

INTRODUCTIONS

Members shared Hopes for New Year

** Connecting with each other and families in person again, post-COVID was a top theme*

Welcome to new members:

Kayla Calabro, SLP & Parent; Duresmeen Birta and Kathleen Clark of Bridges Domestic Violence; Lisa Emerson, Milford Welfare; Karen Abbot, CC Aware NH

Minutes/Recording started >>

SAU 40 SCHOOL READINESS

Leslie Brigagliano, Melissa McDonald of SAU

From Leslie Brigagliano:

It truly does take a village... I'm thankful for our work together as a Collaborative — this has been a highlight of my year and it makes me proud to be a part of Milford and this group. The fact that we already have a central number, FB and website for our families! (Progress!)

Assessments/Kindergarten Screening overview, including Dial4

Typically we start in the summer before they start kindergarten and measure progress throughout the school year. Assessment scores include motor, language, self-help, and social emotional... The Dial 4 assessment can be used from 2.6 - 5.11 months so it helps us monitor individual child progress in each area with families. This is the tool that the SAU's ChildFind uses as well as our Pre-K. The screenings help us determine which young children may potentially benefit from additional EC services and/or additional screenings. Individual results and progress for enrolled pre-K & K students help teachers (& families) focus on supporting each child's development in the areas needed most, and where needed, provide effective interventions and potential special education referrals.

This past year, 59% of our incoming Kindergarteners indicated a potential delay in one or more areas of development.

We also benchmark our students in reading readiness and progress using Acadience (Dibbels). This data along with other data points allow us to support their language and reading development with the supports needed — including specific interventions, appropriate instructional groupings and reading materials and small group instruction when needed, as well as child-study team.

This data also allows us to determine who qualifies for Title I. We know that our Milford students benefit from the Wadleigh library and the Milford Parks and Recreation services. It would also be great to connect with some primary care doctors since they are most likely the first ones to see if there is a potential delay.

Melissa and I (Leslie) work very closely together especially when it comes to SST. Leadership meets twice a week.. Jacques holds a K forum twice a year for parents where they can ask questions and meet the team of principal, curriculum director, Title I coordinator, school counselors, social workers and one or two grade level teachers. This gives parents an opportunity to ask questions. This year due to our Covid regulations, while the students were getting their DIAL 4 assessments, we met with the parents outside and I have to say that the weather cooperated so we could socially distance have some time to answer their questions

and describe the system and staff in place. It also included information about our social emotional curriculum (and our tier 1 support centers), the work of our counselors and social workers, the free and reduced lunch program... and we also hand out a kindergarten readiness brochure.

Leslie shared the trends since 2013 of the Acadience test results. This fall's first grader test results definitely indicated a drop from last year's results. So you can really see the impact of what Covid has done. Mid-year assessments are coming up so it will be interesting to see the compared results. For Kindergarten, the drop was not present so that was a positive.

Melissa and I are working closely with Brittany Curtis Dr. Brittany Curtis, one of our occupational therapist that works with the preschool program, and with her lead, the school district was granted a " " grant. I helped write the grant and Joelle Martin also signed agreement with us so it is 99% sure we will be awarded this \$50,000 grant that will help us enhance our social emotional supports for our children and families. (NH Department of Ed student wellness services & DHHS bureau drug and alcohol services and the National Guard). The grant programming will include trainings from Lyn Lyons (it's training for both families and educators) around protective factors and universal strategies for prevention. IT will also incorporate Choose Love.

Kindergarten Registration will be held on March 18th via Zoom. We are hoping to create a video tour of Jacques but also thought it would be a good idea for some of the Collaborative members and their early childhood supports and services be featured. For example, Miss Trina doing a little video of their resources, etc.

Melissa reported that the Pre-K will be doing something similar but on a smaller scale. They are hopeful that in the fall there won't be the same COVID restrictions and that they'll be able to open up more seats within each class.

Discussion about: how, ideally if Collaborative members are all working together and improve our bridging of parents and young children to our early childhood supports and resources, then the school readiness numbers will will improve!

Melissa reported a tentative date of Wednesday, March 24 for the district's ChildFind. She will be in touch with more details. It would be helpful if Collaborative partners could help advertise the event on social media. Melissa and Joelle will explore potential resources to share with the parents as well. There was also discussion about a potential outdoor young children/families event later this spring that would allow for screening and provide EC information and fun activities for our young children/families.

REVIEW OF COLLABORATIVE's WORK To-DATE & For NEXT FEW MONTHS...

"To ensure Milford's youngest children birth to five and their families are connecting to the various early childhood supports and services we offer so that our kids are given strong early childhood foundations so they can thrive."

...and as we discussed early, arrive at either pre-K or kindergarten more ready to learn, and ready to reach their full potential.

Three major objectives for this first year of our work together>>

- 1) As early childhood providers and stakeholders, to develop a better understanding of the early childhood supports/services/resources available to our young children (b-5) and their families.

To build our relationships so that we can refer families to each other and serve as Early Childhood Ambassadors

2) To develop a better understanding of our parents needs by hearing directly from them — and discover the best ways to connect and engage with them.

