

BARC Childcare Committee Meeting Notes March 30, 2022

Present: Karen Tanner (VA Coop. Ext), Amanda Powell (Bedford DSS), Crystal Bailey (Human Kind Early Head Start), Bridget Austin (Lyn-Cag Head Start), Denise Hutton (VA Career Works), Pam Bailey (Bedford Econ Dev), Kara Sensenig (VA Quality), Kim Gregory (CVCC), Cindy Perdue (Bedford County Schools), Andy Crawford (Bedford DSS), Holly Layne (Bright Beginnings CV)

Kim Gregory explained the new early childhood program available at CVCC

Pam reported that there was discussion about the lack of Infant care at the joint meeting of Bedford Town and County Economic Development Authorities. They have tasked her with calling local providers and asking what it would take to offer more classrooms for infants. Amanda shared the site with all programs listed.

Discussion on family day homes that are not licensed and the reasons why.

Discussion on why we are still seeing children start kindergarten without any preschool experience. This led to discussion on how the general public is not aware of the importance of the first five years of life and brain development. Perhaps our focus for the next few months should be about how we can educate the general public. Andy mentioned we could possibly apply for grants from Centra or the Community Health Foundation for funds for billboards or flyers, etc. There were many ideas on where we can reach families including:

Bedford Pregnancy Center, Public library, doctor's offices and health department, Walmart, WIC offices, Centertown, Food banks, Rain Tree Day, Human Resource offices, Wellness Fair, County fair, Moneta's Fourth of July celebration, Huddleston Rec Dept. VPI Family events, Tree Lighting Ceremony, Farmers Market, Take Back the Night event.

It was decided we start with exploring having a presence at Bedford's Center Fest. Holly will contact someone to inquire about space.