



Welcome to Spark NH!

Dear Friend of Spark NH,

Framework for Action Spotlight: Family Resource Centers

For anyone interested in preserving the quality of life we know and love in New Hampshire, we must ensure that our communities are places where children and families can thrive. Family Resource Centers (FRCs) throughout the state are helping do just that. FRCs work in communities to create the conditions that promote healthy development and family well-being. They are built on a research-based framework of family support, which focuses on helping families build on their own strengths and access resources that are available in their communities to further their well-being. Because FRCs are embedded in communities, the programs are tailored to the needs of the community they serve, but typical services include professional home visiting, parenting education and parent leadership development, early care and education, promotion of economic success, service coordination, resources and referral.

We know that when families have resources in their own communities, it makes it easier to do the hard work of raising children. Unfortunately, there is currently very little funding for FRCs. The small amount of state funding that FRCs once received was cut completely in 2012. Currently, many communities in New Hampshire have no family resource center and while the ones that exist are doing important and innovative work in their communities, they are struggling to survive. That's why the Spark NH Framework for Action includes a recommendation to increase state investments in FRCs.

If we can strengthen and expand New Hampshire's family resource centers and bring them to more of New Hampshire's communities we would be well on the way to building a system that ensures that all young children and their families are healthy, learning and thriving now and in the future. To find out more about Family Resource Centers, contact Family Support NH. To see where FRCs are located, you can view a map on our website at <http://sparknh.daveystrategies.com/family-supports/family-resources-centers/>.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Milliken, Esq.
Director, Spark NH

[Visit Our Website](#)

Community of Practice Updates

Carroll County Early Childhood Coalition

The Carroll County Early Childhood Coalition (CCECC) has had a busy spring supporting the young children and families in our region. In partnership with Conway Public Library and Conway Head Start we hosted a Kindergarten Transition Evening, providing parents of incoming kindergartners and their parents a chance to ask local kindergarten teachers questions about

what to expect when their children enter kindergarten in the fall. Our KReady program was able to distribute books and other resources to 395 children who will be entering kindergarten this fall at our elementary schools across Carroll County. Many thanks to the Believe in Books Literacy Foundation for their generous donation of books! The CCECC also partnered with the Mt. Washington Children's Museum, thanks to the support of VROOM, to host a Teddy Bear Picnic as part of a celebration of the Day of the Young Child. 50 children attended the event through their preschool programs as well as through the general public. We are excited to have a permanent VROOM display at the museum, which serves over 17,000 visitors a year. We continue to see increasing numbers of families being referred to our Family Connections Family Resource Center at Children Unlimited to be connected to additional services and are excited about the parenting classes that their staff are able to offer to inmates at the Carroll County House of Corrections.

Claremont Learning Partnership

The Claremont Learning Partnership's newest initiative is teen transitional housing with a focus on pregnant and parenting teens. We have found a site, cleared all the hurdles with City officials, secured MOU's with community partners, and have begun work with the limited funding that we have secured already. We are in the process of securing additional funding so that we can continue moving forward. We are continuing our work with our community engagement committee that we began with Nellie Mae. We are addressing a variety of needs that have emerged and continue to emerge within our community.

Concord School District Safe Schools/Healthy Students

The Concord School District Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant Initiative is fully committed to providing meaningful parent/caregiver education for families. This spring, The Concord Developmental Preschool hosted an evening session for families, which focused on Social-Emotional Development. Families provided input about what kinds of topics/activities were of interest to them. The evening was designed to include interactive, hands-on experiences which helped families support their children in following home routines, developing self-regulation and experiencing calming activities such as yoga. In addition, an evening presentation offered families information about Mindful Parenting. The year will wrap up with an evening presentation, Understanding and Promoting Your Child's Healthy Brain Growth.

Coos Coalition for Young Children and Families

No update at this time.

