



**Best Start Network  
Summary Notes  
Friday, April 20, 2012  
12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
The Waterfront Centre**

- Present:** Paul Johnson, Grace Mater, Karen Calligan, Dorothy Barr-Elliott, Brenda Bax, Judith Bishop, Shawn Chisholm, Jean Clinton, Debbie Crickmore, Karen Davis, Andrew Debicki, Ruth Doherty, Denise Doyle, Christine Finochio, Ivana Fortino, Sam Gardner, Rocco Gizzarelli, Matt Goodman, Sgt. Harold Harris, Don Jaffray, Pauline Kajiura, Lisa Kiriakopoulos, Kathleen Kitching, Mary Lachapelle, Ann Lamanes, Laura Lukasik, Rebecca Raven, Laura Martindale, Shirley McCoy, Colin McMullan, Debbie Myers, Dina Phillips, Lorraine Robinson, Pat Senft, Jane Soldera, Wanda St. Francois, Sharon Stephanian, Marion Trent-Kratz, Cheryl Velenosi, Janis Webster, Dean Younger, Ruth Wells
- Guests:** Jennifer Faulkner, Kathleen Dekker, Lois Saunders
- Regrets:** Karyn Callaghan, Jim Commerford, Marni Flaherty, Paula Forbes, Ghyslaine Hunter-Perreault, Diane Jamieson, Jeanne Schmidt, Lea Pollard, Krys Croxall

	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Discussion/Decision</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	Welcome / Declaration of Conflict of Interest / Review of Meeting Notes / Announcements	<p>Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting after our month hiatus. He indicated that we have an exciting meeting agenda this afternoon. Several guests are with us today and they will be more formally introduced prior to their respective presentations.</p> <p>Paul indicated that two days ago, City Council at Committee strongly endorsed the Strategic Plan for the rest of the term of Council. During this process, the Plan reaffirmed the vision that 'Hamilton is the best place to raise a child'. Some of the priorities and strategies of particular note are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council and City are working on a maternal health strategy (i.e.: prenatal, primary care, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Universal access to healthy food particularly for those families most at need</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improving access to child and family services such as linking to Best Start, seamless access and entry into services/ supports required, etc</li> </ul> <p>Paul stated it is wonderful that Best Start and early years' programs and services are continuing to be recognized as part of the City's Strategic Plan. A number of other initiatives in the city which are having a positive impact on other areas such as waterfront development, economic growth, etc. were also mentioned. He indicated that tangible and positive things are happening and if we touch base with City Councillors or staff, we might want to thank them for their work on the Plan. One Councillor stated he wanted the budget to reflect what is outlined in the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Paul thanked the Working Group for pulling together today's agenda. Working Group members are Sam, Marion, Colin, Cheryl, Wanda, Grace and Debbie Myers. Today's meeting is a longer session and is expected to be very interactive.</p> <p>Round-the-table introductions were made.</p>	
2	<p>Pathway to Information Presentations:</p> <p>Jennifer Faulkner – HWDSB</p>	<p>Sam introduced the first speaker of the afternoon: Jennifer Faulkner from the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB). He indicated that the Working Group has been discussing how more conversation is needed in regard to the Strategic Framework as it represents a kind of cusp of change on how we view Hamilton as a learning society; changing perspectives to producers of products to presenters of information products. This will be an interesting but also a challenging meeting as we are moving into uncharted territory. We have completed this on a small scale to date, however, we need to look at how to scale things up. This is our first real opportunity to dive into this area.</p> <p>Sam stated that part of the ongoing discussions has been on how to provide parents with a pathway to information. Best Start is interested in finding a range of different ways to raise the level and sophistication of healthy child development beyond just the dissemination of information.</p>	

		<p>We are also interested in widening the scope beyond parents to families and professionals in the community that support healthy child development. He indicated that dissemination of information is important but somewhat limiting in terms of the effect it has on raising the level of understanding in a community. We need to ask ourselves what happens with the information, engage with the materials and turn our attention to the issues of learning. We need to think about what we know about adult learning and act on those principles in terms of knowledge construction, styles of learners, different types of forums, etc.</p> <p>Sam indicated that Jennifer Faulkner is the Manager of Staff Development, Human Resources Department at HWDSB and previously taught at the post-secondary level. She has expertise in adult learning and will be providing information on the theory of adult learning.