



Inclusive and Equitable Recovery for Kent County Children, Youth & Families

MINUTES

Community Action Planning Sessions (Virtual and In-Person)

Summary & Asynchronous Feedback Collection Tool

12/16/21

[Meeting Recording](#)

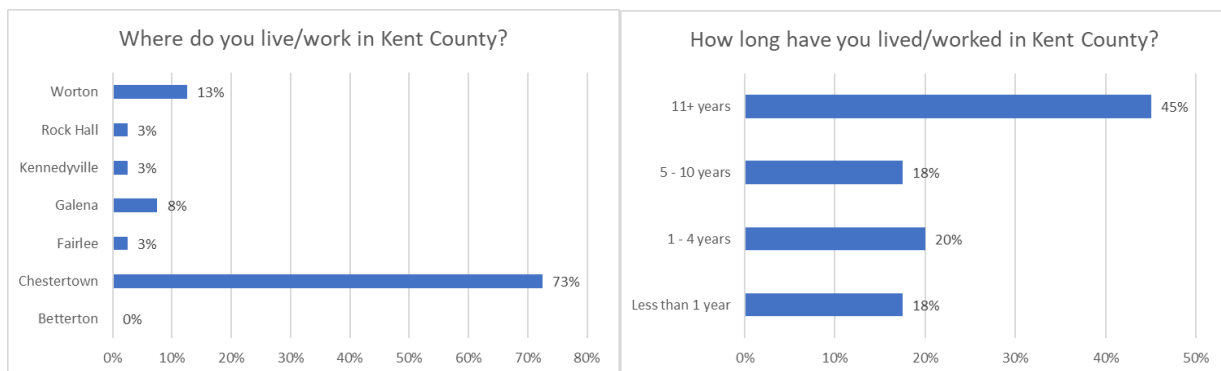
Meeting Purpose

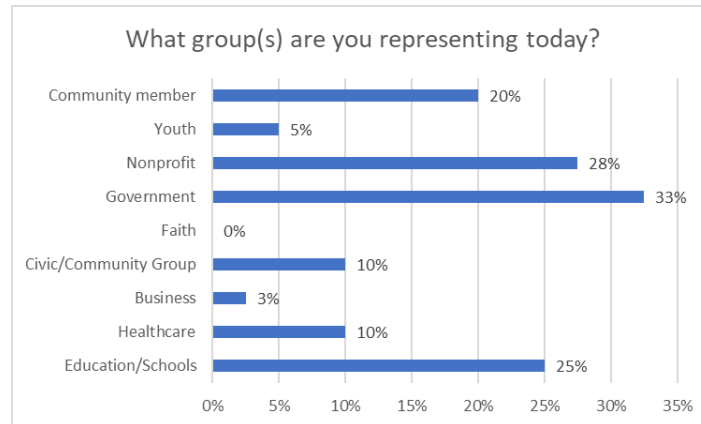
KCLMB shared progress and barriers from implementation of the FY2020-FY2022 Community Plan and collected input from participants to inform the next iteration that will continue to guide our collective efforts in FY2023-FY2025. Data and youth voices were shared to help attendees understand where Kent County youth and families are today and identify strategies and actions to address racial disparities.

Agenda (full agenda [here](#) and meetings slides [here](#))

- Checking in on Kent County Youth and Families - what the data tells us and hearing the voices of local youth
- Working Together to Increase Economic Mobility - progress made since FY20 including the launch of Transportation and Affordable Housing Action Teams; focusing on equity by identifying and addressing racial disparities
- Refreshing our Shared Vision and Priorities for our Next Community Plan - a brief check-on the refined Vision and Priorities from the Guiding Coalition and breakout discussions to discuss collective actions and specific initiatives/programs

Welcome and who's in the room Poll - 68 Live Attendees





Asynchronous participants

Where do you live/work in Kent County?

- **Live in Millington/Galena Area**
- **Work in Chestertown - HH Garnet ES**
- **Work for Kent County, Economic and Tourism Development.**
- **Chestertown - Kent County Health Department, Managed Care**
- **Kennedyville-Kent County Health Department, Managed Care**
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How long have you lived/worked in Kent County?

