



**Best Start Network
Summary Notes
Friday, June 20, 2014
1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
The Waterfront Centre**

- Present:** Debbie Myers, Karen Davis, Grace Mater, Karen Calligan, Dorothy Barr-Elliott Brenda Bax, Judith Bishop, Bonnie Buchanan, Shawn Chisholm, Rachelle DiCrosta, Ruth Doherty, Marni Flaherty, Paula Forbes, Ivana Fortino, Matt Goodman, Don Jaffray, Pauline Kajiura, Colin McMullan, Rachelle Moore, Dina Phillips, Lorraine Robinson, Val Sadler, Wanda St. Francois, Sgt. Joanne Savoie, Sharon Stephanian, Marion Trent-Kratz, Cheryl Velenosi, Rose Wiegel
- Guest:** Dr. John Cairney, Chris Borst, Kim Burns, Evette Sauriol
- Regrets:** Karyn Callaghan, Jean Clinton, Debbie Crickmore, Andrew Debicki, Jodi Guilmette, Paul Johnson, Lisa Kiriakopoulos, Laura Lukasik, Laura Martindale, Ruth Wells

	Agenda Item	Discussion/Decision	Action
1	Welcome/Introductions/ Review of Meeting Notes/Declaration of Conflict of Interest	<p>Debbie welcomed everyone to the meeting</p> <p>There were no declarations of conflicts of interest noted.</p> <p>If there are any changes needed to the May meeting minutes, please bring this to the attention of Joyce.</p>	
2	INCH Lab	<p>Dr. John Cairney, Director of the INCH Lab, McMaster University, presented information on the INCH Lab. He presented on PANS – Psychometric Assessment of the Nipissing District Developmental Screens (NDDS) Study. The purpose of the NDDS Screen is to identify children with delays. The Study was conducted to determine the reliability of the NDDS. To test the reliability, they had parents complete the Screen one day and then complete it again 2 days later. The final sample was 812 families over all age groupings.</p> <p>The recommendation that came forth from the study was that the NDDS cannot be used as a sole screening tool. The NDDS is a good facilitation and resource tool for parents. The tool works better when facilitated as it provides a deeper response. A qualitative sub-study was conducted randomly with 55 families to determine what they liked, didn't like, interpretation of the questions, etc. Parents did not like the 'yes' and 'no' responses as they felt they had to make a definitive decision that may not be accurate. Additional responses have been included in the NDDS of 'sometimes, not sure, haven't tried'.</p>	For additional information, please refer to the attached Power Point presentation.

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		<p>John indicated limitations are always present when it is a parent evaluative tool.</p> <p>A total of 774 families of the 812 will be recontacted. Development is not a linear process and cannot be assessed in one instance. The retesting will see if there is an improvement from the original assessment/screen. To date, they have retested approximately 350 families and the remaining retests will be completed in the next 6 to 8 months.</p> <p>Dr. Cairney shared information on CATCH – Co-ordination and Activity Tracking in Children. This study is looking at children who have DCD – developmental co-ordination disorder which is seldom recognized or diagnosed. Children with DCD often appear clumsy and are not as physically agile. They are at risk of obesity, poor fitness, metabolic syndrome and are socially ostracized and bullied by others. They received a large grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). This is the first and largest study of its kind in the world.</p> <p>Parents interested in participating in the study complete a screen over the phone which focuses on assessing the child’s key motor development. There are a number of children who have motor concerns. If they are not eligible for the study, they are referred elsewhere. If they qualify, they are invited into the INCH Lab and asked if they wish to participate in the full study and go through the assessment process. It is a longitudinal study and the 300 children cohort are tested every year. Parents are asked to commit to a long term relationship with the Lab as they follow the children for 5 years. For more information on the INCH Lab, please visit www.inchlab.ca</p> <p>John indicated that the INCH Lab is presently located at the Innovation Centre, however, they will be moving downtown to the new McMaster Family Health Building. It will be a larger facility. They are rethinking screening and would like to have an Early Years Skilled-based Resource Program in Hamilton similar to a program in New Zealand. John concluded by saying that physical movement is a gentle way of engaging with parents; it is a way to build a relationship and rapport with parents.</p> <p>Debbie thanked John for taking the time to share information on McMaster’s INCH Lab and current studies.</p>	
3	Read to Your Baby (RTYB)	<p>Evette Sauriol and Kim Burns, Early Literacy Specialists, presented on the Read to Your Baby project.</p> <p>Evette indicated there has been progress with the project this year. The project is under the</p>	

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		<p>guidance of Early Literacy Hamilton which is a sub-committee of the BSN. Representation on the RTYB Committee is broad and includes 2 school boards, Early Words, Hamilton Public Library, child care, OEYCs, Parent & Family Literacy Centres, public health, among others. The program is part of the 18-month well-baby visits. The emphasis of the project is to get books into the hands of families. Parents are given a prescription to encourage them to read to their child daily as well as an invitation to obtain a library card for their child. According to Leah Morris, Executive Director of Adult Basic Education Association (ABEA), 40% of people in Hamilton function at a low rate of literacy. Low literacy is a risk for poor health and people who have low literacy have more difficulty finding and maintaining employment without support.</p> <p>There is evidence through the Canadian Pediatric Society that suggests pediatricians and family physicians who take a stronger role can have a positive influence on literacy health in a community. Parents tend to listen more to physicians than to teachers and educators. The 18-month visit may be the last time the child sees his/her physician until they enter school.</p> <p>Evette outlined the history of the project which began as a pilot in the spring of 2010. Eight physicians who had children as patients with higher vulnerability identified from the Early Development Instrument (EDI) distributed 500 books over 1 year to families. The initial book distribution was made possible through funding from Telling Tales. An evaluation of the pilot was conducted by the Best Start Early Years Research Team. The pilot showed that close to 50% of parents participating said receiving the book from the physician made a positive difference. A total of 84% of the respondents indicated they were starting to read with their child since receiving the book. Initially, only one book title was available to parents, “Sing a Song of Mother Goose”. One of the recommendations made by parents was to have a broader selection of books available. There are now 5 books to choose from as the project moves into the next distribution phase whereby 2500 books will be distributed at the 18-month visit. This represents half the annual birth cohort in Hamilton.</p> <p>The project is expanding to 150 physicians who are part of the Hamilton Family Health Team. Through contributions from the Hamilton Community Foundation and Telling Tales, they were able to purchase more books and offer co-ordination of the program to provide information sessions to explain the program and importance of literacy to physicians. The Francophone Community Health Centre was involved in the pilot and with the new funding, the other 3 community health centres are also involved (aboriginal, north end and urban core). Jean Clinton has recommended that we also include the Academic clinics since there is a high</p>	

