



Success By 6 of Kankakee County

An Early Childhood Community Collaborative

2019 Strategic Plan



**United Way of Kankakee
& Iroquois Counties**



Table of Contents

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| What is Success By 6? | 3 |
| Mission and Vision Statements | 3 |
| Success By 6 History | 4 |
| Who We Serve: Demographics and Community Information | 6 |
| Success By 6 Leadership | 7 |
| Acknowledgements | 8 |
| Strategic Resetting | 9 |
| The Data | 12 |

What is Success By 6?

Success By 6 is a community collaborative, funded by the United Way of Kankakee & Iroquois Counties and the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley, focused on early childhood development and support for families across Kankakee County.

Success By 6 is comprised of community members and professionals who believe in the transformative power of investing in high-quality programs for children prenatal to six years old and their families. These stakeholders include our local school systems, healthcare systems, public health, mental health providers, human service agencies, childcare programs, preschools, home-visiting programs, faith-based organizations, park districts, law enforcement, municipalities, libraries, families, and community members. Kankakee County is one of several hundred Success By 6 coalitions nationwide that is focused on improving school readiness through community change.

The key factor impacting school and life readiness is the understanding that a child and family must have access to community supports and services addressing a variety of needs. Research in the fields of education, development, and psychology have long shown that adverse childhood experiences and dysfunction in the family can cause great harm to a developing child; harm that can impact that child's ability to learn and succeed for the rest of his or her life. Ensuring high quality programs and services for all children and their families requires commitment from a system of providers including: healthcare providers, early childhood education programs, parents, public officials, community leaders, social services agencies, and the general public. Success By 6 engages local partners to ensure that the developmental needs of our youngest children and their families are understood and met. In doing this, not only are our community's children likely to succeed in school, they are more likely to have higher achievement in life.

Mission and Vision Statements:

Mission: Success By 6 works to ensure all Kankakee County children ages 0-6 have the positive and enriching experiences and positive parent-child relationships necessary to begin school ready to succeed.

Vision: Success By 6 envisions a community where all children and families are happy, healthy, and well-adjusted. We are dedicated to supporting our community through family and parent engagement, early mental health services, and by raising awareness about resources available to parents, caregivers, and early childhood providers.

Success By 6 History

United Way of Kankakee & Iroquois Counties and the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley created the Success By 6[®] Initiative in 2008 to ensure all Kankakee County children, birth to age six, have the positive and enriching experiences and positive parent-child relationships necessary to begin school ready to succeed. This early learning coalition made up of early childhood development experts, United Way agencies serving families, childcare providers, school districts, libraries, local businesses, and community volunteers is working together to improve the early childhood educational landscape for our local community.

Since 2008, Success By 6 has spearheaded multiple initiatives focused on parent support and school readiness. These initiatives include early learning calendars, yearly preschool fairs, Parent Cafes, Text 4 Baby, Kindergarten Bootcamps, and Love & Logic caregiver trainings. The coalition also developed a website, ParentsPage.org, which received on average 10,000 hits per month in 2013. Success By 6 has partnered with the Kankakee County Health Department and local pediatricians to distribute *Born Learning's Stage of Learning* materials to parents of birth to age six which can be found on ParentsPage.org.

Beginning in 2009, Success By 6 partnered with the Kankakee, Bradley, and Herscher school districts to host ten Parent Cafés focusing on parent education and literacy. Over the past years, these school districts, along with Bourbonnais school district, began hosting a series of parenting workshops called Love and Logic, with funding from the Community Foundation and Success By 6. The Love and Logic approach helps improve parent, child, and teacher relationships through practical, effective and fun techniques.

In 2011 and 2012 Success By 6 partnered with the Bradley Public Library, Bradley School District 61, the Kankakee Public Library and Child Care Resource and Referral to host a Kindergarten Boot Camp. The camp served as a school readiness support created by Success By 6 for children who were preparing to enter kindergarten the following school year. The camp used center-based activities covering fine and gross motor skills, general knowledge, group play, and home life skills. Children's skill levels and family characteristics were surveyed in order to get a snapshot of how prepared children and families were for entering school.

Additionally, Success By 6 was the recipient of a \$9,999 grant from Early Childhood Action Partnerships (ECAP) to organize and strengthen its existing partnerships. The purpose of the ECAP project was to promote and support systems building initiatives in communities across Illinois. Through the ECAP project grant, Success By 6 has participated in various trainings and received technical assistance pertaining to systems change, community collaboration, parental participation, and strategic structure and planning.

Each year the United Way and Community Foundation Success By 6 coalition, along with the child development faculty and students from Olivet Nazarene University, create a comprehensive early learning calendar for families and caregivers of children ages birth to six years. The calendars focus on a different theme each month and provide daily developmental activities as well as resources available in the community for children and families. Five thousand of the early learning calendars are distributed annually through the Kankakee and Bradley public libraries, child care facilities and preschools, the Success By 6 preschool fair, the weekly Kankakee Farmers Market, and through the members of the Success By 6 coalition.

