A Partnership for Lamoille Valley Children
Morrisville, Vermont

ORIGIN OF THE PARTNERSHIP IN LAMOILLE VALLEY

Collaborative efforts to bring together parents, providers, educators and the business community to improve outcomes for children and families in Lamoille Valley have been ongoing for over 20 years. In 1992, Lamoille Valley launched the state’s first regional Success By Six Council, a model adopted and adapted in 12 regions of the state over the next few years. The purpose of Success by Six Councils was to change or influence early childhood systems, policies, practices and funding. Vermont’s early childhood partnerships are now referred to as Building Bright Futures (BBF) Councils. The Lamoille Family Center has been an active partner in the BBF Council, including serving on the local Steering Committee and the Council Board since 1992. It currently serves as the BBF fiscal agent for the Lamoille County region.

GOALS

Vermont’s outcomes were codified in law in 2014 under Vermont Act 186. The Act lays out a set of desired outcomes for which the state will collect population-level data to measure progress and inform future spending decisions. These outcomes also serve as the vision and roadmap for the Lamoille Valley partnership. All partners with a stake in child and family well-being are invited to step up and help align resources toward the following outcomes, as outlined in the Act.

1. Vermont has a prosperous economy.
2. Vermonters are healthy.
3. Vermont’s environment is clean and sustainable.
4. Vermont’s communities are safe and supportive.
5. Vermont’s families are safe, nurturing, stable and supported.
6. Vermont’s children and young people achieve their potential:
   a. pregnant women and young people thrive;
   b. children are ready for school;
   c. children succeed in school;
   d. youth choose healthy behaviors; and
   e. youth successfully transition to adulthood.
7. Vermont’s elders and people with disabilities and people with mental conditions live with dignity and independence in settings they prefer.
8. Vermont has open, effective and inclusive government at the state and local levels.

Early Childhood-LINC, a Learning and Innovation Network for Communities, is co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Social Policy in Washington, D.C., and the Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County, Florida. The Early Childhood-LINC profiles provide overviews of our member communities.
KEY STRATEGIES

Lamoille Valley partners pursue multiple strategies to build a strong and vibrant system that supports desired outcomes for children and families and promotes protective factors, including:

- A coordinated and integrated system of services for young children and their parents;
- Playgroups for parents and children to promote social connections;
- Facilitated dialogue and instructional opportunities to increase knowledge of parenting and child development;
- Home visiting to support children with developmental, physical or behavioral challenges and their families and provide access to concrete supports;
- Community events that create awareness of early learning and development; and
- Support to and networking with child care providers to enhance quality.

MEASURES OF PROGRESS

The partners in Lamoille Valley track progress on numerous indicators of well-being for the above mentioned outcomes and goals of Vermont Act 186. Data are used to inform continuing quality improvement efforts. Specific indicators collected by Lamoille partners include but are not limited to:

- percent of total regulated early care and education providers rated as 4 or 5 STARS in the state quality rating and improvement system;
- percent of children ready for kindergarten;
- percent of public school students eligible for free or reduced meals; and
- number of reports and percent of substantiations of child abuse and neglect cases.

In addition, BBF collects data on indicators that are publicly available by geographic regions of the state (see www.vermontinsights.org).

STRUCTURE & LEADERSHIP

The Lamoille BBF Council is one of 12 Councils across Vermont that align geographically with the state Agency of Human Services districts. The BBF State Council, established in Vermont Act 104, serves as the umbrella organization to the 12 regional councils. The Lamoille Council is comprised of local parents, early childhood providers, child welfare, physical and mental health staff and other interested community members.

The Lamoille Family Center is a non-profit service agency and one of 15 parent child centers in Vermont. It is a major provider of child and family services in this rural community. The Center is governed by a Board of Directors and is firmly committed to developing a system of care for children and families that weaves together best practices of professionals, the wisdom and experience of families and the strengths and hopes of the community. Members of the Lamoille Family Center staff are part of the BBF Council.

FINANCING

The Lamoille BBF Council is supported with two funding streams. First, state grants fund the implementation of direct service strategies. Second, a 2014 federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant supports Council staffing.

The Lamoille Family Center is funded with state and federal grants and contracts that allow it to provide programming for children, youth and families.