Meeting Minutes  
Wisconsin Partnership Program  
Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families  
Communications and Public Awareness Workgroup  
Feb. 16, 2012, 11:00 to 1:00 p.m.  
Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative  
Milwaukee Housing Authority  
5003 W. Lisbon Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53216

Present: Michael Campbell, Daryl Carter, Darryl Davidson, Rodney Evan, Kim Gonzalez, Kate Kvale, Angela Moore, Valerie Nash, Samantha Perry, Terrance Ray, Craig Sanders, Pamela Smith, Dennis Walton, Erick Williams and Shirley Williams

Staff and Consultants: Quinton Cotton, Nancy Eberle, Lorraine Lathen and Karen Roach

Guests from the Beloit Fatherhood Initiative: Traviase Dumas, Jeff Hardnett, Jerry Jones and Jairell Knigh

1. Welcome and Introductions

Lorraine Lathen called meeting to order at 11:25 a.m.

Terrance Ray reminded the group about the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative’s upcoming Daddy-Daughter Dance, and encouraged fathers to attend with their daughters.

2. Communications Work Plan

Lathen provided an overview: Plan was developed over past 18 to 24 months with input from this Workgroup, the collaboratives, the LIHF Steering Committee and others. The communications plan is a living and breathing document. Lathen reminded the group that the focus of today’s meeting was to select the key audiences and messages and review recommendations in the draft plan.

Lathen asked for feedback on the draft communications plan. Moore noted that the plan was well done and more than reflective of the group’s work. Cotton noted that the plan reflected group discussion and suggested the group take a look at the recommendations, particularly which audience should be targeted first.

Cotton clarified the difference between direct and grassroots lobbying, noting that Wisconsin Partnership Program funds cannot be used for lobbying. Cotton noted that information that is educational in nature could be provided to elected officials unless related to specific legislation. The group discussed crafting messages at the grassroots and community level versus statewide, i.e., we can expand our audience, but where do we start?

Lathen noted the Wisconsin population chart on page 5 of the communications plan (to reach an audience of 60 percent of African Americans age 15 to 44 living in Kenosha, Racine and Rock counties and 20 percent of this population living in Milwaukee County over a three-year period) and asked the group if the goal seemed reasonable. Members of the workgroup concurred.
Ideas for cost-saving tactics:
- Pitching stories to local cable channels.
- Online ads might not be as effective for this message; ads would work better in places where people are captive audiences, for example, city buses, DMV, point of access communications (see page 7).
- Slam artists might be willing to dedicate a night to the cause, in a language that is understood.
- Artists might commission work as a way to give back.
- College students could do pro bono work as a way to build their portfolios.

3. Finalizing Recommendations of Messaging
- Discussion of the core messages to fathers included:
  - Spiritual well-being should be considered.
  - Planning for pregnancy is an important concept.
  - Create positive messages that pregnancy is beautiful, not a burden; change the stereotype.
  - Message might be different depending on the age of the father.
  - Even when the parents are not in a relationship, it’s important to have fathers involved. Fathers are not second string, they’re on the A team.

Lathen asked workgroup members to select their top two messages to fathers and mothers, and noted that in regard to health providers, efforts would be made a decision to focus on PRAMS (PRAMS is a survey that asks mothers about their experiences before, during and after pregnancy. The goal is to encourage African American women to participate in the survey.) The workgroup identified their primary audience, with majority selecting African American women of reproductive age.

Discussion about technical support needs included the concept of consistency and how to frame messages. Other workgroup members suggested social media training, and templates for press releases and letters to the editor.

Recommendations:
- We can’t do this all at once, we need to set priorities.
- This plan is complex: there are activities the WPP will have responsibility for, others the collaboratives will have responsibility for.
- We have to speak the same message to create buzz, i.e., consistent messages with multiple channels. This is a regional plan with flexibility for local efforts.
- Be creative to raise funds. Tap into Ad Council proposals and partner with other groups, including the Fatherhood Initiative and FAIM (Fathers Against Infant Mortality). Host a regional basketball tournament.
- Consider digital storytelling and social media.
- Formalize evaluation plan, so we know we made a difference.

5. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. Recorder, Karen Roach