

Washtenaw Success by 6[®]

February 2010 Update

An update on work across the Initiative!

As we start the new year, we would like to update you on the ongoing work of Washtenaw Success by 6. The last twelve months have been difficult ones for all the early childhood programs and agencies of Washtenaw County, as all have faced budgetary challenges and limitations. However, Washtenaw Success by 6 is continuing to work to ensure that our children enter school ready to succeed. In the past twelve months, we have expanded our involvement throughout the county, developed a new three year strategic plan, implemented a large program of child care provider training, as well as continued to nurture and grow our existing programs - we hope you enjoy reading about our progress.

Upcoming Events at Washtenaw Success by 6

Ann Arbor Preschool Expo!

Sunday, March 7 - 1 pm to 4 pm
Palmer Commons on the UM Campus
Co-hosted with the Ann Arbor District Library and Child Care Network
An opportunity to explore the preschool choices available in our community.

Touch-a-Truck!

Saturday, May 22nd - 9 am to 1 pm
In the parking lot of Briarwood Mall
An opportunity to explore a variety of large trucks, buses and emergency vehicles while also accessing information about early childhood programs, services, and supports



Parent Coalition Progress

The Washtenaw Great Start Parent Coalition continues to grow and expand. Two new parent liaisons have recently joined the work, allowing the coalition to reach more parents around the county. Annherst Kreitz will be focusing on families and parents in greater Washtenaw County, and Althea Wilson on families in Willow Run, Ypsilanti and Lincoln school districts. Donna Lasinski will continue to lead the parent coalition across the whole county.

The Parent Coalition recently held an event at Jungle Java, which was a huge success. Parents came with their children and learned about the importance of brain development in the toddler years. Fun, learning and snacks were had by all! Thank you to all the parents who joined our Parent Coalition. We are looking forward to hosting more events.

This month, the Parent Coalition leaders will be looking at Lansing and the program cuts that have been made in Early Childhood Programs. We will be hosting a meeting to learn about advocating with legislators to keep these important programs in place. If you are interested in learning to speak directly with legislators on early childhood issues, please contact Donna Lasinski to learn more about this opportunity at lasinski@mac.com or 734-997-7265.

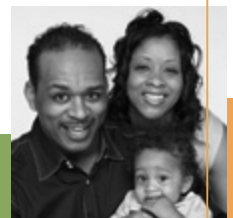
Over the coming months, it will be important for parent voices to be heard in the upcoming election year as well as in tough budget decisions. If you would like to become more involved or learn more about the work of the parent coalition, please contact Donna Lasinski.

Advocacy Task Group and Work

The Advocacy and Education Task Group is off and running in 2010! The primary focus of this year will be an education plan designed to reach out to elected officials and those seeking election in 2010. To do this, the Advocacy and Education Task Group will work closely with the Parent Coalition to craft a plan for the year, which includes everything from hosting candidates at parent events to one-on-one meetings. The group will also re-design and update the Advocacy Agenda and develop a plan for outreach to the business community regarding the economic importance of early child education and programs.

If you are interested in being part of the Advocacy Task Group, please contact Melissa Pinsky at 734-994-8100, ext 2177 or mpinsky@uwwashtenaw.org

If you are interested in being part of conversations with legislators about the importance of early childhood services, parent support and education to children's life long growth and development, please contact Donna Lasinski at lasinski@mac.com or 734-997-7265.



Pfizer Grant Update

The implementation of the Pfizer Grant from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation is moving ahead rapidly. The grant provides funds for a number of activities, but the majority is to support child care provider training in the areas of challenging behaviors, speech and language development, developmental delay, and cultural competency. The training program is designed to reach out to both those who do childcare in their homes, and to center based providers. We have already trained 115 home providers and 209 center based providers in a total of 26 trainings since October 1st. We will be busy offering trainings into the summer, all supported by the Pfizer Grant.

The Pfizer grant is also supporting two evaluations of programs that we have been implementing as part of Washtenaw Success by 6 - the Parent Network and the county-wide First Steps programs. Teams of university students - one from the University of Michigan and the other from Eastern Michigan University - are in the process of developing their research tools and choosing their research samples. In late February, they will begin administering their surveys and interview schedules, and by April will have an evaluation of the programs for us to use to share future developments and implementations. We are extremely grateful to have the services of all these fine graduate students!

