**Vermillion Parke Health Coalition**

**Minutes - September 7, 2023**

**Vision**: Encourage healthy communities in Parke and Vermillion Counties.

**Mission**: To bring communities together to help everyone lead healthier lives in Parke and Vermillion Counties.

**Goals**: \*Education / \*Advocacy / \*Collaboration

**Attendees**: Aaron Evola, Lori Bouslog, Heather Thompson, Mary Margaret Rhees, Rish O’Brian, Andy Jones, Allissa Theisz, Karen Hinshaw, Lori Powers, Judy Gainey, Shelly Amerman, Lori Swinford, Larry Addison, Ronda Foster, Maci Valdez, Laura Ruhl, Lori DeYoung, Judi Barnes, Allison Finzel, Dan Gettinger, Kay Smith

**Review notes from July 6th meeting – additions or corrections –**

Corrected spelling of Heather Thompson’s name.

During the pandemic, folks were able to get a free copy of their credit reports weekly. (addition-credit reports are still currently available for free)

As of January 1st, SHIP – State Health Insurance Assistance Program will be available, call 800-452-4800. They will have Health Insurance and resources available for our communities. (addition – Note-they are available currently)

**Guest Speaker Allissa Theisz, Community Engagement Specialist for CASY.**

\*This is the Child Care Resource and Referral Network – Statewide network

\*We are in SDA Region 4

\*Https://brighterfuturein.findhelp.com

Main Mission is to make childcare, more affordable, accessible, and high quality. They do this by interacting with families, childcare programs / providers, and the community.

Importance of Early Care and Education Advocate, the first few years of life.

Ninety percent of a child’s capacity to learn is developed by age five (memory, how fast you process things, being able to put things in order. So, the children that have the high-quality early education are going to be at a little bit of an advantage verse those who don’t. Which happens because we don’t have enough seats for every child to have that advantage.

Four out of 10 Hoosier children live in a child care desert (only one child care seat for every three children in need). Only 40% of licensed programs qualify as high quality in Indiana. Investing in early education in health equity is important. Research has shown that one dollar invested has at least a four-dollar return, when invested in the community. It helps the kids to develop the skills needed and to be successful later in life.

Childcare is not as accessible to those who need it the most, single parent, or families that work the nightshifts and don’t have access to the quality care have a disadvantage and seem to have to play catch up the rest of their lives, that they may not be able to win.

However, when people do have access to affordable, high-quality care, it can positively increase their health outcomes.

Therefore, with reliable care, employment stability, there’s opportunity for employment/financial security. Financial security can do a lot to have security in housing, nutrition, access to mental health and health services. With employment stability they can have opportunity for economic mobility and move up in their career.

“Research show us that children who participate in these programs have better education, earning, and health outcomes as compared to those who do not.”

The Child Care Resource and Referral Network serve families, childcare providers and the community.

Their family engagement specialist connects families to childcare programs and provides them with the information to help the families decide what would be best for their situation. They also help with financial assistance (Firefly – can help out with financial needs.) Childcare Resource and Referral Network can also provide an assessment to see if they would be able to connect the families to any other sources that may be needed. There’s a free online website called Findhelp. (Blue cards were handed out with information). Organization/Programs can go on this free website and search for their specific program that they have and claim a card, which is to verify the email/information is correct.)

\*Https://brighterfuturein.findhelp.com

Can go to this website and put in zip code and can look at the different types of resources in that area. It’s not always an exclusive list.

***Claiming Your Card (from PowerPoint)***

Visit <http://brighterfuturesin.findhelp.com/claims> and put in the information for your program to search for it in the resource bank.

If your program pops up, click on it and then click the “Work here? Manage listings!” link in the top right corner of the screen

If your program does not pop up, suggest it by scrolling to the bottom of the pages and pressing “Suggest Program” in the bottom right and fill out the information for your program

Create your free account using your work email and watch for an email from the FindHelp team with the subject “Validate your claim, “along with a claim verification link

Support - Childcare Professionals – encourage people to get licensed and offer high quality care and get involuntary program, and accept financial aid from the state and who to get them in contact with. Cohorts of providers for childcare homes, trying to get providers together to make sure share their information.

Connect with community leaders to bring awareness, educate, build partnerships with other youth organizations, business consultations and sit down with employers to do a needs assessment, early learning coalitions, and provide and share data.

***Data (from the PowerPoint) Need & Capacity:***

Children 0-5 – Who may need care: Parke: 539; Vermillion:345

Maximum Licensed Capacity: Parke: 269; Vermillion: 179

Percent of Children able to be served by Licensed Capacity: Parke 50%; Vermillion: 52%

***Licensed & Regulated Programs: (from the PowerPoint)***

Number of Programs: Parke:10; Vermillion: 7

Programs w/Non-Traditional Hours: Parke: 1; Vermillion: 1

Programs w/Weekend Hours: Parke:0; Vermillion: 0

***Quality: (from PowerPoint)***

Number of High Quality Program: Parke 3; Vermillion: 1

High Quality Licensed Capacity: Parke 84; Vermillion:88

Percent of High Quality Capacity: Parke: 31%; Vermillion:46%

***Cost: (from PowerPoint)***

Average Annual Cost of Child Care for Infant, Toddler, and Preschool:

Parke: $5,416. 8% of Median Annual Household Income;

Vermillion: $6,007. 11% of Median Annual Household Income

Annual Economic Impact of Child Care Gaps:

Parke: Over 9 million dollars

Vermillion: Almost 7 million dollars

Communities are losing money due to lack of childcare.

