Ready Families, Ready Children
Family Engagement Approaches that Matter

Catholic Education Summit
University of Dayton
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Family Café Presenters

- **Teresa Wendell** – Site Coordinator, Dayton Public Schools, Kiser PK-8 School Neighborhood School Center located in Old North Dayton neighborhood
- **Randy Chestnut** – Pastor and Member of the Old North Dayton community  [Hope4Dayton@gmail.com](mailto:Hope4Dayton@gmail.com)
- **April Bennett** – Parent, community member, and member of Kiser Family Cafe
- **Diane Brogan-Adams** – Director of TOTS Program, East End Community Services
- **Kathlene Somerset** – TOTS Program parent, East End Community Services
- **Rachael Varvel** – TOTS Program parent, East End Community Services
- **Sue Koverman** - Manager of Resource Development, Catholic School Office, Archdiocese of Cincinnati
- **Cindy Currell** – University of Dayton, Better Way Grant Coordinator
Introduction

- Successfully implemented approaches to family engagement in a community collaborative environment:
  - Family Café Dinner at Kiser PK-8 School
  - Family Café at Mary Queen of Peace/Westwood School Community
  - Taking Off To Success – East End Community Services and Ruskin PK-8 School
  - Family Cafes with Head Start families
  - Developing a local community based Family Engagement Collaborative
Our Values-Strengthening Families
Protective Factors Framework *

- Parental Resilience –
- Social Connections
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children
- Nurturing and Attachment

* http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/the-basics/protective-factors
Neighborhood Context - NSC

Neighborhood School Centers Model

- Bring Assets of the neighborhood to the school
- Expand the vision of education as a community process
- Dynamic and Collaborative
- School Principal, Site Coordinator, Involved partners from community
- Consistency, friendship, “not somebody’s project.”
Ingredients

- Neighborhood assets
- Parent leadership and assets
- Feedback from parents and stakeholders
- Learning from experience – what works, and what doesn’t work
- Developing relationships for partnering
- Slow and steady, commitment – it takes time
- Collaboration for sharing resources, ongoing process
Ready Families, Ready Children

- **Family engagement** = vital ingredient for helping children prepare for kindergarten in all schools in the community
- **Building on strengths** = stronger families in all schools
- **Protective factors** = recognizing strengths and assets of parents and families
- **Family Café Approaches** = rooted in supporting and building family strengths
- **Better Way Foundation** – provide financial support to strengthening families through local initiative
The Kiser Family Cafe

Ingredients that make it possible:

- Principal and School Site Coordinator have Strong working relationships
- Care about student academic and social needs
- Desire for outreach to welcome and involve families and parents
- Developing community awareness of shared opportunities – needs, talents, desire to be involved.
Role of the Faith Based Community in Family Engagement

- Outreach to the city
- Social justice / Building the Kingdom of God
- Care for the community
- Resources to share
- Motivation to be involved with schools
- Connection with family need
Kiser Family Cafe
TOTS – Taking Off to Success

Ingredients that make it possible:

- Collaborative Leadership - Parents
- Link with urban school and community based organization
- Building relationships
- Concern for family well being
- Desire for outreach to welcome and involve young families and new parents
What parents have to share
Involving young families
Developing relationships between schools and families
Dinner, information, forming social relationships
What is most meaningful to me as a parent
Belonging and working together
Sharing Parent Wisdom

- What do you want teachers, principals, others who work with families to know about family life?
- What messages from parents do teachers, principals, and others who work with family need to know?
- What are my biggest strengths?
- Why are parents and families important in the school community?
End of Year
Family Café Celebration
December 2012
University of Dayton Students as Family Café Child Care and Homework Helper Team
Westwood Family Café

- Partnership with Miami Valley Child Development Head Start, Mary Queen of Peace School, Westwood PK-8 School
- New openings, challenges, opportunities
- Link with Fatherhood Initiative
- Learn from experience
Emerging Opportunities with Family Cafes

• Sharing the strengthening families framework and Family Café with diversity of the Dayton Community

• Developing the ability of urban schools to build relationships with community

• Strengthening families and developing protective factors through Family Café experiences

• Opportunities for professional development for collaborating and engaging with families.
Family Engagement Models

- School Readiness Collaborative Family Café – 3 questions to strengthen bonds

- Kiser Family Café – "Family Cafe" @ Kiser PK-8 School 2nite: LASAGNA! Plus: mini-concert by Kiser band. Free! Serving at 6:00p #HopeCommunity @ApexGoing
Family Café Models (con’t)

- East End Community Services TOTS (Taking Off To Success) – Hispanic families

- Edison TOTS – African American families

- Westwood Family Café – partnership of Head Start, public and faith based for peaceful families

- Family Café for faith sharing
What we continue to learn . . .

Family Café . . .

It’s a process,

building strength together
through building relationships.
Resources for Family Cafes and Family Engagement Models
1. Family Cafe Model*

- 3 Themes, 3 Discussion Questions
  - Taking Care of Yourself
  - Being a Strong Parent
  - Building Strong Relationships with Your Children

- Supporting Parents and Family Members:
  - Transportation
  - Child Care provided
  - Family Meals
  - Inclusive and welcoming to all types of parents and families

* See handout with information on developing a Family Cafe
2. Contacts for Learning More

Kiser PK-8 Neighborhood School Center
   Teresa Wendell – TAWendel@dps.k12.oh.us
   Randy Chestnut and April Bennett – Hope Community Church hope4dayton@gmail.com

TOTS Program – East End Community Services
   Diane Brogan-Adams - dbadams@east-end.org
   Kathlene Somerset - ksomerset@east-end.org
   Rachael Varvel - rvarvel@east-end.org
2. Contacts for Learning More (con’t)

Westwood School / Mary Queen of Peace School
Family Cafe
- Sue Koverman
- skoverman@catholiccincinnati.org
- Mike Newsome - NEWSOM@odjfs.state.oh.us

Ready Families, Ready Children Project
- Cindy Currell - ccurrell1@udayton.edu

Experienced with Family Cafes
- Trentae Taylor-taylor@4cforchildren.org
- Chris Brenneman - cbrenn1119@aol.com
3. Web Resources for Learning More

The Family Engagement Collaborative
http://www.familyengagementcollaborative.com/index.html
  ◦ Family Engagement Strengths and Needs Survey
  ◦ the-ready-families-ready-children-blog

FRIENDS National Resource Center
http://friendsnrc.org/

The Protective Factors Survey
http://friendsnrc.org/protective-factors-survey
Web Resources for Learning More
(con’t)

The Center for the Study of Social Policy
http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/the-basics/protective-factors

DISCUSSION

Question, comments, and observations

Additional resources on conference electronic resource board

Thanks for participating!