

**No Small Matter Screening  
Discussion Notes  
January 22, 2020**

**General Notes**

- The Annie E. Casey Foundation releases an annual report of the data relevant to children in the state of Kansas annually through the Kid's Count initiative. This data is available on the Kansas Health Foundation website.

**Primary Points of Discussion**

<b>Details</b>	
<b>Supporting success of early childhood</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase teachers' wages to reduce turn-over in early childhood</li> <li>• Need to support not only preschool, but infants through 8 year old children</li> <li>• Be prepared for when additional funding opportunities are available</li> </ul>
<b>Role of physicians</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important to expand role through screenings and access to vaccinations</li> </ul>
<b>Role of legislators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand funding and prioritize early childhood</li> <li>• Make policies that reduce the barriers to quality early childhood education (e.g., increase wages of early childhood educators, provide Universal Pre-K, provide more affordable early childhood centers, subsidize programs)</li> <li>• Provide avenues of communication with stakeholders that work collaboratively to tackle barriers of early childhood</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that parents have experienced trauma and that they need support to provide nurturing interactions with their children</li> </ul>
<b>Role of business leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase their knowledge of early childhood and its vital role in providing a thriving future workforce</li> <li>• Understand the benefit of investing in the community by providing job opportunities that increase the wages</li> <li>• Have Chamber of Commerce champion early childhood</li> </ul>
<b>Systems reform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be a Preschool-12<sup>th</sup> grade school system</li> <li>• Head Start is not accessible to everyone</li> <li>• Understand that the libraries and health care systems are part of the solution</li> <li>• Different components have to be invited to the table to provide a system that supports early childhood</li> <li>• Providing parenting classes in high school</li> </ul>
<b>Dissemination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire additional advocates</li> <li>• Address this public health concern by having spokespeople from across various backgrounds and spheres of influence</li> </ul>

**Next Steps:** 1) Will reach out to individuals who have attended through email; 2) share message learned today with the people you interact with; 3) continue to strive to follow up with conversations in your respective agencies.

## Notes from No Small Matter – Wyandotte County

- Advocacy
  - Building a network to get the message out about the benefits of early education and the importance of the early years
  - Support parent advocates as well as educators
  - Invite legislators to meet with families so they hear personal stories and see impacts firsthand
  - Messaging strategy – know how to convince legislators/what messages they respond to
    - Discuss return on investment
    - Educate on new programs as well as current barriers in place
  - Be a resource for families, not a judge, and get input from diverse communities when building a proposal
  - Reach out to families to connect them with resources, and inform them of programs that are already available
  - Focus on improving race equity in existing and future systems
- Education
  - Include parenting classes in high school curriculum
  - K-12 has a vested interest in early education, as it helps with school readiness, savings on remedial courses, and social & emotional learning
  - Build upon the start young model
- Business
  - Early education is important for future workforce development, as well as current employees who need access to early education for their children
  - Encourage individual businesses, and chambers of commerce, to support early education both with advocacy power and financial resources
  - Normalize child care assistance as an employer-offered benefit
- Agencies/government
  - Increase funding, but also evaluate how current dollars are being spent
    - Are we using them as effectively as we can? Leveraging partnerships?
  - Gather more and better data, and publish it to a wider audience
  - Ensure we are drawing down all available federal funds to complement state investment
  - Head Start is a good starting point, but need to expand on the theory behind the policy to make accessible to more families
- Early education workforce
  - Increase wages & benefits so they are competitive with other employment opportunities
    - Many early educators in Wyandotte county do have 2<sup>nd</sup> jobs
  - Increase access to home visiting programs to fill gaps in early education availability
  - Allow parents to have access to information on school performance
  - Identify pockets of excellence and community resources – healthcare systems and libraries can be part of the solution
  - Support early educators with training on how to deal with children who have experienced ACES