

Community
Action Angels
News York

2019-2020

Child Needs Assessment

"Every Child Deserves A Champion"

Presented by: Pat Standish



Community Action Angels Commission for Children

Organization of 18 volunteers from diverse avenues of expertise

Knowledgeable ~ Talented ~ Accomplished ~ Connected

Committed to empowering children to tackle life greatest challenges.

Mission and Vision

Impact social, emotional, character development of children ages 6-12.

“All children will have the life skills needed to grow into competent, successful, happy adults capable of teaching the next generation.”



The Commission Champions Project That Build

HEALTHY EMOTIONS
GOOD CHARACTER
SELF-WORTH
RESILIENCE
LEADERSHIP
RESPECT FOR OTHERS
TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS
HEALTH AND WELLNESS
SOCIAL COMPETENCE
ACADEMIC SUCCESS



Purpose:

To explore the diverse needs of children across NYS to develop a strategic plan of action and take Community Action Angels NY to the next level of service.

The Next Level Includes:

- Focus on Identified Needs and Priorities
- Project/Program Development
- Resources (Funds/In-kind)
- Capacity Building
- Advocacy
- Documentation of Transformational Change



Methods :

#1

Statewide Input at Meeting of the Minds, September 2019, in Syracuse.

Commission member, Julia Kivistic, National Director, Corporate and Cause Partnerships at Boys and Girls Clubs of America, developed a series of five questions and posted around the conference venue.

75 participants of the Meeting of the Minds were divided into 5 groups and proceeded to each posted question to call out answers which were recorded.



Data Collection – Meeting of the Minds

The 5 questions posed to those in attendance.

What do you think/feel is the greatest need of our kids?

Response: Out of 102 responses -77 focused on emotional and social needs, 21 on personal and health needs and 3 on education.

What are the greatest challenges you face every day as "leaders on the ground" in your communities?

Response: Out of 38 responses-11 focused on staff, 10 on funding/resources, 8 on measuring outcomes and marketing, 9 on other. i.e. racial inequity, transportation, competition/politics, parent addiction, parent education.

What are the resources you need to make things happen?

Response: Out of 42 responses-16 focused on human capacity (staff and volunteers), 6 on data collection tools/technology, 4 on funding, 4 on marketing, 2 on workplace safety, 10 on other. i.e. policy and procedure, motivation, leadership, community involvement.



Data Collection – Meeting of the Minds

The 5 questions posed to those in attendance.

Name the five most important things needed to make a real transformational change for children and their families?

Response:

1. Remove stigma.
2. Feel safe in surroundings.
3. Increase communication and trust in providers and authority.
4. Family Counseling/Parent Education.
5. Security (food, childcare, educational and emotional needs met)

What is the ONE THING you would like to see happen?

Response: Out of 33 responses - 29 focused on emotional wellness, 4 on basic needs.



Methods

#2

A meeting of the Community Action Angels Commission convened at the Meeting of the Minds to discuss the commissions focus and mission based on needs identified by commission members.

#3

Interviews and formal discussions focused on needs of children were held in both rural and urban areas. One on one interviews were conducted by both staff and volunteers.

#4

Group presentation and feedback sessions were implemented by both staff and volunteer efforts. Those participating were organizations whose work focused on needs of children in homes of addiction and poverty in both urban and rural communities. Fifteen (15) organizations participated.



Key Findings:

Children need a strong social and emotional foundation to

- Influence their self-confidence
- Be empathetic
- Develop meaningful relationships
- Impact positive attitudes and behaviors
- Have a sense of importance and value to those around them
- Academic success
- Recognize a career path
- Good adult physical and mental health outcomes



Key Findings:

Children need to be nurtured and surrounded by a strong network of supportive adults and peers who can

- Offer practical and emotional support
- Build positive character traits
- Teach them to trust and communicate with others

Positive role models and **connectedness at home, school and in the community can buffer or redirect a child on a trajectory of risk by**

- Encouraging healthy choices
- Boosting their ability to cope with stress and trauma
- Provide encouragement and beneficial opportunities



Key Findings:

Children need to feel safe and should never be deprived of basic needs that can result in a wide variety of challenging behaviors, physical and mental health issues, social isolation, poor grades and hopelessness that will follow them through life.

To make real transformational change for children and families agencies need to increase both agency and human capacity.

i.e. sustainable funding, marketing, data collection, measurement, assessment, staff support and buy-in from leadership, child and family focused programming to educate parents, remove stigma, child and family focused resources, partnerships, community support and volunteer engagement.



Final Word

“There needs to be a worldwide consensus that children are the key to the future and their voice needs to be heard.”

Recommendations?



While we were waiting.....

1. In process of creating new storybook called “Choices”. Both good, bad choices and consequences.
2. Lindsey Zajac, Principal, Ahern, Murphy & Associates, creating Leadership Training Series for elementary grade students.
3. Enhanced the SHIELD Pilot Program
*Officer Reading Program In Schools
Classes for Incarcerated Parents*

