

Project Sussex Kids:
County Council for Young Children
Families of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers Subcommittee Meeting

July 14, 2015; 1:00 PM

Project Self-Sufficiency

Welcome and Member Introductions: Haley McCracken; Project Sussex Kids coordinator, Hannah Kirby; PSS, Melissa Bischoff; Project Sussex Kids co-chair and subcommittee chair, Devon Eehalt; Project Sussex Kids subcommittee chair, Linda Osmani; PSS, Caren Vogt; Our Savior Nursery School, Anita Plantamura; West Side Child Enrichment Center Director/Parent, Peggy Askew; Parent, Kathy Kwasnik; United Way of Northern NJ, Athina Savva; Parent, Belinda Akandon; Parent

Subcommittee Meeting Review- May 2015:

- Action Items
 - Providing a forum for parents to discuss issues/concerns
 - Parent Cafés
 - Developing a Protocol for working with pediatricians
 - Parent and pediatrician communication
 - Pediatricians to advocate about Project Sussex Kids
 - Have a plastic display board at pediatricians offices
 - Have questions on medical form
 - Pediatricians should hand parents information on resources
 - Grow NJ Kids
 - Mirrored after a program in 48 other states
 - Star rating system
 - 5 star= the best through 1 star= the worst
 - Rated on the childcare's staff, environment, classroom, parent communication
 - Staff to child ratio
 - Bring standards up so care for a child is optimal
 - 2-3 years to improve program
 - Have specialists come in and go over pros and cons of childcare center
 - Staff training
 - Know that staff is specifically trained in childcare
 - CDA course is \$1200
 - Received grant money
 - Grant money will be gone by 2018
 - Part of the Race for the Top Grant
 - Easier for parents to pick childcare for their children based on the star rating system
 - Rating available on the Grow NJ Kids website
 - Tells parents what the childcare is lacking and what they are good at
 - Grow NJ Kids helps with the financial aspect as well
 - Assessing program

- Helps programs become better than they already are
 - Not there for just the children there for the entire family
 - Schools come out to childcare centers to talk about their kindergarten program
 - The preschool program is making sure that children are ready for kindergarten
 - West Side Child Enrichment Center is working with Laura Mickley and Maureen Griner in New Jersey
 - They use creative curriculum
- Central Intake
 - 1800 number housed at Project Self-Sufficiency
 - There will be a live operator answering the phone
 - Will filter referrals for community resources
 - Assessment, home visitation, case management
 - Get where you want to be in the shortest time
 - Easier for parents to access since there is one simple number to call
 - Possibly available in Spanish in the future
- 211 Number
 - For anyone throughout the state
 - Call and say what county you are from
 - Referrals for anything
 - Website for 211 where you can find information
 - Run by a volunteer group
- Working with Handicap Preschools
 - Have a presentation
 - Provide dinner
- Parent Committees at Child Care Centers
 - Need to structure these committees different
 - Westside Child Enrichment Center
 - Reach out to childcare center to see if they have a parent committee

Project Sussex Kids Website Update:

- Up and running
- Want the website to be very interactive
- Homepage
 - Enrollment forms both for Parents and Community Organizations
 - Will be interactive
 - Scrolling updated information
 - Upcoming meetings
 - Articles
- Purple band across the top of the homepage
 - Links to subtopics on the resource guide
 - Able to click on these links
 - Drop down menu for different ages
- Site map on the bottom of the website pages

- Easy way to get where you want to go without having to go through the different topics

Discussion Items:

- Development of the Project Sussex Kids Resource Guide
 - Want to find local resources at childcare centers, pediatricians, churches, etc.
 - We will be sending a letter out shortly to agencies and a form to fill out
 - Want to find out what programs are available at these agencies
 - Ex: Connect Me (available in the 90s)
 - Information changes and new programs start so we want to stay up to date with current information
 - There will be a form available in hard copy and also on the website to fill out electronically
- SPAN Seminars
 - Starting in October through May
 - Skipping December
 - 6 workshops
 - In the evening on the first Tuesday of the month
 - Dinner and childcare will be provided
 - Holding seminars at Project Self-Sufficiency
 - Basic Rights, Early Education, Early Literacy
 - Early Literacy is lacking with children that are entering kindergarten
- Hudson Maxim School Resource Fair
 - Make parents aware of the services available
 - At the event have many vendors
 - Possible at the Durban Avenue School (4-5 grade level)
 - Larger gym
 - More parking
 - Have at the end of September or early October in the evening around 6:30 PM
- Father Daughter Dances
 - Had one at the end of April at Clifton E. Lawrence
 - Very well attended
 - Have a Sweetheart Dance at Hopatcong schools this year
- Speaker/Topic Ideas
 - Things parents would like to know more about
 - Presenters that you have previously seen that you would recommend
 - Diane Lang came to the July General Council Meeting and presented on *Positive Parenting*
 - Arc of Warren County- presentation of media use

Comments, Questions, Suggestions, and Outreach Ideas:

- Have Project Sussex Kids information of childcare websites
- Have a card in childcare centers with simple Project Sussex Kids Information (website, number)
- Eblast for information

- Even though people may not like having a ton of papers around- hard copy is suggested
- Have the Survey for Presentation/Speaker Topics online
- Have information available at
 - Colleges, supermarkets, Laundromats, municipalities, libraries
- Information in
 - School newspaper/school newsletter
- Our Savior Fall Festival- Caren Vogt
 - Have a Project Sussex Kids table at this event
 - Present at parent orientations
 - Looking for resources for Middle Class population
- Franklin 100 Year Celebration
 - Have a table

***Next Project Sussex Kids Families of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers Subcommittee meeting: September 16, 2015 at 1:00 PM**