

STRENGTHEN FAMILIES LOCALLY

6/14/21

In attendance:

Cindy Meyer, Drayton Jackson, Marwan Cameron, Nicole Earls, Alex Seifert, Kimberly Riley, Jill McCormick, Lindsey Phillips, Lisa Lechuga, Shawnda Hicks, Victoria Hilt, Marlaina Simmons, Erinn Havig, John Huley, Rebecca Disbrow, Brittane DeBard, Ursula Petters, Nijhia Jackson, Angela Flemming, Iva Scott, Joy Lile

Important documents:

SFL onboarding document:

<https://dcyf.box.com/s/pirdixemujfr1hw75gj3bp0enhebg1c4>

Bremerton Project Overview:

<https://dcyf.box.com/s/f6ytycmw2dyrlyw75udyckr9q0o0r4ay>

Sensemaker "Share a Story" flyer:

https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/FS_0057.pdf

Parent Support Gift Cards:

<https://dcyf.box.com/s/ysd6dkewzb916qzcl87so0ufo8qfzgki>

Next meeting: July 12th, 1-3 pm

Topic: Community Project Presentations

2nd Monday of the month, 1-3

Housing discussion during welcome:

- Housing questions: Housing is a huge issue for many families with Child Welfare cases. They can't get stable and benefit from other services if they don't have housing. Does this project address that?
 - o Housing authority - emergency "housing choice" (formerly known as Section 8) vouchers - from HUD - Bremerton has 38 in the community - looking at how to refer these clients - looking at how to be an advocate for landlords so they know how to access supports. New ED is looking at how to increase utilization
 - o Issue that housing vouchers are available but HUD housing is hard to find in Kitsap

Centering Introductions: Lived Experiences in Family Supports and BIPOC voices

What would you like to share about how to strengthen families?

- 2-generational approaches - don't just think about children, think about the whole family
- We talk about having a village - this is important to foster families. Some foster homes in the community, especially families of color but also non-POC families - feel like they are not on the same "team" as the state or agencies providing resources. Need to navigate how to bring their voices to the table without being vulnerable to over-policing from the state
- It takes all the people sitting at the table in order to strengthen a family and help them succeed - it really "takes a village"



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- How to continue to strengthen families - allow them to lead us, not go in and tell them what they need. Value their voice and their experiences, allow them to describe their story and find meaning in their story
- Train internally and train those working with families on cultural humility, understanding the history of tribal communities, and how systems are designed to prevent families from thriving. We have to respect families, and respect the culture of families - not put our ideas on them and tell them how to live. Systems are designed for families to fail, and until we come to them with respect we won't understand what their strengths are

SFL Community Planning Process (review)

- Question about specific disproportionality, and representation in child welfare and foster care. Bremerton sees racial disproportionality in child welfare cases with Black children and families, but not so much with Indigenous families, possibly because of the low numbers of tribal families living in the city of Bremerton (Note: In Bremerton, roughly 2.6% of children are AI/AN, while roughly 8% of children in child welfare are AI/AN)
- Kitsap/Bremerton lacking in-home, culturally relevant resources for families - having people come in who represent the community they are serving
- Racial bias example: "adultifying" young children and labelling normal behavior as "over-sexualized" - assigning meaning to behavior that doesn't actually mean anything
 - o Mismatch between cognitive and physical development for children with neurodevelopmental difference
- Helping families communicate and advocate when miscommunication happens - someone to help them advocate for themselves
- Asking families before making assumptions about what is happening - TRUST families!
- Black parents are experiencing barriers in adopting children of color - more red tape, more background checks
- What are the biases of those working in the system that are negatively impacting families?
 - o How are we checking on who is being hired - how are the people working in the field representing dominant culture and bias, and how are they working on breaking down biases?
 - o From DCYF staff: One of the issues that come up in regard to placing children and issues in placing-we now have a unit to relook at findings that may have been issued due to bias. People now have a way of fighting this now.

Community Updates:

- Kitsap Regional Library - summer learning program launched in June - kids read 10 hours and get a new book to keep. 100 hours=t-shirt, parents get a prize too
- KCR and OESD are enrolling for Fall for Head start, ECEAP, Early Head start - 0-5 years old
- Youthnet is up and running, providing BRS (Behavioral Rehabilitation Services) for foster and biological families involved with dependency cases, and licensing foster caregivers

SFL Project Updates:

Parent Support Gift Cards Available!

Original Date: 6/16/21
Family Support Programs Division

Reserved for individuals who are not paid by an organization to attend SFL meetings, including parents, youth, and family members with lived experiences in family support and/or child welfare systems. Apply within 1 month of the meeting. Form and details:

<https://dcyf.box.com/s/ysd6dkewzb916qzcl87so0ufo8qfzgkj>

Community Cafe Q&A

Learn how Community Cafés spark leadership and build relationships to promote social justice and strengthen families. This meeting is appropriate for parent leaders who want to connect with other parents in their community, and Strengthen Families Locally partners. \$25 gift cards are available to support participation of volunteers and parents with lived experience in family support systems.

July 2, 11-12 (on Zoom)

Presented in partnership with the Community Café Collaborative:

<https://thecommunitycafe.org/>

Registration: <https://dcyf.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAsfuuoqD4vHNNGuvlqJuD5ZCqxIn1Lt1ux>

Upcoming (in July):

Medicaid and Me: Providing Trauma-Informed and Healing-Centered Supports for families who are Medicaid-eligible

Planning team participants?

