Public Policy and Communications

Annual Report 2018-19 – First 5 Marin’s annual report for 2018-19 is printed and being distributed. Copies are available for commissioner’s offices or sharing with community partners.

First 5 Express – Michelle has scheduled the First 5 Express to visit Marin County in April, for the Month of the Young Child. The Express, with a variety of “Talk-Read-Sing” activities for young children monitored by bilingual staff, will visit the Marin Community Clinics’ “Health Hubs” on Wednesday, April 15th in the Canal (2:30 to 5:30 pm) and Thursday, April 16th in Novato (3:30 to 5:30 pm). The Express will distribute New Parent Kits and other parenting information, plus give away (bilingual) Potter the Otter books, stickers and other handouts.

Marin Communications Forum – The forum continues to host informative sessions with great speakers and strong attendance. Much of January was spent on developing the meeting schedule for 2020.

- The Struggle to Make Ends Meet in Marin – On January 28th, the California Budget and Policy Center presented data from their “Making Ends Meet” fact sheet for Marin County, and policy from their recent report, “Many Californians are Struggling to Live in Our Communities—Five Reasons to Share the State’s Prosperity.” (Both documents are available at First 5 Marin.) This event was held in the San Rafael city council chambers with about 75 people in attendance. The video of the “Making Ends Meet” forum is available on the Marin Communications Forum’s Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/events/1845785642231993/
At the request of commissioner Supervisor Dennis Rodoni, Executive director Amy Reisch and Policy and Communications Manager Michelle Fadelli presented a summary of the “Making Ends Meet” data to the Marin County Board of Supervisors on February 11th. They were joined by forum presenters Paula Glodowski from the Department of Social Services and Monique Liebhard from Community Action Marin, who reviewed the variety of assistance programs they offer to helps support families in Marin County.

Next forums for 2020 (back at the remodeled Embassy Suites Hotel):

- **February 24 – Census 2020: Help Count All the Kids** – Michelle is finalizing the agenda for this forum aimed at a complete count of young children (and their families) in Marin. Working in partnership with Canal Alliance and Community Action Marin, the agenda will include a discussion of the programs that are funded based on census numbers, a presentation of the messaging guide from the First 5 Association, distribution of bilingual outreach materials, and a specific focus on Spanish-language outreach.
- **March 18 – Social-Emotional Learning & Development** – speaker and program are being finalized.
- **April 22 – Child Abuse Prevention Month** – Keynote by Dr. Taquelia Washington, LCSW. This event will be presented in partnership with Parent Services Project and Marin County Health and Human Services on this event.
- **May 2020 – Mental Health Awareness Month** – Date and speaker TBD.
- **June 1 - Kids, Technology and Internet Safety/Common Sense Media**
- **Help Me Grow/Support for Developmental Delays and Disabilities** – Date TBD.
- **October – Restorative Justice/Youth Justice Action Month** – planning in partnership with the YWCA and Marin County Public Defender. Date TBD

**Oral Health** – Amy and Michelle continue working with Marin County HHS and other community partners on the new oral health initiative. Amy is serving on the Oral Health Advisory Committee; Michelle is on the Communications Work Group and will be creating and compiling outreach materials for pregnant women and young children.

Michelle is managing the Facebook page, which will be sharing oral health messages for all age groups: [www.Facebook.com/HealthySmilesMarin](http://www.Facebook.com/HealthySmilesMarin). (Like & Share!)

**Policy Breakfast** – First 5 Marin’s annual policy breakfast will be on **Friday, May 1st** at the Embassy Suites Hotel in San Rafael (8:30 to 10 am). The keynote speaker and program are being finalized.

**Public Charge** – Amy and Michelle continue working with the “Public Charge Coordinating Committee” on outreach and education. In the latest news, a Supreme Court ruling will allow public charge to take effect: The U.S. Supreme Court allowed the DHS public charge rule to take effect nationwide while lawsuits continue (except for Illinois, where the rule remains blocked by a statewide injunction). Per USCIS, the final rule will only apply to applications submitted on or after February 24, 2020. Medicaid, SNAP (“Food Stamps”), HUD public housing, and “Section 8” housing benefits received before February 24, 2020 will not be considered in the public charge determination.

There are many informational materials available regarding public charge. Michelle recently provided updates to the website (managed by Marin HHS) to reflect the most current information; see [https://www.marinhhs.org/public-charge](https://www.marinhhs.org/public-charge).
The website for PIF (Protecting Immigrant Families) has a whole new set of documents regarding personal rights related to public charge: https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/know-your-rights/ and a Spanish language version of “Public Charge: Does this apply to me?” at https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Public-Charge-Does-This-Apply-To-Me-Updated-January-2020-SPANISH.pdf. There are also special resources for providers and advocates: https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/special-resources/

Other Key Resources for Public Charge:
- National Immigration Law Center (NILC) - www.nilc.org
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) - www.ilrc.org
- California Immigrant Policy Center - https://caimmigrant.org/
- For more information, please visit the Marin County “Public Charge” page: https://www.marinhhs.org/public-charge

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Census 2020 – In addition to hosting the forum on February 24th, we will be working with community partners to distribute the messaging guides and bilingual outreach materials from the First 5 Association. We are also sharing infographics and other census news on Facebook. There is a great deal of information and lots of resources online:

- Marin County Census info: https://marincensus2020.org/
- First 5 Association census resource: http://first5association.org/census-2020-resources/

First 5 Summit – Amy and Michelle attended the First 5 California Summit in Irvine at the beginning of February. There were high-profile speakers and numerous breakout sessions, with approximately 800 First 5 staff and community partners from across California in attendance.

