Strategy Selections

Coalition members reviewed the March 2009 Parent Need Assessment Survey, the Community Council Study Committee Report, the recent Key Informant Interview Findings and their own experience to identify the strategies most likely to successfully advance our three priorities. The strategies were briefly discussed and then coalition members voted for those strategies they found most promising and subsequently brainstormed what some of the elements of each prioritized strategy might be. The prioritized strategy in each area will form the focus of the Coalition’s work over the next several years. Additional strategies that were not selected follow the Prioritized Strategies:

Goal for Parents & Children - Support parents and families in their important role raising the next generation

Prioritized Strategy – Create neighborhood hubs (such as libraries, Children’s museum, Family Medical Center, etc.) connected to a community-wide effort that fosters relationship and trust. Elements of this strategy might include:

- Neighborhood Partnerships with youth, parents and existing programs (like Home Team, Commitment to Community, Children’s Museum) to plan constructive neighborhood activities that encourage community, provide positive learning interactions and build trust:
  - Movie nights
  - Craft activities
  - Swap meets
  - Respite activities
  - Neighborhood and high-school-based parent peer groups with food and child care that provide parenting education and peer support (like PEPS www.pepsgroup.org)
  - Parenting Classes with incentives/rewards (stipends, baby supplies, diapers, food cards, tax credits, etc.) for participation in parenting education (tie in with advertising) starting at pregnancy

- Community engagement efforts that promote family-friendly environments, letting families know that they are recognized and honored
  - Designated parking spaces for parents close to the door and the cart stand
  - Designated parent space on buses that ease use of strollers
  - Seal of approval for family-friendly businesses/agencies/spaces
    - Play areas for children
    - Physical accessibility for strollers
    - Changing tables in restrooms

- Online communities
  - (Facebook, MySpace) to share information about parenting tips (Parent Gem of the day), resources (e.g. list of trained baby-sitters) and events, encourage connection with peers and ease building of relationships.
  - A Group Text Messaging system to notify teens, young adults and parents of events
  - A Parenting Blog that encourages community participation/comments

- Stream-lined access to supportive family services
  - Streamline intake at the Community Service Office and other agencies to reduce duplication or paperwork for parents
  - Create one-stop service eligibility and information

- Create a Walla Walla Parenting Magazine

Possible indicators:
- % of healthy-weight babies
- % of teens who see education as a life goal
- % of parents who feel confident in their ability to support their child’s development
- % of pregnancies to teen parents
- % Rate of early intervention needed per 100 children
Goal for Professionals - Encourage education, experience and fair pay among adults who care for children

Prioritized Strategy - Define and increase the availability of high-quality child care in the Walla Walla Valley. Elements might include:
- Definition of what high-quality child care looks like and marketing to stimulate demand
- Semi-annual need assessment with particular attention to:
  - Child care in schools for teen parents
  - Infant care throughout Walla Walla Valley
  - Off-hour/weekend care
  - Sick child care
- Expanded consulting services to providers
  - Expanded recruitment and incentives for new child care businesses
  - Mentoring/support for those in the licensing process
  - Technical assistance like that currently available at the resource and referral agency
  - Traveling training/enrichment services (art, health, nutrition) to enhance current licensed and unlicensed child care
  - Link navigators/mental health consultants to preschoolers/kindergarteners who exhibit stress, mental health issues and not feeling well
  - Outreach to Family, Friend and Neighbor child care providers to connect them to events, materials and supports for families/parents
- Expanded resources for child care providers/businesses:
  - Scholarships and incentives for child care providers to access education and training
  - Mini-grants for child care facility improvements (e.g. fences, windows, play areas)
  - Free/reduced cost access to other activities and facilities (e.g. gym, cooking, art, etc.)
  - Child Care Provider peer support groups – Appreciation, support and community
  - Education about the impact of Adverse Child Experiences (ACEs)

Possible Indicators:
- % of licensed infant care slots available relative to # of infants in the community
- Average $ per child available for child care
- # of child care businesses participating in quality improvement efforts

Goal for Our Community - Increase awareness and knowledge of the Importance of early childhood development and let community members know what they can do to help

Prioritized Strategy - Develop activities that create a feeling that Walla Walla Valley parents are honored and supported in their important role. Elements of this strategy might include:
- A local ad campaign that highlights different families, including reality about their situation both challenges and strengths:
  - Bill boards
  - Bus sides
  - Facebook/MySpace
  - Education pieces featuring of the cultural richness and strengths of our diverse local community
  - Promote the effort via “word of mouth” through trusted relationships
- Neighborhoods partnerships that connect the people already there (homes, senior and community centers, etc.) and raise awareness about valuing parenting and supporting early learning
- Community indoor parks for use during Winter/Summer weather – Renovate vacant buildings? – Connect with Neighborhood Hubs idea for parents
- Recruit retirees who are interested in a consistent role to help with administrative functions (WIC- accountants), and program supports
### Other Strategies We Considered to Advance Our Goals

#### Parents and Children
- Make middle school courses in human development, healthy relationships and parenting routinely available
- Improve high school resources for youth to delay parenting and support those who become teen parents
  - Health clinic
  - MOPS
  - Mental Health services
  - On-site child care
  - Young Lives
  - First Steps
- Have teen parents (ideally female-male pair) share parenting realities in middle school classes, perhaps tied to use of the electronic baby project
- Make parenting and child development information more widely available
- Create incentives for parents to support children’s healthy development and learning
- Create a confidential parenting line
- Increase child care subsidy rate and eligibility
- Nanny 911
- Hold Open Houses at public schools to help children and families feel welcome years before kindergarten
- Work with Child Protective Services in offering preventive and intervention parenting classes for parents
- Foster collaboration between CSOs and Parent Educators to explore parent support interest during CSO intake
- Connect with parents before birth
- Provide transportation to events or move events to where families are
- Make access to financial support more available for families (e.g. WIC) to alleviate effects of poverty
- Encourage Ob/Gyns to connect families to child development and parenting information early in pregnancy
- Increase availability of early learning programs (like ECEAP and Head Start) for families across economic levels

#### Early Learning Professionals
- Increase child care subsidy rates
- Create a database of technical/experiential expertise available in the community
- Require STARS classes regarding child development and healthy adult child interaction for others who work with children and families (e.g. DSHS staff)
- Provide college-level interns to support infusion of enriching activities into child care

#### Our Community
- Define school readiness and success
- Create partnerships among the School District, Health Department and child care providers