Greater Nashua Smart Start Coalition

The Smart Start Coalition met in April. Members discussed current participation in the Pyramid Model through the ISource Grant and Nashua School district was interested. We are also hoping to plan an educator's in-service event with pre-school teachers as well as home-based child-care providers with the Nashua School District. On May 3rd, 20 different partners joined United Way for the 2nd Annual Community Baby Shower. 44 families participated in the event at Nashua Community College where parents engaged in workshops focused on child-care, growth and development, parenting skills and learned about community resources for young children including developmental screening, vision screening, budgeting, nutrition and healthcare for mom and baby and immunizations for infants and toddlers. Participants were able to trade-in their learning points for baby gear and clothing as well as many raffle prizes. They were also treated to a family dinner compliments of Giorgio's, Chic-fil-A, Jambard Farms, Aldi, Hannaford, Great Harvest Bread Co, and Fresh Market and SubZero and free professional portraits from Studio Mark Emile and candids from JMphotography. Smart Start Coalition partners providing education and workshops included: Southern NH Healthcare and Medical Partners, The Birthplace, Nashua Community College, Rivier University, Lamprey Health, Beyond Influence, One Greater Nashua, Gateways Family Services, Nashua Public Health, DCU, Primerica Financial, Nashua Public Library, Adult Learning Center, Nashua Family Chiropractic, Child and Family Services, NH Healthy Families, SNHS programs including WIC, Headstart and Childcare Aware. Sponsors included UPS, Nashua Community College, Southern NH Health, Eversource, Beyond Influence, DCU, People's United Banks, Enterprise Banks, Nashua Teachers Union, Pennichuck Waterworks, Old Navy, Shaw's Royal Ridge, Mother and Child, Humane Society, Oster&Wheeler, Henry Hanger, Eaton Berube Insurance, Howe Riley Howe, EmbroidMe, Mint Print, eprint, inc. Target, Collegebound Movers, Heeter Home Team, FSB, Peniel, , students and families of the Parish of St. Joseph the Worker, Bishop Guertin High School, Nashua Catholic, and the Academy of Science and Design and the many, many folks that donated baby shower gifts of new and gently used clothing and gear illustrating that it really does take a village...

Greater Tilton Area Family Resource Center

The Greater Tilton Area Family Resource Center celebrates its grand opening of the new location at 5 Prospect Street in Tilton in May. Programming includes a new early learning opportunity, The Happy Trails Playgroup, facilitated by a parent educator with a master's degree in early education. This playgroup available free for all caregivers and children ages 0-3 with siblings to age 5 welcome. In addition, a new home visiting program is being launched for caregivers in recovery who are parenting children ages 0-5. So many of our families are affected by issues of poverty and substance use, and through the integration of family support services and recovery support services, a customized and comprehensive strength based approach to serving families is having great results. Sober Parenting Journey, a parent education program for those in recovery who are parenting, begins in June. Ongoing family support programs include All Recovery, an Adult Coloring Hour, and the hosting of multiple 12 Step Programs. Soon, we will be adding a Grandparents group modeled after the successful programs of other Family Resource Centers. Our Forever Hope Training Center has now delivered seven regional trainings in Massachusetts through the Head Start Collaborative, and multiple others to The Early Childhood Consortium, Boston College, and others regarding supporting families affected by SUD in light of the protective factors, and plan to deliver additional trainings throughout NH on bridging systems and services. Just as young children live in the context of their family, we see adults recover from SUD in the family. The integration of these supports has benefited our staff by increasing their understanding, decreasing their frustration, and developing the tools to support our families in recovery. Recovery is prevention for the next generation. We will be providing a Recovery Coach Academy at our training center in June, and another at the Family Resource Center at Gorham in August.

Impact Monadnock

StartSmart: Birth Gifts with a Purpose:

The Impact Monadnock Business Ambassadors, a team of Monadnock region business leaders dedicated to supporting and promoting child- and family-friendly workplace practices, have launched a new program called StartSmart: Birth Gifts with a Purpose. This new program offers employers an opportunity to recognize a parent-to-be in their workplace while supporting early childhood brain development through the purchase of gift package designed to foster brain-building communication with the new baby. StartSmart Birth Gifts include 3 board books for the baby, Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs by Ellen Galinsky for the parent/caregiver, and a set of fun tips for early childhood brain development from Vroom, all wrapped in a flannel baby blanket. The gift purchase also contributes toward the enrollment of a local, at-risk child in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. StartSmart gifts are available for online purchase [here](#).