</p> <p>Jennifer thanked us for inviting her to present on adult learning. She is passionate about the topic and enjoys the opportunity of meeting community partners. In preparation for this meeting, she reflected on how to make this presentation meaningful as adults want to know why they are learning. As practitioners, there are various ways to develop your learning from reading articles, collaborating with others, participating in meetings, attending workshops, etc. It is important to consider how we are each developing ourselves as professionals so we can best support the children/families in our community. One of our goals is to increase the knowledge of parents by sharing what we have learned. There are alternate ways of delivering the information beyond disseminating information. Jennifer hopes her presentation will provide us with a deeper understanding of adult learning (<i>please refer to the presentation slides for additional information</i>).</p> <p>Jennifer outlined the outcomes for the session and indicated the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Our background, experience, cultural values and beliefs all have an affect on adult learning.</li> <li>▪ Some adult learners prefer the learning to be self-directed</li> </ul>	
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		<p>rather than in a more formal or traditional way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The model of learning has changed from the teacher being viewed as the expert to one where the teacher is more a facilitator with the students completing more team work and projects. The teacher’s role is about guiding and facilitating the learning.</li> </ul> <p>In terms of the benefits of learning, Jennifer shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Building capacity and providing the tools, resources and skills so they can take the learning and share it with others. It is about building the capacity of those we are supporting so they can use the information and knowledge in a practical way.</li> <li>▪ Building capacity leads to increased retention of information. Some people need to apply what they have learned or talk to someone about it while others may benefit more from reading and then applying what they’ve learned.</li> <li>▪ When you increase retention and understand how to apply it, then you are more readily able to apply what you’ve learned as you begin to internalize the learning. This applies to us as professionals and also in supporting others in their learning both adults and children.</li> <li>▪ Change is constant and our experiences play an important role in the learning.</li> </ul> <p>Jennifer outlined the basic adult learning principles. One of the primary principles is to ensure the information is of value to the receiver. We need to understand how they best learn and to build their capacity.</p> <p>Laura shared the example that individuals learn best when they are familiar with the topic area. A parent as an adult learner takes their learning experience and applies it to their child.</p> <p>Jennifer concluded by sharing three things to remember as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build capacity to increase value – this depends on our ability to</li> </ol>	<p>Jennifer will share information with us via e-mail on Adult Learning</p>
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	<p>Karen Davis – Mohawk College</p>	<p>affect change.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Emphasis should be on the learner needs and not about delivering the content. It should be on what the learner needs and wants to know, not on what we feel is important for them to know.</li> <li>3. We need to focus on the process and how the person learns best, realizing there are different approaches and styles of learning.</li> </ol> <p>Paul thanked Jennifer for sharing her expertise in this area. He indicated that sometimes, due to our large group size, it is challenging to make the meeting meaningful for the members. Paul presented a small token of appreciation to Jennifer for enlightening us on this topic today.</p> <p>Wanda introduced Karen Davis, Professor of Early Childhood Education at Mohawk College. Karen is also the Co-ordinator of the Apprenticeship Program and Academic Program Co-ordinator. Today, Karen is presenting on Intergenerational Differences as the topic applies to adult learning.</p> <p>Karen indicated that the information from her presentation is based on research from the University of Waterloo. The student of today has a different learning style and approach than the generations of the past.</p> <p>Karen outlined the four generations: Veterans (1922-1943), Baby Boomers (1944-1960), Generation Xers (1961 to 1980), Nexters/Ys (1981 to 2000). She indicated that every generation has its challenges, struggles and mark of success. It is important for us, as professionals, to understand where every generation is coming from.</p> <p>Karen stated that within the next 10 years, 1 in 5 workers will be eligible to retire. From a recruitment standpoint, soon there will be more retirees than individuals entering the workforce. In regard to retention, job tenure is decreasing as people are more often voluntarily leaving their positions.</p>	<p>Styles/Learning Cycles by David Cole.</p>