For several years, the coalition has also coordinated a preschool and early childhood fair, bringing together 25 preschools and early childhood education programs that are available in the community. The fair is free of charge and provides a wealth of information to parents and caregivers on the educational options available for their children. This is the only fair of its kind in the area that allows families to learn about the community's many resources so they can make informed decisions about their children's early education and development.

In 2016, Success By 6 partnered with the Erikson Institute of Chicago to bring the Early Development Instrument (EDI) to Kankakee County. The EDI is a community measure that provides information about children's health, development, and school readiness. The EDI allows Success By 6 and our stakeholders, as well as other community partners, to help improve services and community conditions that prepare children for success in school and in life. The EDI survey tool was implemented through the kindergarten teachers at Kankakee School District 111, Bourbonnais Elementary School District 53, Bradley Elementary School District 61, Kankakee Trinity Academy, and Kankakee Valley Montessori School to provide Success By 6 with helpful data on how we can better support the development of our children before they enter into the school system.

From the data we received through the EDI, Success By 6 has established a new strategic plan focusing on family and parent engagement, early mental health support, marketing, and outreach for the resources available to families. This strategic plan seeks to address the needs and mitigate the barriers that hinder our children and families from a successful future in school and in life. The Success By 6 Coalition has put in place clearly defined goals and outcomes that reflect our mission statement; to ensure all Kankakee County children 0-6 have the positive and enriching experiences and positive parent-child relationship necessary to begin school ready to succeed.

Who We Serve: Demographics and Community Information

Success By 6 serves children prenatal to age six and their caregivers in Kankakee County through programs that focus on child development and parenting skills. The Success By 6 coalition also serves as a hub for early childhood providers to help improve communication and collaboration as we work together to support children and families across the county. Success By 6 is a team comprised of passionate individuals who have a stake in early childhood outcomes and are leaders within in their fields.

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, Kankakee County is one of Illinois' ten most disadvantaged counties (Palmer and Stohr, 2016). The measure is based on holistic community demographics, education, employment, crime and public health data. Residents' abilities to make a living wage are challenged by a 31% high school dropout rate (Kankakee District 111, 2016) and only 15% of residents over the age of 25 with a Bachelor's degree or higher (City Data, 2016). However, most non-blue collar wage jobs available today require a minimum of Bachelor's degree as a condition of hire.

Kankakee County consists of both urban and rural communities, providing a unique challenge to reach the needs of its children and families. It is home to 113,449 people (US Census Bureau, 2010). Of the 25,105 households with children - 7,297 are single parent homes (29%). Kankakee County encompasses 12 public school districts with 40 public schools, as well as approximately 12 private or parochial schools.

While there are defined gaps in services and access to resources in our community, Kankakee County does offer a variety of resources to children and families across varying age ranges and types of services. The county is home to two hospitals, a community college, and a 4-year university. The county also has the "Kan-I-Help" information network and the 2-1-1 information hotline, both of which provide a directory of services available in Kankakee and Iroquois Counties. In an effort to provide a safe and educational environment for children and families, Kankakee County is home to the Exploration Station...A Children's Museum, sponsored by the Bourbonnais Township Park District (BTPD). The BTPD and the Kankakee Park District host activities for families throughout the year, focusing on holistic wellness. Kankakee County was awarded with grant funding from the Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation to begin a new initiative called Project SUN. This project will focus on building a comprehensive system of care to address mental health concerns for children and youth ages prenatal to twenty-one years. Success By 6 has partnered with Project SUN to provide data from the EDI to help inform the project's strategic plan. Success By 6 will continue to provide a platform for collaboration as we address the needs of children and families age prenatal to six year in an effort to ensure school readiness and success.

Success By 6 Leadership

Tiffany DeRocco: Tiffany is the Executive Director for United Way of Kankakee & Iroquois Counties and serves as funding partner and acting leader of Success By 6. She has been with United Way for over five years and has a vested interest in early childhood initiatives. Tiffany participated in the nationally renowned Barbara Bowman Leadership Fellows Program in the 2017-2018 cohort and completed a policy memorandum for the implementation of a trauma screening tool in Kankakee County schools.

Nicole Smolkovich: Nicole is the Executive Director for the Community Foundation of the Kankakee River Valley and serves as funding partner and co-leader of Success By 6. She has been with the Community Foundation for over 9 years and has played a major role in Success By 6's strategic initiatives since 2009. Through the Community Foundation and Success By 6, Nicole has made a significant impact on children and families throughout Kankakee & Iroquois Counties.