Help Me Grow – Help Me Grow Marin is now fully-staffed, with Susanne Kreuzer as the program coordinator and Maritza Barahona as the bilingual family case coordinator.

The Help Me Grow Marin coordinating committee met on February 5th meeting and focused on marketing and community outreach. The discussion centered on broad goals: educating parents about the need for developmental screening, increasing awareness about the Help Me Grow program, and introducing the organizations involved in Help Me Grow Marin. The committee also discussed barriers and the need to alleviate confusion in the referral process.

Several other counties have established Help Me Grow programs, so there are a wealth of websites, communications plans and outreach materials to review as we move forward. Orange County had a substantial grant for development of marketing and communications. After several different options, they chose to use “Am I on Track?” as a tagline with parents—to indicate that screenings are just a check-in and not a major cause for concern. Visit their website: www.HelpMeGrowOC.org.

Help Me Grow Staff Report

- I am excited to announce that we have hired Martiza Barahona for the position of Bilingual Family Advocate/Child Development Care Coordinator. Maritza will be working 20 hours per week beginning February 3, 2020. Maritza comes with 13 years’ experience working as a Family Advocate/Early Childhood Education work with low income families of diverse backgrounds at Community Action Marin Head Start. She holds a Bachelor’s equivalent degree from the
University in El Salvador and a Family Development Credential from the extended learning program, Cornell University. She is bi-lingual/bi-cultural and is very connected to resources and programs in Marin County.

- Consultation with consumers: we continue to follow up and work with providers, families and community partners who are seeking information/referral/resources

Families:

Under 6 of age:
- We have provided four (4) ASQ-3 for an 18 month old, two (2) children age 4.5 month and one child age 5.5 years. In addition we have provided and two (2) ASQ-SE-2 on the 4.5 month old children.

Over 6 years of age:
- Consultation and resources have been given to an immigrant mother whose 15 year old child is struggling in school and needed resources and understanding of how to get and assessment for her child at school.
- Consultation and resources have been given to a mother of an adult severely disabled dependent on transitioning from the mother’s home into a group home as mother was newly diagnosed with cancer and unable to care for her dependent daughter. Strategies and resources were shared with mother to help with life transition for both mother and daughter.

Child Care Providers:
- To date HMG has consulted with 6 ECE providers on various concerns with policies, partnerships and difficulties working with specific children. Resources and linkages have been shared and site visits and strategies regarding inclusion of specific children have been given. Follow-up and check in will take place as needed.

- Susanne continues to work with the technology company KJMB Solutions on the customizations of STAR for the HMG Marin data base. This is labor intensive and requires attention to detail and thought of long term needs for reporting information to be considered as the data base is developed and customized for Marin County.

- Amy and Susanne have started the time study for MAA billing beginning January 2020. Amy continues to investigate billing for Targeted Case Management (TCM) and EPSDT as future funding options.

- Susanne continues to have get acquainted meeting with various providers and programs in the county. She has also continues conversations with other HMG programs in California to help guide the work.

- Many of the HMG programs in California have moved from the paper format to the online format for the ASQ assessments. Susanne is in conversations with Brookes publishing and KJMB Solutions to set up this system in the STAR database. Orange County HMG has worked with Brookes publishing to waive their annual $800.00 API fee for those working with the STAR database. Total for installation and purchase of set up is $1,849.95 plus .50 per completed screening. Annual fee for ongoing online service will be $850.00 + .50 per completed screening.

- On February 5, 2020 the Leadership Team had a planning meeting for Communications and Outreach for HMG Marin’s Communication Objective. The team was facilitated by Jill Casey, Luminare Group, and the focus of conversation kept in mind the messaging/considerations of the
broad array of audiences, e.g. general public, families, health care providers, early care providers, service providers in general, policy makers.

The meeting concluded with a consensus to continue the conversation and for Amy to reach out to communication specialists, including people who have done this with other counties, put a bidding process together, and secure a person/group to work with HMG Marin by April 2020.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

**Help Me Grow Leadership** – The Help Me Grow Leadership Team met on February 5th to brainstorm a framework and some overall goals for the communications/marketing/public education campaign for HMGMarin. A Invitation to Bid (ITB) has been drafted and we hope to have a successful bidder begin April 1st. The next meeting will of the Leadership Team will hopefully include the successful candidate and focus on two major items

1) roll-out of the MOU sign-on outreach for referring and potential referral partners (e.g. Marin Community Clinics, Head Start) for data sharing and two way referrals

2) the communications plan the next steps in developing the campaign

Michelle and Amy attended the First 5 CA Summit in Irvine February 3-5th. There were a number of good keynote speakers and some interesting and informative workshops. One in particular from Orang County presenting their work on the development of a screening registry for Orange County. They also discussed how they are using kindergarten readiness assessments in the county to help them target their outreach around early screening and identification. The most amazing thing is that all 25 school districts are using a single researched and validated tool for assessing kindergarten entry (!). We have much to learn from their experience!

Amy attended Justice Funders State of the Movement 2020 Event. It was inspirational, full of hope and enthusiasm and a reminder that many many people are working to change the narrative coming out of Washington these days.

Amy attended the steering committee meeting for the CHIP (Community Health Improvement Plan) prioritizing the focus of the planning process for Marin. Work groups will be meeting over the next several months to flesh out strategies for addressing the three priorities identified.

**Meetings**

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