



# GREAT START COLLABORATIVE OF KENT COUNTY

*Mission: To assure a coordinated system of community resources and supports to help all Kent County families provide a great start for their children from birth to age five.*

## Minutes

**April 27, 2023 – 1:30pm-3:00pm**

Kent County Health Department: 700 Fuller Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

**Attendees:** Maureen Hale, Abby Bishop, Dr. Ali Jaffry, Alyssa Bryan, Amy Coon, Barb Hawkins-Palmer, Ben Brower, Cara Sutcliffe, Emily Skavnak, Fredericka Brown, Jayme Vosovic, Jennifer Cottingham, Joann Hoganson, Julie Guenther, Kristin Gietzen, Kathie Hoffman, Linda Pickett, Lindsey VanDyke, Marissa Brown, Mary Claire Meimers, Merin DeKruyter, Nicole Pratt, Rebecca Boot, Ryan Huizenga, Sarah Miller, Stephanie McKendry, Tara Rhodes (KCHD)  
Staff: Paula Brown, Tomarra Richardson, Shanequa Mosley, Melanie Medema

- Welcome **Maureen Hale**  
*Approval of minutes for February 23 – Approved*
  
- DEI Activity **Mary Claire Meimers (KCHD)**
  - “Radical Responses” activity
    - Are you prepared to respond to bias?
  
- Great Start Parent Coalition Report **Tomarra Richardson**  
**Shanequa Mosley**
  - Books, Blocks & Balls – spaces still available for partners
    - Grand Rapids – August 12 – Alger Head Start
    - Sparta – September 16 – Sparta Baptist Church
  - Community Baby Shower – July 22
    - Flyer will be sent via email, please share with your networks
  - COFI Training
    - Mental Health Awareness – Saturday July 15
      - Mental Health, Healthy Eating, Cleanliness
    - COFI Phase II coming this Fall
  - Diaper Drive
    - 2 million Celebration – June 23
      - Flyer to come, 6p-9p at Grand Rapids Children’s Museum
      - Please reach out to if willing to donate raffle prizes: bubbles, jump ropes, books, sidewalk chalk, books, gift cards
  - Early Childhood Legislative Day
    - Parent panel, 200 in attendance, advocacy tips. Senator not available, spoke with the Rep., networking opportunity.



#### ➤ Parent Leader Network Summit

- Santa Ana, ACA: “Nothing About Us Without Us”
- Kent County Group called themselves “Encanto”
- 5<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the Manifesto
- Systems change sector included Parent Representative Fredericka Brown
- Story sharing was the highlight
- Included workshops on building skills into a resume point
- Video highlight of the summit experience

#### ● Preschool Update

**Julie Guenther (GSRP)**

- Starting placements much earlier this year: May 15
- Applications are about 20% ahead of last year
- Expanding GSRP slots: anticipating lots of new classrooms in districts and subrecipients
  - Julie = direct run
  - Subrecipients = partners such as YMCA, ELNC
- Tomorrow is a new event called Preschool Here I Come (children must be 4 YO by December 1)
  - All sites open from 9-2 for families to check it out and explore

#### ● Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) Report

**Marissa Brown, RN (KCHD)**

- Health disparities in Infant Mortality
- Kent County used to be housed at Spectrum. Defunded in 2020, moved to KCHD in 2021, Marissa is program coordinator.
- IM defined as the death of a child prior to 1<sup>st</sup> birthday. Number of deaths per 1,000 live births per year.
- Community-based review process to improve MIH outcomes
  - Information gathering on deaths (i.e. autopsy reports)
  - Case Review Team (GSC Member Dr. Ali Jaffrey is a member of the Team), then progresses to the Community Action Team (Kent County version called Infant Health Action Team). They receive findings, develop action plans, integrate into the community.
  - Systemic Racism consequences of historical unequal access to resources, housing discrimination, breastfeeding, mistrust of health institutions.
    - Black infants 3x more likely to die than White (more recently about 2.7x), Hispanic 3.5x more likely (Kent County, comparable to MI numbers).
  - Age: mothers in the highest age range have infants born with the most congenital anomalies.
  - Education: babies of mothers with HS/GED most likely to die.
  - Insurance: Medicaid recipients have higher incidence of obesity, smoking
  - Marital status
  - Cause of Death: highest rate of perinatal, then congenital anomalies, then sleep-related
  - Drug Exposed Infant Committee: Black/Hispanic mothers were tested more frequently; now focused on Universal Screening
  - 45% of parents that lost an infant were single
  - FIMR recommendations
    - Firefighters/first responders, health care access, doulas, Pack n Plays
  - Maternal interviews are attempted, challenging



- Data about infant mortality rates by county available in FIMR report
- New recommendation: Infant Health Action Team working to designate members to forward actionable steps to reduce bias
- Suggestion to consider reviewing successes
- Unsure what contributes to recent reduction in Native American baby deaths, not enough babies to determine, state may have data.
- KCHD Statement on Structural Inequity

- GSC Updates

**Paula Brown**

- Budget 1<sup>st</sup> quarter distributed at meeting-3<sup>rd</sup> quarter is when expenditures peak
- Additional \$250k for home visiting
  - Early Head Start, Baby Scholars
- One County One Book
  - Thank you to all the volunteers
- Region IV Birth to Five Literacy HUB Support Network grant
  - Increase equitable access multilingual/multicultural family engagement, support all families, and align with existing K12 supports
  - Oceana County United Way of the Lakeshore has just been designated as the Regional Hub
  - Strategy #1: Network Convenings (GSC collaborates w/partners, development of Advisory Council)
    - \* GSC will be reaching out to some members
  - #2: Mini Grants (GSC grants to expand literacy programs, asset mapping, progress measurement)
  - #3: Professional Learning & Training

- Partner Announcements

- CTC just started next round of therapeutic playgroups designed for parents of children with developmental differences or suspected
- MDHHS updating MIHEIP, flyer on tables to recruit parents at upcoming Town Hall 5/4/23 at 5pm

**Upcoming Meetings:**

**GSC Executive Team: May 9, 2023, 2:30pm-4pm (Zoom)**

**June 13, 2023, 2:30pm-4pm (Zoom)**

**GSC Membership Meeting: June 22, 2023, 1:30–3:00pm (In person: Health Dept)**