Emily Poff: Emily is the Development Manager for United Way of Kankakee & Iroquois Counties and assists as co-lead of Success By 6 alongside Tiffany and Nicole. She has been with United Way for over 3 years and has a vested interest in serving our community's youngest members. She works to ensure equitable distribution of resources for children and families through United Way and Success By 6.

Steering Committee: *The steering committee members serve as the leads for the three different work groups and have played an instrumental role in guiding the strategic planning process.* Erica Baptiste, Dr. Jim Duggan, Dr. Scott Goselin, Chris Hall, Sandra Knight, Rosemary Pistorius, Kate Reed, Tyler Reynolds, Dr. Laura Sztuba, and Dr. Genevra Walters.

Acknowledgements

Coalition Members:

We are deeply grateful for the dedicated individuals and community partners who have played a key role in moving the mission of Success By 6 forward throughout the years! Each person has been an integral part in making Kankakee County Success By 6 a premier early childhood coalition in the state of Illinois. We appreciate the time and expertise shared and the efforts given in pursuit of a better community for the families who call Kankakee County home. The work of Success By 6 would not be possible without the commitment of those listed below:

Bruce Adams, Mildred Andersen, Christa Austin, Erica Baptist, Brittaney Beck, Kathleen Berry, Jen Blair, Brianne Noehrnsen, Natalie Brandon, Chelsey Byers, Chris Bzdon, Debra Caise, Marlene Carr, Shannan Carrell, Torrie Carter, Betty Chapman, Pat Childs, Lindsey Coffey, Kim Cousin, Jodie Depatis, Joy D'Amico, Amy Emerson, Nina Epstein, Andrew Fisher, Colleen Ford, Stacey Fox, Wendy Goeckner, Penny Greenlee, Jackie Haas, Mike Hahs, Char Haisma, Christean Hall, Dan Harris, Jennifer Hering, Kennilyn Hickory, Elisa Holtman, Rozanne Hooper, Felice Hybert, Shannon Jermal, Mary Kestel, Courtney Kidd, Kim Knott, Jim Krupski, Amy LaFine, Kari Livesey, Lynn Lochner, Fabi Lopez, Cindy Luzeniecki, Khuloud Mansour, Kathy Marquie, Kelly Martin, Matt McAllister, Becky McBroom, Lisa Milton, Lynn Noffke, Chrissy Nojd, David Nojd, Richard Nordmeyer, Tammy Notter, Sissy O'Connor, Beth Olney, Kay Pangle, Rebecca Parks, Julie Penrod, Kathy Peterson, Brad Prairie, Crystal Pombert, Debbie Reinche, Ellie Roby, Camille Rose, Dawn Schwarzkopf, Liz Scott, Kristi Schu, Mary Self, Becky Selk, Christle Sforza, Beth Shelton, Tracy Small, Eran Smith, Christine Sparks, Jennifer Stawick, Ellen Steward, Sherry Spencer, Erin Thorne, Deloris Walker, William Welsh, Brooke Williams, Laura Wilson, and Sarah Winkel

Family and Parent Engagement Work Group Members:

Dr. Jim Duggan, Rosemary Pistorius, Mary Self, Rebecca Parks, Kelly Martin, Shannan Carrell, Christean Hall, Becky Selk, Chrissy Nojd, and Kim Knott

Mental Health Work Group Members:

Kate Reed, Ellen Steward, Ellie Roby, Jackie Haas, David Nojd, Rebecca Halperin, Brenda Wetzel, Sarah Ritter, Mariah Garratt, Mary Ann Berg, Andy Fisher, Amy LaFine, Kristen Longberger, Tyler Reynolds, Juanita Redd, Kristi Ball, Sandra Knight, Bridget Purdy, Jason Bentsen,

Marketing and Outreach Work Group Members:

Laura Sztuba, Bill Yohnka, Mary Kestel, Shannan Carrell, Chris Bzdon, Rosemary Pistorius, Tyler Reynolds

Strategic Re-Setting

Success By 6 received rich data from the implementation of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) in May of 2017. The EDI provided Kankakee County with unique data sets which highlighted areas of vulnerability and strengths across five developmental domains for kindergarten children enrolled in Kankakee School District 111, Bradley School District 61, Bourbonnais School District 53, Kankakee Trinity Academy, and Kankakee Valley Montessori School. The EDI is a community needs assessment that provides a detailed snapshot of how well the children in our community are developing at the neighborhood level and their level of preparedness before entering into the school system. The data was sourced by assessing the students' development in the areas of physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive, communication skills and general knowledge. This information was instrumental to identifying gaps in resources, organizing community stakeholders, and strengthening existing and establishing new partnerships.

