



Children's Working Group Give Every Child a Chance to Succeed

**Co-Chairs: Jacqueline Hall, ECDSS
Aimee Neri, NYS Family Court Improvement Project
April 24, 2020
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM**

Aimee Neri and Jacqueline Hall convened the meeting via Webex, welcoming the attendees. The Webex format will allow us to continue the work of the Live Well Erie Children's Working Group, given the restrictions on in-person meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are all learning the new format and exploring the possibilities, and appreciate the patience of the Working Group participants.

Ms. Neri and Ms. Hall acknowledge that the ability of many of our Working Group members to continue to engage with our Live Well Erie work will be limited by the demands of COVID-19 responses. All of our organizations and families are in the same place and we understand the competing demands. Participants should know that they are welcome to withdraw from the process and reenter at any convenient point without judgement from the other participants. The leaders would just ask that the organizations receiving Live Well Erie grant support continue to participate in order to inform the group as to the progress of their grant-funded work.

The Live Well Erie Co-chairs Marie Cannon and John Craik have identified race-based health disparities as a major focus of the Live Well Erie initiative going forward. The COVID-19 health crisis has served to highlight the operation of systemic racism and poverty in resulting in the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 in communities of color. Our task now, as the Children's Working Group, is to identify how the goals on which we've chosen to focus can work to reduce and eventually end race-based health inequities.

Ms. Hall and Ms. Neri asked attendees to share thoughts about the initiatives and the opportunity to address race-based health inequities. Mary Comtois shared that she believes policy changes will be required to do so, including minimum income child care subsidies. Other racial equity interventions and planning should include human centered design. Trauma informed care has taken hold in many of our organizations but Ms. Comtois does not see human centered design is as widely adopted.

Kim Berghash the Director of Program Operations at Homespace introduced herself as a Live Well Erie grant recipient. She or a designee will attend future meetings.

Dr. Kuo shared that he agrees with the importance of the Live Well Erie Children's Working Group and this work especially related to structural racism and racial equity. Many care providers have moved to telemedicine to keep people at home as much as possible. He and his colleagues want people to know they are open and practicing. They are doing outreach to children especially those who suffer from chronic illness. He is aware of a need for diapers and other basics. As well, mental health issues are arising or being unaddressed as a result of shelter in place restrictions. Dr. Kuo has reached out to other initiatives and groups about community needs and has largely been met with silence. There are number is of people in the community that understand these issues and this pandemic isn't going away anytime soon. But the reality is that there are a lot of people in Erie County susceptible to this virus, especially vulnerable children. The safety net has some fragmentation in it to begin with, and it is going to be really stressed out over the next months and years. The more that we can call attention to reaching out, screening, and calling attention to those most at risk the better. He would like this group to work with other initiatives, to be at the table with other groups and initiatives. There are people who are doing things and we need to coordinate efforts.

In order to gauge the ability of current Children's Working Group members to continue to participate in the Live Well Erie work, Ms. Hall and Ms. Neri have devised a survey which will be distributed to the members after the meeting. The survey will ask respondents about their ability to engage with the Live Well Erie Children's Working Group as well as ideas for how best to employ the selected Group initiatives in service of reducing racially-based health disparities. The survey will also include an opportunity for members to enter general feedback on the Working Group and the Live Well Erie process.