



Children's Working Group Minutes
October 16, 2020
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Attendees: Broderick Cason, Samantha Khoury, Lynn Pullano, Lea Passage, Alan Delmerico, Tieza Jonas, Lisa Neff, Tierney Smith, Heidi Milch, Jacqueline Hall, Aimee Neri, Hannah Holden, Bonnie Lawrence, Tony Sanfilippo, Sarah Utkin, Mary Ieraci, and Katie Junevic.

Welcome: Ms. Neri & Ms. Hall opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. Ms. Neri recapped the September meeting. Ms. Neri emphasized that the Race Equity Tool is a continued dialogue not a one-time conversation, and that our combined and individual efforts are improved by the opportunity to talk, think, and learn.

Ms. Hall thanked Dr. Kuo, Ms. Passage, and Ms. Pullano of the Best Beginnings Partnership for being "guinea pigs" after the focus shift of the group due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Best Beginnings Partnership was the first anchor initiative to carry the Live Well Erie Children's Working Group work forward.

Best Beginnings Partnership Update: Ms. Passage and Ms. Pullano provided an update on the work of the Best Beginnings Partnership (BBP). BBP continues to support vulnerable children and to demonstrate the better return on investment of early childhood interventions as compared with interventions later in life. They will eventually have a one-pager available on this, they are partnering with Univera on it, and will make it available to Children's Working Group members when finalized.

Ms. Pullano observed that they are now able to disaggregate the BBP data by key demographics. They can see where barriers to equity might be. They are planning focus groups with diverse families in their practices to explore their experiences with raising their children and interactions with their providers, etc. Ms. Passage agreed that this feedback is consistent with the objectives of their grant funding to incorporate feedback from the community, in addition to being a best practice.

Discussion Groups: The group broke into Discussion Group sessions to complete the evaluation of the ECCPASA one pager through the lens of the Race Equity Tool. Discussion Group One reported out that personal stories are really instructive about the experiences of marginalized groups. One participant shared a story about not being listened to by a provider, and this type of story can be instructive for staff and providers. Cultural Competency is also an issue, and the International Institute of Buffalo recently offered a training on this subject in which many of the Working Group members participated.

Mr. Sanfilippo shared information about a Diversity & Inclusion seminar being offered by his organization, the CBO Consortium, and shared the registration link:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0vdeGhrz0oEtbZGnov0MVh7RslqPXAjImc>

Discussion Group Two reported out about respecting cultural norms. A participant shared a story about an expectant mom with limited English whose husband wasn't permitted in the exam room. Despite the fact that an advocate accompanied the woman to the appointment, the DV protocols of the practice prevented the advocate from accompanying the women in the exam room. It was so traumatizing for the mom that it may have jeopardized her ongoing engagement with prenatal care. As well, the group discussed the unintended consequences of not understanding each other's life circumstances, and the importance of the ways in which environment influences health outcomes.

Mr. Cason shared the following article links with the group:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/12/business/corporate-diversity-black-employees.html>

<https://www.bizjournals.com/buffalo/news/2020/10/13/diversity-and-inclusion-in-buffalo-workplace.amp.html>

Ms. Hall observed that the high level of discourse in the discussion groups shows the evolution of the Working Group during its first year in existence.

Round Robin Discussion: Ms. Neri led a round robin discussion of how the attendees and agencies can support the work of the Live Well Erie Children's Working Group, and how the co-chairs can support the attendees' participation.

Mr. Sanfilippo – this is his first meeting, but he thought it was great and interactive and he is excited to join the next one.

Ms. Jonas – she thinks the Working Group is amazing, and she is happy, motivated, encouraged, and empowered to continue participating.

Ms. Smith – is overwhelmed with setting up Virtual Learning Support Centers for her organization (Boys & Girls Club of the Northtowns) and can't think much beyond that right now.

Ms. Utkin – there was good conversation today, and she is working on assisting her staff with remote learning needs.

Ms. Khoury – this is her first full meeting. Things are going well, she and her colleagues are trying to make connections between the Working Group's Race Equity lens and their Trauma Informed Care work. They are currently looking at their organizational practices to incorporate it into everything.

Ms. Ieraci – the WNY Women's Foundation is doing advocacy work at the state level esp around child care. They are also working on their MOMS program.

Ms. Pullano – loves the group and finds it to have a wonderful dynamic. Feels the pivot to focus on race equity in light of the pandemic was so critical and in fact was essential to the work we were "supposed" to do. Loves the conversation.

Ms. Passage – the group is an important avenue for many to come together, especially those working toward similar goals. Many have shared goals and this group offers the opportunity to develop partnerships and provides an avenue for communication.

Ms. Junevic – the group is helpful for networking but attendance is tough because of so many other demands to attend community meetings.

Ms. Wah - is glad to be a part of the group. The Karen Society was temporarily sidelined by the pandemic, but was able to provide a summer employment program for youth as well as an afterschool program, in addition to lots of census activity.

Mr. Cason – helpful to listen to the consciousness of the other participants as they wake up to the experiences of others. It is a road that you need to travel to do the work. We can't just collect information about people's experiences and do nothing with it. We have to use it as a call to action.

Ms. Lawrence – this is my second meeting, and it is very important to our work the County Department of Environment & Planning. Attending to listen and connect to our work in DEP especially related to sustainability and climate change.

Dr. Delmerico – his group the Institute of Health Promotion is not front facing, but does a lot of coalition work. They are prepared and interested in being supportive with analytic and evaluative supports. He is energized to be a part of this group.

Next Steps: Ms. Hall briefly introduced the next steps for the group. At our November, December, and possibly our January meetings we will hear presentations from the recipients of Live Well Erie grants. We will use the Race Equity Lens to provide feedback on their work.

NEXT MEETING: Friday, November 20, 2020 from 9 AM to 10:30 AM