- I have lived in Kent County most of my life. I was born and raised in KC. I moved away for college and grad school, and for AmeriCorps VISTA. I then worked in Baltimore County Public Schools for 5 years, before moving back to KC in 2006.
- Lived in Kent County from 1984-1990, live in Chester Harbor now. I have worked for Kent County for 10 years.
- Lived in Kent County for 7 year, then moved to QA. Working in Kent County for 5 years
- I have lived in Kent County 18 years, worked in Kent for 15 years
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What group(s) are you representing?

- Education
- Economic and Tourism Development
- Chestertown Rotary



- Health
- Government
- Parent of student in KCPS
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Checking in on Kent County Youth and Families

What the Data Tells Us

- Since we started our last plan, we have seen overall positive trends:
 - Food insecurity and childhood hunger have declined
 - Median household income has increased
 - Overall rate of poverty and childhood poverty have also decreased
- There are racial disparities that show some are being hit harder than others
- Since the pandemic (locally and nationally)
 - Chronic absenteeism has increased
 - Test scores are declining
 - Seeing a rise in mental health emergencies

Hip-Hop Time Capsule

- It's not just about the numbers, we also want to make sure we understand who is being affected by these trends.
- An amplifier of youth voice is a project Chesapeake Heartland and a few others, including KCLMB, sponsored last summer for youth to engage in and build their skills.
- Thank you to Kasey Stewart who was able to present during our meeting and share clips from the [Hip Hop Time Capsule Summer '21 Mixtape](#)

Asynchronous participants

Comments

- Mental Health concerns at all grade levels
- Lower elementary - more behavior & academic concerns than before the pandemic
- Food security has increased. Our students get free breakfast and lunch and we also send home weekend food bags to those in need. Our school has also worked with other local agencies to secure food for families.
- Attendance has improved this school year.
- Need more wrap-around services in the schools & home.
- Youth & Minority mental health



- Youth Placement Crisis - have DDA needs, home crisis (mental health, addiction) Much more complex - just not enough in state resources

Working Together to Increase Economic Mobility

FY20-FY22 Community Plan implementation and alignment of activities

- Progress to-date in addressing basic needs and supporting youth, a few highlights below ([see meeting slides for more](#))
 - Food
 - Pre-Covid, we had great food pantries but they were not connected, through a lot of effort those pantries began to coordinate
 - Feed the Elderly established and more Mobile food pantries to fill the extra need during the pandemic
 - Elementary and Middle School were able to add universal lunch for all students
 - Housing
 - Good Neighbor House through the Chester Valley Minister's Association is working towards a 12-month emergency/transitional shelter to support those in need
 - Expanded Maryland Rural Development Corporation to help community members stay in their homes and prevent evictions and homelessness
 - Transportation
 - UnitedWay put together a task force to study transportation in 2018/2019 - implemented their recommendation to hire a transportation coordinator
 - Rock Hall trolley stopped, then this summer there was a pilot project for a shuttle in Rock Hall and we're looking to see if we can expand this service to connect Rock Hall to Chestertown
 - Youth Programming
 - Earlier this year, we were able to readjust to in class programming and the school system was able to hire mental health and safety coordinators and social workers at all five schools
 - Health and Technology
 - Kent County was at risk of losing the Chestertown Hospital, but through University MD Shore Regional Health, we were able to launch Chestertown Hospital as a rural health model



- Precovid, we weren't online as much. Now, telehealth has expanded to decrease barriers community members experience when seeking healthcare

Comments/Additions:

Virtually

- Make sure to include recreational activities

Asynchronous participants

- EXTREMELY happy to have social workers in schools! (KCMS does not have a social worker, but they have 2 school counselors).
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Transportation and Affordable Housing Action Teams

- **Affordable Housing Action Team**
 - **Purpose:** To collaboratively increase housing stability solutions to the mid-shore
 - **Role:**
 - Deepen understanding of resources to improve on shortage of affordable housing
 - Align the Housing Action Plan with the FY23 Community Plan
 - Support communication, coordination and alignment with other housing programs
- **Transportation Action Team**
 - **Purpose:** To increase the availability of public transit information and options that will both increase ridership, access and broaden the user base
 - **Role:**
 - Deepen understanding of transportation issues, gaps and opportunities
 - Support the development of a new Action Plan aligned with the FY23 Community Plan