Children's Health Advocate Work

Kelly Stupple continues her good work as the Washtenaw Children's Health Insurance Advocate, and has recently expanded her role beyond health insurance support and advocacy to include a wider range of health issues. She has been particularly concerned with the availability and ease of access of dental health care for children, especially those in their first six years. Dental health is an essential, but often overlooked, part of a child's full physical condition. Although "baby" teeth are indeed replaced as children age, damage done to them by decay or neglect has life long effects on the person's health. If there is untreated dental decay in a child's mouth, then newly erupting "adult" teeth are quick to become infected with the decay as well; and if missing or badly damaged baby teeth are not corrected, then the permanent teeth come in at unusual angles and are often painful for the child. Kelly now coordinates the pediatric Medicaid dental list for the county, and serves as the key referral point for low-income families seeking dental care for their children.

Kelly's work with supporting families in their application to the Department of Human Services for medical insurance (Medicaid) has now expanded to include coordinating the county Spanish Language Health Outreach committee, and working hard to ensure that materials about Medicaid, applications for Medicaid, and support by workers is available in Spanish, as well as other needed languages, including West African French and Arabic.

Kelly can be reached at 734-544-3079 or stupplek@ewashtenaw.org and is there to help with any children's health or health insurance questions or concerns.



Programs and Activities

Washtenaw Success by 6 and the Washtenaw Great Start Collaborative are active throughout the community, ensuring that services and supports for families and children are in place. Our current work includes:

- Childcare trainings in challenging behavior, Hanen Speech and Language, and Developmental Delay, funded by the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation
- Continuing to build and expand the parent network, which delivers age appropriate parenting information and a monthly newsletter
- Coordination of Early On Services county-wide
- Maintenance of the Children's Health Insurance Advocate
- Coordination of the County-wide Interagency Coordinating Council - Washtenaw Birth to Six
- Advocacy on behalf of our children and families at the local and state level
- Continuation of all of our programs and initiatives

Staff Members - Who to Call

The daily work of Washtenaw Success by 6[®] is carried out by the staff. Please feel free to contact them with any questions or ideas.

Siân Owen-Cruise:

Director of Washtenaw Success by 6[®]

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Melissa Pinsky:

Co-Director of the Great Start Collaborative

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Kelly Stupple:

Children's Health Insurance Advocate

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Jenni Onslow:

Provider Training Program Manager

734-994-8100, ext 1832 -

jonslow.successby6@gmail.com

Donna Lasinski:

Parent Liaison for the Parent Coalition

734-994-8100, ext 2177 - lasinski@mac.com

**Our website has resources for
parents and children**

www.washtenawsuccessby6.org

Leadership Commission Members

Direction and oversight of Washtenaw Success by 6[®] is provided by our strong Leadership Commission - who are all committed to ensuring the success of the youngest children in Washtenaw County - they are:

Leadership:

Martha Darling - Community Volunteer

Mark Ouimet - County Commissioner

David Rutledge - WCC Board Member

Members:

Anya Abramzon

Chris Aris

Elaine Brady

Pam Byrnes

Shannon Campbell

Robert Chapman

Jerry Clayton

Mindy Costello

April Davis

Julie DuChateau

Joseph Dulin

L. Edwards-Brown

Cheryl Elliott

Richard Fleece

Mark Foster

Bryan Girbach

Robert Guenzel

Norman Herbert

Sandra Hilton

P. Horne-McGee

Marj Hyde

Donna Lasinski

Shannon Luhrs

Mike Manchester

Cynthia Maritato

Jennie McAlpine

Lindsay McCarthy

Susan Miller

William Miller

Josie Parker

Todd Roberts

Stan Reedy

Sandra Rupp

Donna Sabourin

Steven Sheldon

Clay Shouse

Pam Smith

Nancy Thelen

Larry Voight

Patricia Warner

Althea Wilson

Jewish Family Services

EMU Children's Institute

Parent Member

Michigan House of Rep.

Junior League of A.A.

United Bank and Trust

County Sheriff

Parent Member

Parent Member

Parent Member

Roberto Clemente

Juvenile Court

Ann Arbor Area Comm. F.

Washtenaw Public Health

Rotary Club of Ann Arbor

Milan Area Schools

Washtenaw County Gov.

Community Volunteer

Perry Nursery School

Washtenaw Head St.

First Steps Ann Arbor

Parent Coalition Chair

Parent Member

Ypsilanti Chamber

Washtenaw DHS

UM Work/Life Program

Ann Arbor Chamber

Community Volunteer

Washtenaw ISD

Ann Arbor District Library

Ann Arbor Public Schools

Community Member

United Way of Washtenaw

Community Support/Treat.

Community Health

High/Scope Foundation

Child Care Network

MSU Extension

Catholic Social Services

UM Mott Hospital

Parent Member