



**Listening Learning Session with Local Attorneys
April 16, 2015
Coltivare**

Lunch conversation was insightful at the Children & Youth Listening and Learning session! The report below captures the thoughts of local attorneys whose work touches the lives of the children in our community lending their voices to a conversation on, “What is working well, problems, and obstacles.”

What works for children?

- Mental Health Association’s Kids First Summer camp, needs to be available free of charge and to increase enrollment
- Child Development Council provides a database to find child care providers
- Groton Library programs and services creating a community center space
- Faith communities that volunteer
- Advocacy Center has personal care packages for teens entering the shelter
- New Roots and LACS, examples of an individualized approach to education, we need more of this
- GreenStar’s Healthy Food for All
- Advocacy Center’s male and female sexual assault survivors support groups
- Food pantries throughout Tompkins County
- 211 as a central repository of information
- Human Services Coalition’s list serve

Needs

- Drug use and poverty, more and more entrenched across multiple generations
- Mental health and lack of treatment
- Child care in the court house
- Child care for attending 12 step programs
- Access to GED services
- Late night child care for parents working irregular schedules
- Dependable transportation for affordable housing communities for needs of families, sick children
- Programs for children with developmental disabilities
- Free supervised visitation spaces and supervisors, supervised visitation free to parents
- Therapeutic visitation
- Advocacy support for parents of children with IEPs, working with schools to advocate for their children
- Working with teachers to early identify children at high risk of future legal system involvement for preventative care
- Support for children of substance abusing parents

- Lack of treatment for young children in early phases of their own substance abuse
- More foster families and educating the community what it means to be a foster parent
- Barriers with access to communication and literacy resources, need to connect more families to libraries
- Lack of education of life skills such as literacy, financial skills, sex ed, savings
- Therapeutic foster care homes in this community to ease reunification
- Post adoption services such as after school programs and summer camps
- Education about alternatives to using the legal system to settle disputes
- Ways of bringing Ithaca based services to outlying townships of Tompkins County, could Auburn/Cayuga County be a role model for this?
- Support for foster care youth to attain a college education
- Affordable housing
- Apprenticeship programs, partner with unions to help teach in demand trades
- Conceptualizing truancy as diagnostic of literacy and negative school experiences, if I am at a second grade reading level as a seventh grade student, why would I go to school to experience that negative environment every day/
- Programs to encourage parents to read to their children everyday
- Out of county residents who get arrested for drug offenses and are not able to participate in Tompkins drug courts because their home county won't pay/participate
- Recognition of/for volunteers
- Smaller high schools which would be more focused so that individuals with unique needs do not get lost in the crowd
- Sexual assault survivor services and education about these needs

Next steps by the Community Foundation Children & Youth Committee includes grants to solve or mitigate problems identified and to continue connecting with the lawyers. We were fortunate to have a donor underwrite the luncheon. Afterward, several lawyers asked to volunteer for the Community Foundation!

For more information please contact:

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