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		<p>In terms of workforce representation, 40% of our current population are Baby Boomers and 33% are Generation Xers.</p> <p>Karen outlined the strengths of each generation as follows:</p> <p><u>Veterans</u> (1922-1943):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Are a silent generation who don't want to rock the boat</li><li>▪ Tend to pay with cash</li><li>▪ Have respect for authority</li><li>▪ May have trouble with technology</li><li>▪ Follow directions</li><li>▪ Are unlikely to be absent</li></ul> <p>Veterans have vast knowledge, experience and accountability.</p> <p><u>Baby Boomers</u> (1944-1960):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Are workaholics who want both personal and professional fulfillment</li><li>▪ They are focused on material goods and want the best</li><li>▪ They are change-makers</li><li>▪ The phrase, "I'm okay, you're okay" applies to them.</li></ul> <p>Baby Boomers are very positive and feel that everything is possible. They have a vast knowledge and skill set and are flexible to learn new things. They accept stress and live with it and are team oriented.</p> <p><u>Generation X</u> (1961 to 1980):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Known as the 'Me' generation and also the 'unwanted' generation</li><li>▪ Were the latch-key kids raised by Baby Boomers, divorced parents or blended families</li><li>▪ Entered the workforce during the recession and saw workaholic parents downsized so they tend to be more cynical about</li></ul>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ employer loyalty</li> <li>▪ Are technology literate</li> <li>▪ Are socially and globally aware and want more of a work/life/family balance</li> </ul> <p>Generation Xers are good at seeing the big picture, are self-sufficient and require little guidance. They are also excellent at multi-tasking, very responsible and have high rates of post-secondary education.</p> <p><u>Generation Y (1981 to 2000):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are the ‘Me’ generation as they were raised by doting parents</li> <li>▪ Technology driven</li> <li>▪ Want it and they want it now!</li> <li>▪ Traditional gender roles don’t exist</li> <li>▪ May require more supervision and attention</li> <li>▪ Are very media savvy</li> <li>▪ Identify more with social circles than learning institutions</li> </ul> <p>Generation Ys are loyal students as long as they are interested in what they are learning. They adapt well to technology, are excellent at multi-tasking and tend to have an overscheduled lifestyle.</p> <p>There are certain aspects common to all generations, they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Having a work/life balance</li> <li>▪ Involved in interesting work</li> <li>▪ A good salary with benefits</li> <li>▪ Flexible hours of work.</li> </ul> <p>Following the presentation, there was some discussion and the highlights are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is important to respect people’s comfort level</li> <li>▪ If we are trying to communicate a message and engage people, we need to keep in mind where people are coming from, what</li> </ul>	
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	<p>Kathleen Dekker – Hanen Program</p>	<p>they value and how they learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interesting to hear how each generation had certain tensions they needed to resolve as there have been different wars/conflicts over the generations</li> <li>▪ Technology is actually distancing us instead of developing connections; there are some interesting contradictions</li> <li>▪ In Hamilton, we have a very diverse community and it would be interesting to know whether the manner in which the generations has been presented is common across cultures or if there are differences and what they are, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Paul thanked Karen for sharing her knowledge in this area. It gives us an understanding of who we are working with re: young parents from Generation Y, older parents and grandparents who are the primary caregiver from Baby Boomers or Generation X. It also makes us realize that we need to consider this from other lens such as the Aboriginal population, other cultures, etc.</p> <p>Wanda introduced Kathleen Dekker who is a guest to the Network. Kathleen is a Speech-Language Pathologist with McMaster Children’s Hospital and is part of the Early Words system of care. Kathleen will be presenting on the Hanen Parent Education Program which is well supported and respected in Hamilton and many countries around the world.</p> <p>Kathleen mentioned that she found it interesting to listen to Jennifer’s presentation on adult learning principles. In her presentation, she will outline how these principles are applied in a practical sense with parents of young children and professionals. She also felt It was interesting to hear Karen speak reminding us that we need to be mindful of who could be accessing our services and supports (<i>please refer to the presentation notes for additional information</i>).</p> <p>Kathleen indicated that The Hanen Centre© is a non-profit organization which began in 1975. Programs reflect a family-centred orientation and use a naturalistic approach to intervention where the parent/caregiver is</p>	
