community that understands their experiences - not just technical terms, but also the felt/lived experiences
- Staff who have capacity to identify their own bias
 - Systemic gaps and labels that don't help
- Having access to resources - housing, rental assistance, counseling
 - Lack of community capacity to meet those needs
- Scarlet Road - working on art and music therapy options to work on trauma - not a lot of options here
- Neighbors who can support with childcare - connected neighborhoods
- Interviewing parents about how they meet concrete needs
- Social connections - how they build up networks and supports
 - Meeting social and emotional needs - how do we find the strengths and supports to meet our needs - - reminding parents that they are resilient
- "Focus on what's strong, not what's wrong"



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

- Strengthening Families protective factors - might start in different places, can help all families

Needs and supports:

- Survivors of sexual exploitation (Scarlet Road)
 - Survivors of exploitation who are 10 or under can't get a sexual assault exam unless they can verbally disclose - gets in the way of getting needs met
 - Law enforcement not having enough time to address cases
 - Stigma/stereotype mentality around exploitation - female and male, parents with children, specialized and specified needs
 - They have seen cases where the child is about to age out of foster care not being pursued by the department
 - Runaway teens - law enforcement doesn't have resources to pursue the cases, youth engaging in sex trade and overlaps in behavior between abusive and non-abusive situations
 - "Moral Injury" traumas
 - Legal supports
- More screening for sexual exploitation and trafficking
 - Medical facilitates, service providers working with vulnerable populations, within foster care systems
 - Lack of training about sexual exploitation for foster families
 - Housing, shelters
- University of Texas - early learning policies - Family supporting policies that each state has -
 - Wa is on track - Paid family leave
 - Policies out there that we can use - apply knowledge that's out there already
- Dealing with trauma - have to be careful not to dehumanize or villainize/criminalize
 - Many of our families have been immersed in trauma and have been criminalized
 - Trust have been broken
 - Staying in unhealthy situations because of the fear of criminalizing
 - How do we address the historical systems that have caused this harm?
 - If we are not having this conversation, the harmful systems will be perpetuated
 - Looking at new ways of addressing and healing traumas
- Systemic and historic funding for these issues
- Criminal justice connected systems
 - Criminal diversion systems doing the same things that traffickers do - jumping through hoops, unrealistic expectations, can't reach goals - acting nice but inflicting harsh and unclear rules
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- How to recruit homes that will be safer for foster children who have experienced trafficking?
 - Have to know what they're getting into and have clear expectations
 - Reality of developmental problems and difficulties
 - Not engage in the power struggle
 - How to work around unconscious biases and their own mental health journeys
 - Opportunities to learn how to do the work
 - Helping parents understand the commercial life - what does it look like? What are the rules? Internalized
 - Training available through Scarlet Road

Original Date: 2/26/21
Family Support Programs Division

- Lack of safe housing for survivors

Opportunities

- Look at systems and re-envision what we can do, figure out what next steps are - re-structure for equity
- County has so much housing funds coming in that they are outgrowing their capacity to manage it
- Need to address equity in ways that break down barriers and build relationships
- Shift from Covid Response to Inclusive Recovery - what does that mean to us? Who needs to be involved and who is going to show up
 - Shift to cultural relevancy and customized care
- New Life - did community faces in early 2000s - on Bainbridge
 - Seattle Foundation - Repair project - inclusive recovery project
 - Dismantling structural harm
- County is "workable" - well set up to transform and make impacts