- Support communication, coordination and alignment with other Action Teams, local and regional coalitions and other program
- FY23 planning and focus on equity ([see meeting slides for data slides](#))
 - During this next planning session, we will be focused on identifying and addressing racial disparities within our community. It's important that we don't blame children or individuals based on the data but focus on the systems that are contributing to the disparities
 - Think outside of the box
 - Healthy Babies
 - Looking at the rate of children born below a normal birthweight - 21% of African American children born in Kent County between 2017-2019 were low birth weights, compared to 6% of White children and 13% Hispanic babies
 - African American children are 4x more likely to be born with a low birth weight
 - Disparities in access to prenatal care; studies show mothers of color experience higher rates of stress, regardless of income.
 - Kindergarten Readiness
 - Huge disparities in our children coming into school
 - Only 50% of African Americans and 30% Hispanic students are coming to school ready compared to 73% of White students
 - Youth Behavioral Health
 - This is a steady trend that started before the pandemic and has been made worse
 - High rates of self reporting - there are disparities and the rates are alarmingly high (1 out of every 3 African American students and 1 out of every 4 White students reported feeling sad or hopeless for more than 2 weeks in the past year - 2018 survey)
 - Student Homelessness
 - Black Students are 1.7x more likely to be homeless than white students at some point during the school year
 - Poverty + ALICE
 - White households are 6.8x more likely to be above the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) threshold than Black households



Refreshing our Shared Vision and Priorities for our Next Community Plan

Our vision is what has ignited engagement and implementation of our current Community Plan. Vision is the clear, compelling picture of change we all want to see for all Kent County residents. The Guiding Coalition made an important update to our shared Vision, to change the word equal to equitable, to emphasize the need to work together to ensure everyone is provided with what they need to succeed. We believe this updated Vision will carry us through our next, refreshed Community Plan and beyond. Recently, the Guiding Coalition took a look at our Priorities and refined them in light of our current situation and opportunities and the progress that has been made. The refinements were minor, carrying forward a focus on basic needs, communication and coordination among service providers and supporting programs and innovative approaches for youth. **If you have any questions or suggestions on how we can further strengthen or clarify the Vision and Priorities in the new, shared Community Plan, please share your thoughts.**

In Person Session

- Vision
 - Do we need to add back in language about children, youth, & families? To whom, for whom, with whom?
 - Is it redundant to say access and opportunity?
 - Should we say 'equal and equitable'?
- Priorities
 - Would like to see services around domestic violence included more in the basic needs discussion
 - Include young adults (like opportunity youth) 19-30 years old.
 - The three priorities seem programmatic and services heavy - what about the ways we can elevate the voice and power of youth and families?

Asynchronous participants

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Virtual and In Person Breakout group discussions

- [Kindergarten Readiness Breakout Group Discussion](#)

Asynchronous participants

- **Additions/Comments:**





- [Student Homelessness Breakout Group Discussion](#)
 - **Additions/Comments:**
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- [School Success Breakout Group Discussion](#)
 - **Additions/Comments:**
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- [Poverty + ALICE Breakout Group Discussion](#)
 - **Additions/Comments:**
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- [Kent County High School Breakout \(Student Homelessness\)](#)
 - **Additions/Comments:**
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Call to Action and Closing Reflections

- January 28, 2022 Homelessness Awareness and Resource Day. Point in Time Count (PIT) to understand the current homeless demographic in Kent County.
- Ride the DCT Bus and give feedback. www.KentCountyRides.com has all the information you need to get on the bus and a comment form to provide feedback to us and our partners.
- [Unite Us](#) platform to build coordinated care networks of health and social service providers. Register your organization [here!](#)
- Mental Health First aid training - reach out to Jeanette from University of Shore Medical, reach out if you are interested in participating

Asynchronous participants

Additions:

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Any other relevant comments or resources shared by the group

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