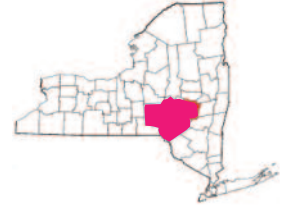




Summaries of New Infancy Leadership Circles

DOCS Infancy Leadership Circle



Overview

Infant-Toddler Coordinators for the Capitol District suggested that infant-toddler professionals in four counties above Albany that are largely rural would appreciate a chance to come together. Within one month, with the help of Catholic Charities in Oneonta, a mailing list was assembled and 27 people came to the first meeting.

Community Strengths

Circle participants praised the quality of program staff, the strong interest from universities with Early Childhood Programs, the many existing programs and agencies, and increasing cross-system referrals and collaboration, especially with the rise in Autism diagnoses. They admired the families struggling to be independent and do the best for their children.

Community Issues

Transportation over long distances between program visits, funding cuts for programs and training, lack of service continuity and cooperation between counties, and shortages of providers and space are some of the key issues facing this group. Participants would like to give more support to parents as their children's first teachers, promote breast feeding, and increase public awareness and knowledge of the importance of the first three years.

DOCS Action Plan

--One meeting held in June 2011

Focus on issues still general but some overall goals may include updating existing resource directories and bringing them together across counties; overcoming isolation of providers and families, and access to online services.

--Fall meeting set for September 19, 2011

“DOCS” represents Delaware, Otsego, Chenango, and Schoharie counties. They sit in the heartland of New York State at the northern fringes of the Catskill Mountains and are made up of small towns (e.g., Cooperstown, home of the National Baseball Hall of Fame) and rural areas.

General Statistics:

Population: 193,485 (all 4 counties)
 Births per year: 1,860 (all 4 counties)[^]
 Median Household Income: \$43,663 (↓)

Early Childhood Statistics:

Infant Mortality Rate: 5.2/1,000 live births (↓)
 Infants in WIC Breastfed @6 mo: 21% (↓)
 Elevated Lead in Young Children: 1.45% (↑)

[^]Births per year is a 3-year average

*Arrows indicate lower or higher than New York State indicator.

Erie County Infancy Leadership Circle



Overview

The Infancy Leadership Circle/Erie was established with input from two local leaders and the Executive Director of the Child Care Resource Network in Buffalo. This Circle discussed the incredible importance of the 0-3 years and the need to move from being a voice to a “battle cry” for babies through the use of community education strategies.

Community Strengths

The Infancy Leadership Circle/Erie identified a comprehensive list of programs and resources supporting infants/toddlers and their families from pregnancy onward. Participants stated that the Office of Children and Family Services, Health Department regulations, and Federal regulations offer positive guidance and standards for their work as they strive to provide quality services.

Community Issues

Erie County concerns include childhood obesity, including breast feeding issues, as well as limited social-emotional support for the youngest children. Providers need support to more effectively know about reliable resources, and to know when to link and to be more proactive instead of reactive to current situations. A gap between what many programs say about the importance of parent involvement and their actual actions was noted.

Erie County Action Plan

Goal: Create ILC/Erie web site

--Activities: Add documents, resources, membership information

Goal: Promote importance of the Early Years

--Activities: Public letter writing, opinion editorials, marketing activities

Erie is a county in Western New York made up of one large city, Buffalo, and many small towns and rural areas. Erie is not as ethnically diverse as other areas of the state. However, Buffalo does have concentrated areas of immigrant neighborhoods that are not represented in overall county statistics.

General Statistics:

Population: 919,040
 Births per year: 9,889[^]
 Mean Household Income: \$46,739 (↓)*

Early Childhood Statistics:

Infant Mortality Rate: 8.1/1,000 live births (↑)
 Infants in WIC Breastfed @6 mo: 12% (↓)
 Elevated Lead in Children <6yo: 2.3% (↑)

[^] Births per year is a 3-year average

*Arrows indicate lower or higher than New York State indicator