Project LAUNCH Manchester

Classroom-based Strategies to Promote the Social-Emotional Competence of Infants and Toddlers: The Pyramid Model. Approximately 50 early childhood, child care, and Early Head Start teachers, administrators, and others who support the professional development of early childhood professionals in NH will be trained to promote young children's social-emotional competence and preventing, understanding, and respond to challenging. This training, originally scheduled for the first week of March, has been rescheduled to June 11-13, 2018. There are still spaces left. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-pyramid-model-strategies-to-promote-the-social-emotional-competence-of-infants-toddlers-and-tickets-42923515390>.

Classroom-based Strategies to Promote the Social-Emotional Competence of Preschool-Aged Children and Address Challenging Behavior: The Pyramid Model. Approximately 50 early childhood/elementary, child care, and Head Start teachers, administrators, and others who support the professional development of early childhood professionals in NH will be trained to promote children's social-emotional competence and prevent and address challenging behaviors the last week of May. This training is full.

Project LAUNCH Sustainability. Project LAUNCH in Manchester is working diligently to sustain its work. Federal funding for direct services ends June 30th and all federal funding ends September 30th. Several future funding sources and grants have been identified and applied for. Please contact Lara Quiroga with any questions at lquiroga@mchc-nh.org.

Somersworth Ready Together Early Childhood Coalition

Somersworth Ready Together is focused on making a difference for children and families in Somersworth by fulfilling our mission to improve early childhood development, ensuring language development and supporting family engagement to promote school readiness to succeed.

The Coalition has recently formed a new Work Group. The Community Awareness Work Group is focused on engaging local business and organizations in promoting every day learning moments in public spaces (e.g. signage in grocery stores, Born Learning Trails, Thinkscapes, etc.). The Coalition is also continuing its efforts to implement the Pyramid Model in community based settings, develop a Facebook page to reach families with information about local resources and early childhood development and bring together community and school based early educators to increase communication and alignment. The Coalition is also excited to have the local school district secure funds to support the second year of our Kindergarten Teacher Family Visit Program. In its first year, the Program resulted in 62% of the families of incoming kindergarteners meeting one on one with their child's teacher, which improved parent-teacher communication throughout the school year.

Team Up Rochester

No update at this time.

Thrive Laconia

Thrive Laconia will host Celebrate Laconia Children, Families and Community, on June 20th, from 4-5:30 PM, at the Historic Belknap Mill. The event is the kick-off of the new Coalition for Family, Children and Community, with the purpose to ensure healthy children and families through a shared vision and coordinated strategies. Cathy McDowell, of the Coos Coalition for Children and Families, is the key note speaker, and will be followed by a "next steps" activity lead by Karen Welford of Family Support NH. On July 25th, Thrive will reconvene to set priorities and develop strategies for the next year.

Stay Connected. Stay Engaged.

Be sure to follow and like Spark NH below!



Want to submit a letter to the editor to your local paper? We'll help you make that happen!

Contact info@sparknh.org

Please Consider Joining a Committee

Spark NH has four committees that are open to the public: Policy, Data, Evaluation, and Work Force and Professional Development. To find the latest information about our committees and important documents such as meeting minutes, agendas and presentations please visit our website at www.sparknh.com/council-and-committees.

About Spark NH:

Spark NH is the Governor-appointed Early Childhood Advisory Council for the State of New Hampshire. Our mission is to provide leadership that promotes a comprehensive, coordinated, sustainable early childhood system that achieves positive outcomes for young children and families, investing in a solid future for the Granite State.

Contact Us:

Call us at 603-226-7900 or email us at info@sparknh.org

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