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		<p>percentage of interns which will help to build awareness of the next generation of physicians.</p> <p>They hope to obtain sustainable corporate funding for the project so they will be able to address the full 5,000 birth cohort annually.</p>	
4	Full Day Kindergarten Evaluation	<p>Marion thanked the Network for providing the opportunity to share some of the work that the Early Years Research Team (EYRT) is involved with and also extended a thank you to the Working Group members which includes the school boards, Offord Centre and City of Hamilton. Hamilton was not included in the provincial evaluation, so the EYRT decided to develop an evaluation of full-day kindergarten in Hamilton.</p> <p>Chris provided an overview of the methodology and outlined several notable highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ there was a significant worsening of children’s vulnerability among the FDK sample in the area of emotional maturity ▪ there were significant improvements in the domains of language and cognitive and communication and general knowledge <p>When the data was broken down further by sub-domains, substantial improvements were noted in gross and fine motor skills, basic literacy, advanced literacy and basic numeracy as well as prosocial and helping behaviour. There was a worsening around anxiety and fearful behaviour and aggressive behaviour which could be a result of the children being overtired, overstimulated, etc.</p> <p>Chris stated a full EDI is scheduled for February of 2015. The Provincial EDI Working Group will be conducting its first ever province-wide implementation of the EDI. Chris will be participating as a member of the Provincial Working Group. He is hoping there will be discussions locally regarding the implementation of the province-wide EDI.</p> <p>There is a question as to who will be responding to the study in the future. There were no significant differences from teachers with this sample group and the ECE although when evaluating the FDK program, there seems to be evidence of an ‘expectation effect’ for behaviours children are demonstrating. The data shows that ECEs are slightly more generous in their evaluation in this area while teachers are more generous than ECEs in relation to the ‘experience effect’.</p> <p>In response to questions or comments, the following points were made:</p>	Please refer to the attached Power Point presentation for additional information.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the parent survey was conducted in March/April ▪ there is a sense among Public School Board trustees that in FDK class sizes of 30, children may be experiencing greater anxiety and aggression. The HWDSB would like to reduce FDK class sizes. <p>Marion indicated it would be interesting to further investigate the effects of class size on children. This sample was too small to allow for deeper analysis of the data, however, they may be able to give this possible correlation a closer look in 2015.</p> <p>Chris stated there could have been other influences as in 2012/'13 schools were going through a variety of stresses.</p> <p>Debbie thanked Marion and Chris for sharing the data on this study.</p>	
5	Hamilton Best Start Website Demo	<p>Rachelle provided an overview of the new Hamilton Best Start website which can be viewed at www.hamiltonbeststart.ca</p> <p>She outlined the purpose of redesigning the website, the process which was undertaken and highlighted the features on the site geared to parents and professionals. The intent was to develop a user-friendly site that highlights programs and services and includes a searchable library of links to content experts. Information available is current, up to date and relevant for parents. The site is AODA compliant and has different type sizes and can be converted to 27 different languages. There is an upcoming events calendar on the site. The Pathways to Learning Working Group, the advisory body for the website will decide if we will have community events posted on the calendar. It is a responsive website that can be accessed through a variety of devices such as PCs, smartphones and tablets.</p>	Please see the attached Power Point presentation for additional information.
6	Good News Stories	<p>Debbie advised that the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres have moved their offices to the St. Helen Centre at McQuesten and now staff see themselves in the broader context of the community whereby child care is not the only way they support families. There is a food bank, senior programs, clothing exchange, space for Ontario Works staff and a community meeting place being offered. They have met with Public Health and Recreation and will be putting in an exercise track.</p> <p>Dorothy indicated that Public Health services have moved to consolidated offices downtown. Previously, there were offices in Dundas, Hamilton Mountain and Stoney Creek. One of the changes is that those who are community-based don't have a desk of their own in the new office configuration downtown but are sharing space.</p>	

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		<p>Matt indicated that for the past 10 years, the Hamilton Community Foundation has focused their discretionary grants on poverty. Likely, education in a broad sense will be the next discretionary priority. He will be coming to ask questions and request input of this group, among others. Target dates have been set for the next round of grant opportunities. The Community Fund is scheduled for September. Matt will forward information on this grant fund to the Network. They are looking for innovative-based projects that will focus on children who are Grade 3 and older.</p> <p>Grace thanked everyone for their participation this past season and provided a Best Start mug as a token of appreciation. She wished everyone a safe and happy summer.</p>	
6	Adjourn	<p style="text-align: center;">Please note: Next Meeting is scheduled for: Friday, September 19, 2014 The Waterfront Centre 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Waterfront Centre, 555 Bay St. N., Hamilton</p>	