Therefore, refer people to CASY to help families be able to utilize the programs and services available: Toll Free: 800-866-3952, option 2 (*from PowerPoint*)

**Child Care Referrals:**

<https://brighterfuturesindiana.org/online-referral-request-form>

**Family Resource Navigator:**

<https://brighterfuturesin.findhelp.com/forms/brighterfuturesin-family-resource-navigator>

**Refer families who need financial assistance for childcare to apply online and contact Firefly Children & Family Alliance with any questions**

<https://earlyconnect.fssa.in.gov/onlineApp/home>

Firefly Children & Family Alliance, Region 2

Toll-Free: 866-287-2420

Email: [ccdfvouchers@fireflyin.org](mailto:ccdfvouchers@fireflyin.org)

Connect with the Vermillion Parke Health Coalitions

* Parke County is working to expand their Early Care and Education Coalition. Reach out to Allissa Theisz, Community Engagement Specialist for CASY, if you would like to be connected with their coalition leader.
* Connect Allissa Theisz, Community Engagement Specialist for CASY, with local employers in your area so she can discuss life policies base on the need of their employees. Pass along Alissa’s contact information to increase accessibility in your area.
* Advocate for early learning / care in your organizations.

Available help/services on 211- also uses FindHelp to access information and childcare referrals. Spanish speaking individual is available to help on the 211.

**Committee working on Discussion of Specified Meeting Topics**

The committee will meet prior to the November 2nd meeting. Committee members are: Mary Margaret Rhees, Stephanie Dowd, Beth Evans, Lori Powers, and Lori Bouslog.

Lori will be reaching out to the committee and will report for the November mtg.

**Coalition Working Group Updates:**

**Food Insecurity** (Allison Finzel / Lynn Egan)

Lynn shared that she is working with pantries and food banks. Catholic Charities has hired a nutrition and development employee.

**Connecting Health Care – (**Matt Smith / Larry Addison)

Lori B. shared on behalf of Matt that the healthcare system is very taxed due to the uptick in Covid, and not enough staff.

**Resource Manual**

No update / Companies and Organizations can add and update their information to the 211.

**Poverty Working Group –** (Mary Margaret Rhees)

56 are registered for the October 25th Poverty Simulation. Volunteers are needed, email Lori if you would like to help.

Two more meetings on zoom before the event – September 15th and October 19th @10:00 am.

Set-up October 24th.

**Long-Term Goals for the Vermillion Parke Health Coalition – Continued Discussion**

Future – what would you like to see the coalition do or be? Thoughts?

\*Medicare Awareness - Judy Gainey shared that she provides education and assist Medicare residents to take advantage of preventive services that Medicare has and other items/ services that they will pay for.

Medicare will continue to pay for the Covid and Flu shot and will now be paying for the Shingles shot.

Medicare assists residents to find ways to cut costs with medications. There’s a cap on insulin of $35.00. They work with another program called Needy Meds to help provide and find lower medication cost.

* Judy Gainey: Volunteer Supervisor for SHIP, the State Health Insurance assistance program. Presentation to Senior groups – does presentations to groups and agencies. Please leave a message when calling. [jg10SHIP@gmail.com](mailto:jg10SHIP@gmail.com) or call 765-418-1576 (contact info from previous meeting)

\*Education – knowledge of what is available/Collaboration

\*Connecting Services

\*Event to share Health Care Information – for Health and Community, for any provider to come and share their information

\*Health Open House – committee: Ronda Foster, Shelly Amerman, Lori Powers, Lori Swinford, Beth Evans

\*Connecting with Farmers when they renew their pesticide applications, to have information or testing items available at the time

\*Lori DeYoung future goal to coordinate and set up a Lethal means site for Parke County at no cost, (gun lock, pill boxes, medication mail back bags, literature, etc. – Wants to make sure all the communities have resources at no charge. (Janet Rutter – volunteered from Valley Professionals in Vermillion County)

Poverty Simulation – Have an outreach or sign-up sheet to reach out to organizations who would be interested in participating in health care outreach / Health Open Houses

**Suggested Coalition Meeting Speakers –** any ideas, please email Lori Bouslog

**November 2nd Coalition Topic - Vermillion County Grant Update: (**Mary Margaret Rhees)

- Share about a grant Vermillion Co is involved with

-Poverty Simulation Update

- November the committee will also share the topics for 2024.

**Organization Updates and Sharing**

**Health Coalition Web Presence:** [**https://extension.purdue.edu/county/vermillion/hhs.html**](https://extension.purdue.edu/county/vermillion/hhs.html)

* Vermillion County Health Department has *MOVED* to 700 South Main, Clinton.
* Thrive West Central has applications for farmers market credit for seniors (over 60), must be used by October 30th.

Lori Bouslog – Extension Programs – See flyers for details:

* Matter of Balance Program in November
* Dining with Diabetes Program in October
* Health and Human Sciences Program Sept-December

**Next Meeting – November 2, 10:00 AM – hybrid**

*Respectfully submitted by Lori Bouslog & Beth Evans*