Moving Upstream: Preventing Problems Instead of Solving Them (Quick Review)

Framing:

- Quick meeting review (anyone who participated)
 - o Activities:
 - “Contextual Resilience”
 - “TRIZ”: Designing the “Worst Community Imaginable”
 - o What were the main themes?
 - o What did you take away?
- From the perspective of families, what do we need to “stop” doing?

Discussion:

- It was really hard to think about the worse possible community, and what we are doing in our communities that are achieving the same impacts
- Shared the “TRIZ” activity with folks at the national advocacy level (Children’s Trust Fund Parent Alliance)
- Hard to build relationships and trust in a transient community - how to build neighborhood connections and supports
- What can we learn from the Hispanic example of immigrant families having more resilient characteristics?
- Reality check - Thinking about the “worst” for families not as a concept, but as the way that some communities were intentionally designed
- How can we build neighborhoods together - coming from the people in the neighborhoods

Original Date: 6/16/21
Family Support Programs Division

Racism as a Root Cause: Approach

Framing:

- From “Racism as a Root Cause Approach: A New Framework” by Malawa, Gaarde, and Spellen in Pediatrics 2021.
<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/147/1/e2020015602.full.pdf>
- When to apply: When there’s clear evidence of racially distributed inequity
 - o Disproportionality in referrals, foster care intakes in Child Welfare
 - o Black and Indigenous families at highest risk (though Indigenous numbers are low in the city of Bremerton)
- 4 Principle Components:
 - o Precise impact on the racially marginalized group(s)
 - o Focus on systems change: “change the system around the family” rather than “change the family”
 - o Long-term investment: A clear path to sustainability
 - o Reparations: Investment in BIPOC community members and organizations - resources, job opportunities, and leadership are focused within the target community

What thoughts do you have at this point?

- Sustainability - what does that look like? Putting the investment where it needs to be in the longer term, not expecting agencies to find their own sustainable funding
- Relationship with Guardian Ad Lidum or CASA - resources for training for volunteers - bias in advocating for children and what will really help/support children vs. bias. Jennifer Martin - GAL supervisor in Kitsap County - volunteers are trained, some bias may still exist

Family Navigator Program Design

Framing:

- “Family Resource Navigator” (/Family Advocate)
 - o Well-connected to community and state resources
 - o A “safe place” to go for help
 - o Walking through challenges alongside parents - more connection than just a referral
 - o Building a “base” to work towards a peer mentorship program
- Considerations:
 - o Placing positions where families already go for support
 - o Engaging schools, churches, BIPOC-serving orgs.
 - o DOH Family Navigation work group (navigating health systems)
 - o Funding flexibility: 2 projects can overlap on activities, amounts can differ
- Racism as a Root Cause:
 - o Precise Impact, Systems Change, Sustainability and Reparations

Discussion: (Participatory note-taking with Easy Retro. We ran out of time to discuss at length.)

- Who is well-suited to do this work?
 - o Marvin Williams Center (4 votes)
 - o POC community member (4 votes)
 - The expertise lies with people with lived experiences in the community - not in

Original Date: 6/16/21

Family Support Programs Division

- people with titles in their name
- schools (3 votes)
- Foundation for Homeless & Poverty Management (2 votes)
- Kitsap Community Resources (2 votes)
- Emmanuel Apostolic Church (2 votes)
- agencies that already utilize community partnerships (2 votes)
- POC Leaders (2 votes)
- Tribal youth services, schools and early learning programs (2 votes)
- Parents and Caregivers (1 votes)
- PYA (Partnering for Youth Achievement)/ Mt. Zion Baptist Church (1 votes)
- Tenants living in low-income apartments and housing (1 votes)
- Pediatric integrated care providers (0 votes)
- Boys and Girls Club - Bremerton (0 votes)
- What additional resources or capacity will be needed?
 - Develop some mechanism to break down silos between agencies. (4 votes)
 - Financial resources (3 votes)
 - budget for staffing; (3 votes)
 - Need to have a network of people not just one-maybe a team of 3. (2 votes)
 - making connections with tribal assisters, navigators (1 votes)
 - community based navigators (1 votes)
 - Community funding (not grants) (1 votes)
 - Parents (1 votes)
 - updated information from community partners (0 votes)
- How can other agencies rally behind this work?
 - Partnering with local providers of color (Social Workers, Therapists, Counselors...) (4 votes)
 - Peninsula Community Health Services (2 votes)
 - open communication and resource sharing (1 votes)
 - DCYF (1 votes)
 - community meeting (1 votes)
 - supports from the Health Care Authority or WA Health Benefit Exchange to train/connect the Family Resource Navigator (0 votes)
 - Drug and alcohol treatment providers (0 votes)
 - BHA's new owner liaison could be a resource for housing options (0 votes)

Final thoughts:

- Need to develop a relationship with communities of color - when you see trusted faces it's easy to show up
- Give the community of color money directly - how to build and support that capacity directly in a community organization

Next Steps:

- Joy: Reach out to the following to build relationships and design programming:
 - Marvin Williams Center
 - Professional Leaders of Color
 - Suquamish and Pt. Gamble S'klallam Tribes

Original Date: 6/16/21
Family Support Programs Division

- Bremerton schools