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	<p>viewed as the primary change agent. A collaborative working relationship between the parent/caregiver and professional is used.</p> <p>One of the key features is that the groups are offered to parents/educators. They have found that parents love to come together with other parents to support one another and share both their challenges and successes.</p> <p>Kathleen outlined the programs offered in Hamilton and indicated that our community has been seen as a leader. In Hamilton, we have piloted new Hanen Programs. Hanen Programs are evidence-based and based on adult education principles. The Program has developed a teaching/learning cycle that is embedded in the parent training sessions; a number of the sessions are practice sessions where the parent practices the strategies he/she has been learning and the facilitator acts as a coach.</p> <p>The Hanen Program<sup>©</sup> uses a 4 P teaching-learning model, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gives a reason for the topic or strategy</li> <li>▪ Gives information regarding the topic/strategy and uses a variety of strategies such as large/small group discussions, video analysis, role-playing, etc. so they are addressing different learning styles of participants</li> <li>▪ Provides the opportunity to see an ideal model and practice the strategies</li> <li>▪ There is a “take something away” that is individualized for the parent/caregiver and child.</li> </ul> <p>Paul thanked Kathleen for her presentation. He indicated that in order for us to do things well, we need the time and energy and a construct to make it work. The Hanen Program<sup>©</sup> is a powerful way of engaging people and achieving results. We are proud of our involvement with the Hanen Programs here in Hamilton. He indicated our appreciation that Kathleen shared the story and it is nice to see that there are passionate people behind the Program.</p>	<p>Please let Kathleen know if you are interested in receiving any of the research summaries that are available.</p>
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	<p>Lois Saunders – ASCY</p>	<p>Wanda introduced Lois Saunders, Project Co-ordinator and representing the Professional Education (PE) Team from ASCY.</p> <p>Lois stated that she is a storyteller so she is going to use this format during her presentation. Lois indicated that her journey began with ASCY approximately 11 years ago when she was hired to co-ordinate the Healthy Child Care Environment Project (HCCEP) and worked alongside the Community Collaboration and Capacity-Building Committee (CCCBC).</p> <p>She indicated that at that time, they were able to ‘talk the talk’. They had good ideas and sound principles and people in the ECE community were engaged in networking and mentoring, etc. Now, they are learning to ‘walk the walk’. Once they began using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) to support high-quality physical environments, they began to look for a way to address the interactional piece between adult/child, adult/adult, etc. They asked a few individuals to come and meet with the PE team to guide staff along this road. Although they didn’t get the answers they were seeking, they were left with more questions. For example, when they asked Jean ‘how do we teach interaction?’, she responded by saying, ‘so the real question is how do we teach kindness?’ Karyn Callaghan suggested that if we want to see different results, we need to ask ourselves the question, ‘what can we do differently?’ Bobbi-Jo Gramigna, a community member, indicated these are good questions which now provide us with the place to begin and learn. The CCCBC wanted to know ‘how will we know that it’s making a positive difference, how will we measure the change?’ So, they went to investigate to see if they could find a tool to address it, which can be dangerous territory. In the end, the PE team, through the Raising the Bar (RTB) Initiative, began turning its attention to how to make professional education more meaningful and to engage people in reflecting on what would be meaningful for them.</p> <p>Lois related some of the key learnings that have transpired through</p>	
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		<p>this process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It's important to begin by building relationships with and among learners.</li> <li>▪ We need to be comfortable with unanswered questions. Learning comes from not knowing and going away with questions to explore.</li> <li>▪ Learning happens in context – it is critically important to understand what the system they work within is like ... the challenges, barriers, strengths, opportunities, etc.</li> <li>▪ Learning is socially-created – everyone has a story and we can all learn from the stories of others.</li> </ul> <p>These key learnings have informed the PE team at ASCY. She noted that even the people who conduct the workshops for other adults are also learning. She outlined some of ASCY's strategies, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In the Save the Day for Play (SDP) training, mentoring and coaching others are the prime methods used in conjunction with the Ontario Early Learning Framework (OELF).</li> <li>▪ Planned workshops engage people around a topic and learning continues in network groups where participants share stories and engage in dialogue.</li> <li>▪ Staff were challenged to rethink having 'make &amp; take' workshops as it is counter to our philosophy.</li> <li>▪ We have been conducting collaborative bus tours so participants can view high-quality ELCC programs and this sparks ideas, questions, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Lois indicated that one of the challenges is that ASCY members have become accustomed to and expect other things, i.e.: instructive delivery workshop method. A parallel can be drawn with the ECE in the classroom where parents have certain expectations which may not be satisfied with a constructivist approach.</p> <p>She stated that the constructivist approach is based on implementing</p>	
