

Building Partnerships that Last

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Strategic Solutions for Success

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Building Partnerships that Last

- Refresher on Performance Standards on Community Partnerships
- Evaluating your current partnerships
- Types of Partnerships
- Key ingredients to successful partnerships
- Strategic planning for partnerships

Performance Standard 1302.53 Community Partnership and coordination with other early childhood and education programs

- Must establish ongoing collaborative relationships and partnerships with community organizations such as establishing joint agreements, procedures or contracts and arranging for onsite delivery of services as appropriate, to facilitate access to community services that are responsive to children's and families' needs and family partnership goals, and community needs and resources as determined by the community assessment.
- Must establish necessary collaborative relationships and partnerships with community organizations that may include:
 - * health care providers including child and adult MH providers, managed care networks, dentists, nutrition service providers, substance abuse, etc.
 - * entities that provide services to children with disabilities including elementary schools

Performance Standard continued:

- Family preservation and support services and child protective services – (Where child abuse is reported)
- Educational and Cultural Institutions (libraries and museums)
- Temporary assistance for needy families, nutrition assistance, workforce development and training programs, adult literacy, post secondary education, financial institutions that enhance family stability
- Housing assistance agencies including local educational agency liaison designated for student assistance
- Domestic violence prevention and support providers
- Other organizations or business that may provide support

Performance Standard Continued: Coordination with other programs and systems

- Memorandum of understanding between Head Start and the entity primarily responsible for managing publically funded preschool programs in one's service area
- Quality Rating Improvement Systems
- Data systems integration with state data systems, other early childhood or education systems to extent practical

Building Community Partnerships – What the Research Says

- Community engagement helps families meet basic needs
- Fosters the use of enrichment resources
- Results in a welcoming community
- Positive relationships foster trust within the community
- Partners offer resources that respond to families strengths and needs

“Partnerships have long term benefits for children. Higher student achievement is linked to programs that partner with community agencies to engage families in supporting their children’s learning at home.”

- NATIONAL CENTER ON PARENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community Partnerships Status Poll

So where are you at?



Community Partnerships Status Poll

Currently on a scale of 1 – 5 how satisfied are you with your current partnerships?

1 Very Dissatisfied 2 Somewhat Dissatisfied 3 OK 4 Pretty Satisfied 5 Very Satisfied

2. Beyond meeting performance standards – do your partnerships fully support your program's and community needs?

Yes

No

Community Partnerships Status Poll

3. Other than the program director do you have an individual responsible for developing, maintaining and supporting community partnerships in your program?

Yes

No

4. Do you regularly evaluate your community partnerships and incorporate your community partnership goals into your overall strategic plan?

Yes

No

Many Types of Community Partnerships

- **Service Coordination Agreements** - to support *individual* needs of children and families within the program, to make additional services readily accessible in the community. “We refer to you and you refer to us.”

Example: WIC, health care clinics, housing and job agencies, schools

- **Partnership Agreements** – to support a *group and/or program* to meet specific needs of families and the program

Example: Dental Providers, MH consultants, Adult education, Domestic Violence Shelter, classroom facilities

- **Collaboration Agreements** - to support a *system* that addresses the needs of its Head Start population, and the community

Example: school districts, early intervention, child welfare, housing authority, etc.

Each type of partnership

Is unique

Comes about differently

Critical need arises

To solve a big problem

To advance your program services or



When great minds collide and are met with **strategic**

BOLD LEADERSHIP!

Successful Partnerships at Community Services for Children



Early Head Start/ Child Welfare Collaboration program

2002 – Identified Community and program problem

- High number of open child welfare cases in 0 – 5 population
- High number of these children entered HS with challenging behaviors – impact of abuse/trauma, and were not enrolled in EHS
- Both child welfare and HS were serving the same families without any coordination
- Children and families were not doing well in terms of safety, permanence, development
- Children and Youth (Child Welfare) and HS began talking about the problem
- Positioned to respond to OHS offer of EHS/Child Welfare collaborations

