

FAMILY ACTION LEARNING TEAM

Meeting Minutes

Date: June 28, 2016

Meeting Participants: Luther, Gustavo, Amber, Sean, Daniela, Richard, Keayba, Paula, Jackie, Sekinah

Ready/Ready Staff: Rachael Burrello, Mary Herbenick

Guest Speaker: Chris Payne

SYSTEMS CHANGE TARGET: Engage families as partners and change agents in the community	
A. Agenda Item: Parent education segment: Cognitive (prenatal to age 8)	
<u>Summary of Discussion</u>	<u>Action Items</u>
<p>Dr. Chris Payne, Director, Center for Youth, Family and Community Partnerships at UNC - Greensboro, shared information about how parents can support cognitive development in young children. She shared that birth to age three is more important than any other stage in life because 85% of brain structures are built during that time.</p> <p>Social emotional development in young children is key to school and life success. Positive interactions between the child and those who come into contact with the child (parents, caregivers, and teachers) build the foundation.</p> <p>Experience is what grows the brain and cognitive development requires three things: (1) In infants and young children, it occurs through interactions with parents, caregivers and peers; (2) It develops best through play; and (3) It is supported through conversations and back-and-forth interactions. More details are included in the attached presentation and in notes at the end of this document.</p>	<p>CHRIS: provide links for resource activities for families.</p>
B. Partner Role	
<u>Summary of Discussion</u>	<u>Action Items</u>
<p>Ready/Ready tested a piece of their Family Engagement Strategy by asking where families spend time on any given day (weekday or weekend), so that programs and services can come to families instead of asking families to come to them. For example, NC Pre-K will be taking applications at community sites next year, and asked for family input on where might be good locations for them to go.</p> <p>Families gave lots of different answers about where they spend time, what they do with their children, and where they can be reached. Some of these include: community and rec centers, libraries, parks, sports activities and classes, running errands (grocery stores, etc.), at work, at church, and at home with their children.</p> <p>Families also gave feedback on where programs could go in the community to reach families with young children and promote kindergarten readiness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YMCA, especially Hayes-Taylor • Libraries – these are places where organizations can be present or can leave information to give to families. • Organizations can go door to door, like voter registration drives (but don't wear a suit on the weekend if you approach people, they are more likely to trust you if you look more casual). 	<p>READY/READY: Share family feedback with NC Pre-K and the early literacy team.</p> <p>READY/READY: Share the 10 Key Strategies the community is undertaking for early childhood systems building.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some churches have partnerships with Moses Cone Congregational Nurses or the Community Food Task Force to serve free healthy meals to the community and families. • The Guilford County Summer Lunch Program • Barber and beauty shops – some already have children’s books in waiting areas. • Places that are popular for children’s parties (Safari Nation, Celebration Station, Chuck E. Cheese) – if their children are at a party, adults want to take advantage of that time while their children play. • Greensboro Science Center, Greensboro Children’s Museum, High Point Museum • Chick-Fil-A Family Night (Tuesdays) • Wal-Mart and neighborhood stores (like Mexican stores/tiendas) • Churches that have nurseries – these attract families with young children. • Fire departments like the downtown branch, which offers help with child seats and safety checks. • Piedmont Parent, a free magazine for parents. 	
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C. Basecamp demonstration	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary of Discussion</u></p> <p>Rachael gave a demonstration of Basecamp, an online and mobile app that lets teams work together without having to meet. The team is interested in trying Basecamp as a way to stay in touch and work on projects between meetings, and will discuss further at the next meeting.</p> <p>Meeting notes will also be made available on the Ready/Ready website.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Action Items</u></p> <p>FAMILY ALT MEMBERS: Check out this video for an overview of Basecamp. If you are interested in trying Basecamp, email Rachael Burrello at Ready/Ready: rachaelb@getreadyguilford.org</p> <p>READY/READY: Add Family ALT notes to the Get Ready Guilford website.</p>

Meetings will be the 3rd Monday of each month. Here’s the schedule for the remainder of the year:

- **Monday, August 15, 5:30 to 7:30 pm**
- **Monday, September 19, 5:30 to 7:30 pm**
- **Monday, October 17, 5:30 to 7:30 pm**
- **Monday, November 21, 5:30 to 7:30 pm** – This is the Monday before Thanksgiving. Let us know if this date does not work for you.
- **Monday, December 19, 5:30 to 7:30 pm**

Location: Martin Dixon Intergenerational Center, Bennett College, 600 Gorrell St. Greensboro

See notes about Dr. Payne’s presentation on social-emotional development on the next page.

Positive interactions between parents and child:

- Creates trust in other relationships and regulate emotions.
- Helps build the child's ability to focus (through "serve and return" they learn to wait for response and provide responses)
- Facilitates and extends the child's learning based on interests, i.e. knowledge about what child likes, doesn't like, responds to, etc.

There are five areas of cognitive development: (1) Thinking and reasoning; (2) Creative expression; (3) Social connections; (4) Mathematical thinking and expression; and (5) Scientific exploration and knowledge. If children develop these skills, they can put a lot of information together and make better decisions about how to proceed. Healthy cognitive development helps people solve problems later on in life -- while there's tragedy and grief, our ability to handle it and solve problems helps us navigate that.

There are many ways to promote cognitive development, including: (1) giving children the opportunity to solve problems, take things apart; (2) reading and exposing children to language every day...chapter books, sports page, etc.; (3) understanding and facilitating their development, i.e. if a baby can't reach a toy, help them learn by bringing it within reach; (4) supporting a child's development at toddler...just enough to make them feel safe and secure as they're exploring the world.

Dr. Payne offered that we don't really need to worry about what toys to buy children; children may be better off if they only have a few toys and instead use their imaginations, i.e. blocks, pretend play, dramatic play, etc. She pointed out that science and art go together -- giving children the opportunity to express themselves and to build is critical. She shared an example of having recycled materials on hand so he/she can build whatever he/she wants to.

She also talked about using green spaces (parks, yards, etc.) as a free science lab -- it's where children learn about the natural world and science. There are a lot of free events to learn about science, science festivals, museums, etc. This doesn't have to be something parents/caregivers spend a lot of money on -- it's pouring and measuring, having pots/pans on floor when cooking, etc. Research shows that outside time also helps families manage ADHD symptoms effectively and that there's a strong health benefit for everyone.

Dr. Payne talked about a few other key things for families to know:

- Using props to be silly with children and to relate to them -- dolls, puppets, etc.
- Incorporate reading, singing, playing into daily routine, i.e. older sister practices reading skills with new baby in the mornings before school, use the oatmeal box to help children learn letters, etc.
- Infants hearing "live" language is critical to building early literacy skills. At three or four months of age, babies are hearing the language that they'll reflect later on.
- Good teaching in a childcare setting looks like good parenting -- make sure they're doing a lot of reading, play time, etc.
- Having a positive male role model is important...father, stepfather, uncle, cousin, friend, etc.
- Some structure and some routine is helpful. When acting up, there's positive way to say to a child "I love you. I care about you. I want to support you, but X is what our family does." (X could be "cleaning up after ourselves" or "eating what's on our plate", etc.)

Keep technology at night to a minimum--a routine where everyone does their part is really helpful with toddlers.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, there's zero benefit for children under age two to use technology -- they need "live" people and interactions.

Learn more by reviewing the attached presentation.