

Opportunities for Collaboration – updated 11/26/08

1. **Top challenges currently faced by Collaborative partners** that we can work on together?
2. How can we become players in **building prosperity for our kids**?
3. How do the partners at the table **increase and promote family engagement**? With decreasing budgets across the board, agencies will need to find ways to engage their families and communities to continue service delivery.
4. How to **pool resources** for program funding, particularly for ideal early childhood programs?
5. **Blending and integration of programs** – particularly at the early childhood level and for families of children with special needs. Some districts have successfully integrated early childhood services, and other agencies should consider this model. However, existing facilities still create on-going space issues which will also need to be addressed.
6. The OTC United Way and the Early Childhood Dental Network are encouraging local dentists to participate in the **“Give a Kid A Smile Program”** which offers free dental services to low income families without insurance. For more information contact Mary Phillippe at United Way at 218-736-5147.
7. **Emergency Assistance Services** – how do partners locate the services available in each of their individual communities?
8. With declining economic times, **community work force development and career counseling** will likely become a need for many of our communities.
9. **“Full Service Schools”** – Can/should partners look at providing more services to students and families at the schools?
10. Ottetail-Wadena Community Action Council is working on a project called **“Blue Print to End Poverty.”** The project is in need of a steering committee to help identify 4-5 tasks to address poverty. This project will run for 18 months and will solicit feedback from economic development and city officials and other key community members.
11. We are excited to announce that the **Parent Support Outreach Program** will be funded again in 2009 in the amount of \$24,000. If your agency is interested in working together with this program to provide home-based family services for families experiencing stressors, please contact Jane at 218-736-3458.
12. **Youth Health Day** has been set for March 10th in Fergus Falls. This event has been hosted for several years and is open to all 9th Grade Students in the area. The Service Coordination/CTIC and Children’s Mental Health Work Groups both strongly encourage all of our partners to participate. There are many valuable learning experiences for students that attend this event. Last year over 500 students from seven area school districts attended!
13. McKinley School in Fergus Falls is looking for opportunities to find and install **new playground equipment** at their site. The existing equipment was made for bigger kids and since this site is now an early childhood site, this equipment poses some safety hazards. If you have any good ideas about how they can obtain quality, low cost playgroup equipment, please contact Stacy Haugen-McAllister at 218-998-0935, ext. 1027.

14. Safe Communities Coalition opportunities

- **Community Luncheon** to learn more about local highway traffic safety efforts and new resources for At Risk Drivers – Wednesday, December 10 from Noon – 1PM at the Government Service Center in Fergus Falls. Please RSVP at 218-736-3458.
- DPS-AAA Buckle Up, Teens! **TV Commercial Contest**, where teens are called on to produce TV spots that promote buckling up. AAA awards the top three teen spots with \$1,000, \$600, and \$400 cash prizes. If you are interested in working on this project, please contact Jane Patrick at 218-736-3458 for more information.
- The **Teen Seatbelt Challenge** is back!! Information has gone out to those schools that participated last year. Because usage rates have generally increased during the previous one month challenge time frame, the Coalition is considering expanding the time frame this year. It will not necessarily involve a lot more activities, but it is the hope that if activities are spread out over a longer time period, some actual habits will form for students wearing seatbelts. We would strongly encourage all schools to participate in the creative, fun event!

15. The Fergus Falls community has recently accepted an offer by West Central Initiative to become an **Early Childhood Initiative** Community. This is a three year project with up to \$10,000 available each year for programs and initiatives that will impact early childhood. United Way of Otter Tail County will be the fiscal host for the project. Any Fergus Falls-based agency that is interested in being involved in the planning and development of this initiative should contact Jane Patrick at 218-736-3458.