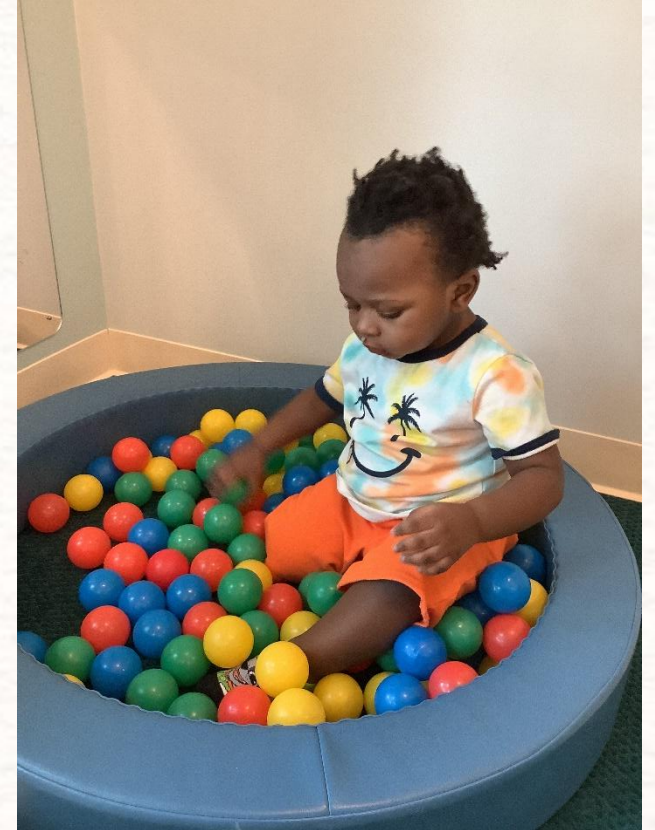
Successful Partnerships at Community Services for Children



2003 – First Early Head Start/Child Welfare collaboration – 15 infants

- Created *Early Head Start/SafeStart*
- Drug impacted, abused/neglected infants 0 – 3
- Center based, therapeutic setting – OHS funding
- Comprehensive partnership with 2 county Child Welfare agencies, and Early intervention, private therapists, Lehigh Valley Hospital
- Financial support from each county

Partnership addresses unmet needs and systems problem





Successful Partnership at Community Services for Children

2008 Expanded partnership to 40 children with support from one county

- Developed a state of the art therapeutic setting – Donley Infant and Family Center

2010 – Expanded partnership, serve an additional 32 children

- Developed a new center with support from Lehigh Valley Health Network at the outpatient hospital

One great partnership (Child Welfare) opened the door to another great partnership with the hospital!

Both Partnerships continue today!



What We Learned that works

- Establish detailed written agreement assigning roles, responsibilities, costs, etc.
- Establish core team of “managers/decision makers” and assign responsibility
- Meet regularly (weekly to start, later monthly)
- Set up a format for problem solving, sharing, talking openly – safe zone
- * Determine who the chief communicators are
- * Review monthly data reports together
- Evaluate processes regularly – pivot as needed
- Annually review agreement
- Stay focused on the mission



Sustaining partnerships is not simple

- Changes in key executive leadership
- Changes in management
- Lack of knowledge of each other's "rules"
- May Underestimate amount of time needed
- Differences in philosophical approach
- Partners goals may wander
- Responding to changes in community (opioid crisis, laws, or a WORLD PANDEMIC)



But we Learned a lot!

- Building strong partnerships takes effort, time, and real commitment
- Relationships – great rapport between leaders, key players is critical
- Must identify and believe in mutual goals – How does this benefit each party?
- Must create one philosophical approach with shared language
- Must establish measureable indicators towards goal success
- Must negotiate differences where you can – be prepared to renegotiate!
- Communication in every direction at all levels, in every way is essential
- Must be willing to take a calculated risk if it fails (back-up plan)



Using Strategic Campaign to form New Partnerships

Big Problem: CSC's Head Start Program identified a lack of continuous quality space as a key barrier to growth in Allentown, City of greatest need in service area.

- Number 1 agency strategic goal! – Find a permanent multi classroom facility to house Head Start now with space for expansion
- Developed multiple strategies to communicate our problem and our needs
 - * Involved parents, board and staff in search for space
 - * Engaged realtors
 - * Used communication tools (op-ed, web site, newsletters, presentations)
 - * Sought out real estate developers, government leaders, corporations concerned with future work force and/or interest in education and early childhood.