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		<p>mentoring schemes by Klasen and Clutterbuck which emphasizes that learning is a two-way process. The learner interprets, integrates and assimilates information with prior learning and experience.</p> <p>Lois outlined the planning model used by the ASCY PE team. She outlined a practical example whereby she contacted Paul Fralick from Turkey Rhubarb to ask him to help with a music workshop. Paul stated, 'I won't do it for you, I will do it with you.' She met with Paul and invited others who had expertise/gifts to share in this area. They have learned that ASCY's role is to coordinate, coach, prepare and facilitate.</p> <p>Lois identified what was learned through this process, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The importance of shared leadership</li><li>▪ They needed to let go of their plan and role at ASCY and look at it differently and allow for the input of others.</li><li>▪ Learning about the process; about orchestrating, not directing.</li></ul> <p>The City of Hamilton has measured past initiatives under ASCY's leadership (HCCEP in 2004, RTB in 2010). In a recent evaluation of Save the Day for Play by the O'Halloran Group, the importance of mentoring and coaching was highlighted. It also outlined that other communities often look to Hamilton for support and networking opportunities.</p> <p>Lois concluded by saying that they are continuing to take baby steps. Not everyone is on the same continuum, however, we are continuing to build capacity and take risks.</p> <p>Paul thanked Lois and indicated that entering into conversation with others goes along with the process. It is not about an expert saying we have to change as we would then miss opportunities to learn. Lois' presentation emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning. ASCY's experience is a great learning resource for us.</p>	
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	<p>Debbie Myers – Baby Network</p> <p>Plenary Discussion</p>	<p>Due to time constraints, Debbie feels it would be best if her information was provided to the Working Group so we will have a few minutes to describe what we have heard and learned through the process of today’s session.</p> <p>Some thoughts that were shared are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Important to open up the dialogue and hear from the people who are directly involved in this type of learning.</li> <li>▪ The importance of relationship as developing and nurturing the relationship(s) produces the best results – solid, safe and trusting relationships enable the learning to begin.</li> <li>▪ Having respect for prior knowledge and experiences.</li> <li>▪ There is learning on both sides; we can learn from others and they (families) can learn from us.</li> <li>▪ Definition of expertise is a continual reinvestment in problem-finding/solving. Expertise is a process for learning.</li> <li>▪ We need to build spaces that are conducive to this type of dialogue/storytelling</li> <li>▪ Amount of expertise we have in our community. Some of us don’t know, what we don’t know has been changed by this process. Learnings we can have from observing.</li> <li>▪ Consider how we can make things better for children and families. We only know what we know. Be willing to introduce something new and rethink it if necessary.</li> <li>▪ We are on a learning journey ourselves and the importance of making changes as we learn.</li> <li>▪ Important to take the principles we have learned today and to apply them to our work; to ask others for their guidance and help along the way.</li> </ul> <p>Paul asked what is worrying people about this topic as it’s not all straight forward.</p> <p>Comments included:</p>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We have to be open to a level playing field and not hang our hat on the title or position we have in the community.</li> <li>▪ Scope and scale is a concern.</li> <li>▪ Very ambitious what we likely want to do; it's exciting but ambitious.</li> <li>▪ Translation – how do we go from what we know to what we do? We need to help others see the gifts that each brings (i.e.: ECE and teacher). We need to make the space safe to ensure open, honest dialogue.</li> </ul> <p>Paul asked whether this is a path we wish to continue to head down. Everyone was in agreement that we should continue. The Working Group confirmed their commitment to the process.</p> <p>Paul reminded Network members that the next meeting has been moved up a week to Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup> due to the Victoria holiday weekend. The meeting will begin at 12:30 p.m. and, once again, be a 3-hour meeting. Don Jaffray and his team will be leading the session to help us think about basic needs. It will be a wonderful learning opportunity. Thank you to Don for his leadership.</p> <p>Sam thanked the Working Group that led the process for today's session and the presenters for engaging us in this topic area.</p>	<p>Janis and Ruth volunteered to join the Working Group. Please let Grace know if you are interested in participating as a member of the Working Group.</p>
4	Adjourn	<p>Next Meeting is scheduled for:</p> <p><b>Friday, May 11th, 2012</b>  <b>12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.</b>  <b>The Waterfront Centre</b> (555 Bay St. N.; formerly the Chamber of Commerce)</p> <p>Lunch will be provided.</p>	