

Ready Families, Ready Children Family Engagement Approaches that Matter

Catholic Education Summit
University of Dayton
July 12, 2013



Family Café Presenters

- **Teresa Wendell** – Site Coordinator, Dayton Public Schools, Kiser PK-8 School Neighborhood School Center located in Old North Dayton neighborhood
- **Randy Chestnut** – Pastor and Member of the Old North Dayton community Hope4Dayton@gmail.com
- **April Bennett** – Parent, community member, and member of Kiser Family Cafe
- **Diane Brogan-Adams** – Director of TOTS Program, East End Community Services
- **Kathlene Somerset** – TOTS Program parent, East End Community Services
- **Rachael Varvel** – TOTS Program parent, East End Community Services
- **Sue Koverman** - Manager of Resource Development, Catholic School Office, Archdiocese of Cincinnati
- **Cindy Currell** – University of Dayton, Better Way Grant Coordinator

Introduction

- Successfully implemented approaches to family engagement in a community collaborative environment:
 - Family Café Dinner at Kiser PK-8 School
 - Family Café at Mary Queen of Peace/Westwood School Community
 - Taking Off To Success – East End Community Services and Ruskin PK-8 School
 - Family Cafes with Head Start families
 - Developing a local community based Family Engagement Collaborative

Our Values-Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework *

- Parental Resilience –
- Social Connections
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children
- Nurturing and Attachment

* <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/the-basics/protective-factors>

Neighborhood Context - NSC

Neighborhood School Centers Model

- Bring Assets of the neighborhood to the school
- Expand the vision of education as a community process
- Dynamic and Collaborative
- School Principal, Site Coordinator, Involved partners from community
- Consistency, friendship, “not somebody’s project.”

Ingredients

- Neighborhood assets
- Parent leadership and assets
- Feedback from parents and stakeholders
- Learning from experience – what works, and what doesn't work
- Developing relationships for partnering
- Slow and steady, commitment – it takes time
- Collaboration for sharing resources, ongoing process

Ready Families, Ready Children

- **Family engagement** = vital ingredient for helping children prepare for kindergarten in all schools in the community
- **Building on strengths** = stronger families in all schools
- **Protective factors** = recognizing strengths and assets of parents and families
- **Family Café Approaches** = rooted in supporting and building family strengths
- **Better Way Foundation** – provide financial support to strengthening families through local initiative

The Kiser Family Cafe

Ingredients that make it possible:

- Principal and School Site Coordinator have Strong working relationships
- Care about student academic and social needs
- Desire for outreach to welcome and involve families and parents
- Developing community awareness of shared opportunities – needs, talents, desire to be involved.

Role of the Faith Based Community in Family Engagement

- Outreach to the city
- Social justice / Building the Kingdom of God
- Care for the community
- Resources to share
- Motivation to be involved with schools
- Connection with family need



Kiser Family Cafe









TOTS – Taking Off to Success

Ingredients that make it possible:

- Collaborative Leadership - Parents
- Link with urban school and community based organization
- Building relationships
- Concern for family well being
- Desire for outreach to welcome and involve young families and new parents









Family Perspectives on Family Engagement for School Readiness

- What parents have to share
- Involving young families
- Developing relationships between schools and families
- Dinner, information, forming social relationships
- What is most meaningful to me as a parent
- Belonging and working together

Sharing Parent Wisdom

- What do you want teachers, principals, others who work with families to know about family life?
- What messages from parents do teachers, principals, and others who work with family need to know?
- What are my biggest strengths?
- Why are parents and families important in the school community?



**End of Year
Family Café Celebration
December 2012**














University of Dayton Students as Family Café Child Care and Homework Helper Team



Westwood Family Café

- Partnership with Miami Valley Child Development Head Start, Mary Queen of Peace School, Westwood PK-8 School
- New openings, challenges, opportunities
- Link with Fatherhood Initiative
- Learn from experience

Emerging Opportunities with Family Cafes

- Sharing the strengthening families framework and Family Café with diversity of the Dayton Community
- Developing the ability of urban schools to build relationships with community
- Strengthening families and developing protective factors through Family Café experiences
- Opportunities for professional development for collaborating and engaging with families.

Family Engagement Models

- School Readiness Collaborative Family Café
– 3 questions to strengthen bonds
- Kiser Family Café –
"Family Cafe" @ Kiser PK-8 School 2nite:
LASAGNA! Plus: mini-concert by Kiser band.
Free! Serving at 6:00p #HopeCommunity
@ApexGoing

Family Café Models (con't)

- East End Community Services TOTS (Taking Off To Success) – Hispanic families
- Edison TOTS – African American families
- Westwood Family Café – partnership of Head Start, public and faith based for peaceful families
- Family Café for faith sharing

What we continue to learn ...

Family Café ...

*It's a process,
building strength together
through building relationships.*





Resources for Family Cafes and Family Engagement Models

I. Family Cafe Model*

- 3 Themes, 3 Discussion Questions
 - Taking Care of Yourself
 - Being a Strong Parent
 - Building Strong Relationships with Your Children
 - Supporting Parents and Family Members:
 - Transportation
 - Child Care provided
 - Family Meals
 - Inclusive and welcoming to all types of parents and families
- * See handout with information on developing a Family Cafe

2. Contacts for Learning More

Kiser PK-8 Neighborhood School Center

Teresa Wendell – TAWendel@dps.k12.oh.us

Randy Chestnut and April Bennett – Hope
Community Church hope4dayton@gmail.com

TOTS Program – East End Community Services

Diane Brogan-Adams - dbadams@east-end.org

Kathlene Somerset - ksomerset@east-end.org

Rachael Varvel - rvarvel@east-end.org

2. Contacts for Learning More (con't)

Westwood School / Mary Queen of Peace School Family Cafe

- Sue Koverman
- skoverman@catholiccincinnati.org
- Mike Newsome - NEWSOM@odjfs.state.oh.us

Ready Families, Ready Children Project

- Cindy Currell - ccurrell1@udayton.edu

Experienced with Family Cafes

Trentae Taylor-taylor@4cforchildren.org

Chris Brenneman - cbrenn1119@aol.com

3. Web Resources for Learning More

The Family Engagement Collaborative

<http://www.familyengagementcollaborative.com/index.html>

- Family Engagement Strengths and Needs Survey
- the-ready-families-ready-children-blog

FRIENDS National Resource Center

<http://friendsnrc.org/>

The Protective Factors Survey

<http://friendsnrc.org/protective-factors-survey>

Web Resources for Learning More

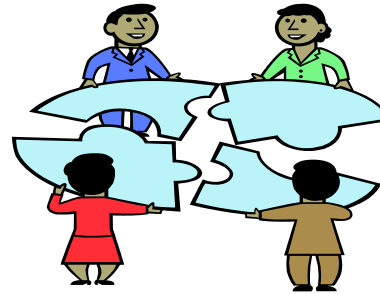
(con't)

The Center for the Study of Social Policy

<http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/the-basics/protective-factors>she Center for the Study of Social Policy

2012 Resource Guide: Preventing Child Maltreatment Promoting Well-Being: A Network for Action

<http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/guide2012/guide.pdf>



DISCUSSION

Question, comments, and observations

Additional resources on conference electronic resource board



Thanks for participating!