3) To do a formal needs assessment to inform our objectives above and give us a clearer picture of the gaps and barriers to access... and based on the needs assessment results and our work together, define together priority actions and potential solutions

So reviewing these objectives >> *Joelle Martin overview:*

1) Increasing provider/member knowledge of EC supports avail and developing relationships

- * I am so happy with our progress especially given the virtual nature of our meetings. You guys have been connecting with each other. Its' been great to hear about increased referrals.
- * Thank you too for your member profiles and for sharing information about your services re: how to refer families
- * Update on Collaborative member virtual meeting site/web site which will include member profile info and serve as a central resource with contact info, referral info, collaborative news/meeting updates; subcommittee & Needs Assessment updates; and resources for you as members and for families. Ultimately this space will help us better serve our families w/YC

2) Better understand our parent/caregiver needs and gain a better sense of how to connect and engage with them (and maybe look at new communication tools)

- * we've been fortunate to have collaborative parent members and appreciate you guys sharing your input @each meeting
- * the results of our needs assessment work will include parent surveys and parent focus groups. This will inform our work.
- * We'll also launch a parent communication and engagement committee where parents will be able to take a closer look at the NA results and pull in other parents perspectives. This parent group will be able to provide the Collaborative with recommendations on their needs, how to better communicate and engage with them, and ultimately how to better serve them and their young children.
- * In the short term for parents the Milford Thrives Facebook page (and website) has expanded its content to provided parents with more info/background and connection to Collaborative partner resources and services. It also include fun activities and events for families with young children — including the library's offerings, Milford Rec's programs, Beaver Brook and other outdoor fun including Milford Thrives 2nd Saturday afternoon hikes for fams w/young children. Key information on healthy child development as well as parenting resources are also included.
- * Milford Thrives Welcome Baby information and our monthly target gift card raffle are also included and have helped build awareness and interest. In just a short time, we've been able to build a good following ~ 400 followers. So, if you're not already following the Milford Thrives Facebook page, follow us and please feel free to tag Milford Thrives and/or email me to alert us to what's going on. We are trying to follow members on social media and get the info out to parents but I welcome your direct communication, too.

So, parent input will help us refine our parent communication but this has helped spread the word about the various EC resources and supports for Milford's youngest children and families.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATES

PEAR Associates Mary Devlin and Alison Gray

Stakeholder Surveys – Parent/Caregiver

- *Which early childhood resources and programs have you and/or your children used?*
- *What are the barriers to accessing the early childhood programs and resources available?*
- *What types of programs or services for young children and families would you find helpful?*
- *What kind of information would you like to receive about community early childhood resources and activities?*

[No Title] Stakeholder Surveys – Parent/Caregiver

- Timelines
 - Final Draft – end of January
 - Distribute Survey – early February
 - Results compiled – late February
 - Focus Groups -- March

The NA committee will be reaching out to parents to “Test” the parent survey in the next few weeks. The Committee has also decided that the best way to distribute the surveys would be using existing Collaborative member list serve and FB ... that way the survey will come through you. We’ll make it easy by drafting a kind of a cover letter/email introduction with the reason why we're doing this and so you have the content to put with the survey link.

Please let us know you can either (contact Mary Devlin or Joelle) and I will make sure that you have all the materials and information you need to reach out to the families and Milford.

At the at the next meeting of this large group PEAR Assoc will start to present some of the discovery findings.

Quick review of Collaborative Member “Interest” Survey Results

- * no surprise = parent engagement and communication top interest
- * Other key interest areas = home visiting; trauma response to practice/ACEs and the new Child-Parent Psychotherapy (mental health support for young children and families); and developmental screening and early supports and services
 - * Including what our healthcare providers are doing/ our pediatricians

Thanks for your input >> this feedback not only validates what we're focused on/working on but it will also help inform future agenda items and discussion topics

Revisit Parent Discussion re: REFERRALS

- * connection and relationship with parents is key
- * and their trust
- * Framing conversations in an educational way with questions on how to *universally* support development — can help get away from “what’s wrong” and stigmatized approach
- * communication disconnect between caregivers/service providers and parents >> trying to communicate that we all want the same thing for the children and the teachers
- * Parent focus groups should hone in on how to develop a universal, all-inclusive health development lens and approach. “THRIVES” lens
- * we've had some really great ideas in this group as far as how dowe develop a culture of wanting to help ALL children thrive and that none of us are perfect right ...and that we all need supports. How can we work together to make sure we're supporting every child
- * trying to shift the culture toward supporting and helping out our little guys thrive and connecting them to fun activities (everyday/ play based)
- * *Share:* I saw the other day (and it wasn't for children it was for adults) but it was just a commercial of people de-stigmatizing mental illness and saying that there is a way to treat this there's a way to get through it and this isn't a next a bad thing necessarily and they were just kind of like turning the DM narrative to this is not like an adult sentence this is the end of the world ...I just love it that's kind of the shift our culture is taking
- * If we can try to align the work that we do with our children and with getting all of the testing done early (as part of a normal healthy check up) ...help them develop an action plan for this that is so encouraging

- * try to build a culture of how to support ALL kids early and build a community and a state that supports our littlest ones and then we carry that culture down to the regional and local level I love that idea
- * Our spring fair event and ChildFind events may give us an additional opportunity to do this

Announcements/Updates

- * the Boys and Girls Club is hiring a coalition coordinator for community action for safety teens/CAST Prevention coalition. Email monica gallant mgallant@svbgc.org
- * Discussion about future Parent Cafes
- * Q about involving HC professionals! Mary Burdett as Neo-natal nurse has been a great perspective on the COLLAB. Recommendations welcome for pediatricians — even if they just participate in focus group.
- * professionals on this collaborative and the answer is we do Mary Burdett is our Nick you nurses she's been fantastic but as far as primary care in pediatricians there's so crazy busy

Our next meeting will be February 18th. We'll hear more about home visiting as well as get an update on some of the discovery from PEAR Associates.

Between now and then, please feel free to email any updates.
Joelle will let members know when the Collaborative web site is live.

Have a good month everyone — thank you!