From this data Success By 6 coalition members, with the help of a strategic planning consultant, identified three key priority areas that drove the coalition's efforts over the course of the year. Furthermore, during the strategic planning period, the coalition worked extensively with the Erikson Institute of Chicago to develop the necessary infrastructure to buildout the proper internal supports. The Erikson Institute was a critical resource for Success By 6 as the strategic plan was refined and will help bring forth implementation over the next three years.

The three focus areas defined in the strategic plan are parent and family engagement, early mental health, and marketing and outreach. Detailed below are the goals and strategies that Success By 6 will strive to achieve by 2021. To gain access to the complete strategic plan with measurable outcomes, please visit our website for more details:

www.myunitedway.org/successby6

Family and Parent Engagement

Goal 1: Increase partnerships with families in Kankakee County.

- Strategies for attaining Goal 1:
 - Design a family needs assessment and distribute county wide
 - Create and implement family focus groups lead by family liaisons
 - Invite the Parent leaders from various school districts to the table to lead this initiative
 - Encourage and invite more parents to the Success By 6 meetings to encourage and promote parents to act on behalf of all children being served in the community

Goal 2: Improve intake and referral through a centralized process for all families

- Strategies for attaining Goal 2:

- Communicating Coordinated Intake (CI) for birth to 3 contact information to all stakeholders in the county
- Develop intake process for 3-5 year olds which would include contact information and service areas for all serving school districts in the county

Goal 3: Empower and Engage families

- Strategies for attaining Goal 3:
- Review and sort survey results to clearly identify skills available and services needed
- Collaborate with Project SUN to maintain a single accurate record of resources for birth to five
- Elicit feedback from our family focus groups to ensure that the directory is in line with community needs

Goal 4: Develop tool to successfully share community engagement practices among and within agencies and schools to better support families in the community

- Strategies for attaining Goal 4:
- Develop a list serve and share details with all stakeholders
- Post sign up details on all county agency websites

Goal 5: Ensure equitable distribution of resources throughout Kankakee County

- Strategies for attaining Goal 5:
- Identify gaps in resource allocations using the EDI asset maps
- Reduce transportation barriers
- Develop regular communication with private child-care and community based day care providers.

Early Mental Health

Goal 1: Improve and expand access for high quality early care, education, and services

- Strategies for attaining Goal 1:
- Promote children’s safety and health.
- Engage and support the early care and education workforce.
- Support the alignment and transition of early childhood programs into Kindergarten (increase SEL).
- Support EC programs in meeting Quality Standards. The alignment of quality in the community will support K readiness into the school systems.
- Contact CCR&R to determine how many licensed, high quality early child care providers we have.
- Define high quality providers based on ExceleRate Illinois standards.
- Provide trainings on SEL, mental health, warning signs, abuse and malnutrition
- Organize local groups who can help to support organizations to retain healthy employees (faith-based groups, PTA, businesses/Chamber of Commerce, etc.).
- Cluster providers so individuals will have opportunities for support.

Goal 2: Develop a trauma informed community

- Strategies for attaining Goal 2:
- Strategies will address Prevention and Treatment of children and families affected by Trauma
- Create Trauma-Informed Organizations
- Improve attachment and address early attachment issues (impact of drugs and alcohol, opioids, drug addicted babies on social-emotional development)

Goal 3: Improve and expand access to mental health education, services and resources

- Strategies for attaining Goal 3:
- Expand network and community reach
- Identify standard language/tools
- Make Mental Health services more convenient based on needs of population being served
- Improved continuum of care
- Increase educational competencies to support the care and learning of infants/toddlers and pre-natal and postpartum services for moms
- Continue to expand professional knowledge and competencies to support the care and learning of infants/toddlers and sensory integration issues
- Systematically engage in reflective practice to support the care and learning of infants/toddlers
- Encourage primary care doctors to steward touch points such as waiting room to disseminate information and give anticipatory guidance about development
- Establish stronger partnership with OBs, pediatricians, WIC, early intervention programs, public health departments for immunizations and check-ins

Marketing and Outreach

Goal 1: Better connect families with current support services and resources throughout Kankakee County

- Strategy for attaining Goal 1:
- Create an online Resource Directory and Event Page for families

Goal 2: Promote and encourage quality early childhood care, experiences, and relationships for all children

- Strategies for attaining Goal 2:
- Create awareness campaigns of the importance of Birth to 5 holistic support services and education (home visiting, early childhood, mental health, sensory integration, attachment, family and community engagement)
- Increase in public awareness of children's need for eye contact and warmth from caregiver

Goal 3: Raise awareness about the Success by Six mission and increase membership

- Strategy for attaining Goal 3:

- Develop a public outreach strategy that includes presentations, forums, and public service activities to expand the understanding of Success by 6 and recruit membership

The Data

Please visit this interactive website to take a deeper look into all of our community's EDI data: edi.erikson.edu