Strategies for Partnership to form new partnership to solve space problem

- Evaluated what was happening in the City of Allentown and learned who were the people involved
- Identified Key business leaders who were in a position to help and sought out opportunities to communicate our needs
- Leveraged other relationships to get to the key player
- Communicated Head Start's value, outcomes and inability to grow due to space constraints.
- Created a sense of urgency

Head Start and City Center Corporation – The Learning Hub

2018 – **City Center Corporation** – largely responsible for redevelopment stepped up!

Renovated one floor in a vacant building to create a beautiful Head Start center complete with innovative programming for children and parents – 6 classrooms

Led support from other businesses and community programs

2020 – Expanded facility to create a Neighborhood Resource Center and two more classrooms

Our partner became a Champion for Head Start – committed to early childhood education and parent engagement!

2022 – Huge Expansion in the works with 30 year commitment! CSC's Head Start program, Early Learning Resource Center program and Health care provider will expand into the entire building!



Head Start and City Center Corporation – The Learning Hub



PA Governor Tom Wolf



First Lady, Dr. Jill Biden
Secretary of HHS, Mr. Xavier Becerra
PA Congresswoman Susan Wild

How did this partnership happen?

- You could call it luck..... or

Intentional Preparation meets opportunity



Key ingredients to Partnership's Success

- Built relationship at all levels – staff, management, board, families
- Built commitment through sharing positive outcomes and getting other business and social programs involved
- Communication – constantly in every direction
- Reliability – do what you say you are going to do
- Reiterated the short and long term value at every opportunity for low income families, to school district, and the community
- Recognition
- Continued leadership



Partnership with Allentown School District at Community Services for Children

- Historically had various forms of relationship that changed frequently
- Created MOU – but
- Developed a Strategic Objective to improve the relationship with the intention of increased coordination and planning, improved transition services, and free classroom space within key elementary schools
 - * Communicated with principals, superintendent, school board
 - * Identified how we could benefit ASD, and what we wanted
 - * Took advantage of every opportunity to be present
 - * Named how Head Start could benefit the school district

Success of Head Start/Allentown School District Partnership

- Created joint application for OHS School District Collaboration Project
 - * Developed a team of ASD and HS leaders to work together
 - * Identified key activities, goals
- Determined Mutual benefits – school readiness for space
- OHS support highlighted this work, increased accountability
- Working together as a team created lasting relationships
- Publicity about collaboration solidified reputation as partners



Some questions to ponder...

Break into small groups for five minutes

- a. What key ingredients for success did these partnerships have in common?
- b. What were the potential barriers to success and which key elements do you think helped to remove these barriers?
- c. Identify one community partnership you want to improve or develop



Feedback from Groups

What do you think?

Is there one partnership that you would like to improve?

Will you put into place an intentional, strategic action plan?

Key Ingredients for building Lasting Partnership Success

- Know what each party needs from the agreement
(What do we want? What do they really want?)
- Understand what values you have in common
- Commit in writing to mutual goals, objectives, process
- Deliver on what you say you are going to do
- Communicate to everyone involved frequently
- Appreciate – each party's contribution regularly – verbally, in writing, in public



Key Ingredients for building Lasting Partnership Success

KEEP GOING!

To sustain the partnerships you must continue to

Lead the effort!

Think Strategically and Creatively About Partnerships

- Put Community Partnerships and your local community through a SWOT analysis
 - Where are the gaps in services for families? Where are the strengths?
 - What is happening in our community (strengths, weaknesses, threats, opportunities)
 - What is happening in our program (challenges to providing services, gaps in expertise)
- What is happening in the State? Nation? What has changed?
- Inventory current partnerships – honestly – are they working? Fulfilling the needs?
- What is our capacity for leadership of community partners?
- Where do we want to be with this in 3 years?
- Who is a potential partner? - look in unusual places

(Lack of affordable housing, school district failure, equity issues, workforce issues, lack of subject matter knowledge, population change, program funding change, pandemic)

Last thoughts...

Partnerships and collaborations



Improve Outcomes

Broaden Reach and access to Services

Strengthen programs and people

Build Community

Questions?



Thank you!