

SUMMARY
BORN TO READ PARTNERS MEETING

June 20, 2017 3:00-4:30 pm
Munson Medical Center

Present: Betsy Hardy, Mary Schubert, Amy Shamroe, Andy Schuck, Ruth Bay, Paula Jo Kemler, Sharon Vreeland, Nancy Grote, Missy Smith, Stephanie Brandsdorfer, Sharon Workman

1. Introductions

We introduced ourselves and welcomed special guest Mary Schubert, Executive Director of Munson Medical Center Women's and Children's services, as well as two new members of our network: Sharon Vreeland, Coordinator of Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties' human services collaboratives and Stephanie Brandsdorfer, Vista volunteer working with Born to Read as our community liaison until November.

2. Born to Read progress since our last meeting (March 7, 2017) - highlights:

- Funds received from 100 Women Who Care (\$9,500) in April brought total raised to \$28,960 since October 2016. And we are very fortunate to have Stephanie, United Way Vista volunteer, assisting with community outreach and development of an implementation manual for sustaining and replicating Born to Read.
- We now have enhanced Welcome Baby packets with new branding, message, and contents. Betsy described the distribution system. About 1800 expectant parents per year receive a card introducing Born to Read with tips for reading with babies during their last trimester visit. WIC nurses then deliver the Welcome Baby packets with book to about 1000 new parents after baby is born. Mary and Betsy will discuss ways to try and reach all 2000 parents who deliver at Munson.
- The BTR Ambassador program is thriving with 20 active volunteers reading at 7 community sites – they've reached 183 children since January. We recognized Ambassadors at Twilight Rotary's BTR celebration on 6/8, presenting them with sashes, caps, and name buttons they can wear while reading with children. * Idea for next year: Ambassadors march in Cherry Festival parade and/or other events.
- Thanks to new funding, we purchased 2000 books, designed new TADL tote bags with free board book, and are upgrading our website using professional services.
- Rotary Club members continue working on our READ fundraiser to benefit Born to Read – September 28, 5:30, TC Golf & Country Club. Please spread the word and plan to come to the event!

3. Goals for summer:

- Plan implementation of Youth Ambassador program with support from BTR Ambassador Mary Kay Archer, retired TCAPS teacher and Tracy Truschke, TCAPS School Readiness Coordinator
- Schedule fall dates for 3 BTR Ambassador training workshops (1 Youth, 1 in Suttons Bay, 1 in TC)
- Plan and implement special outreach activities to reach migrant families
- Translate and print materials for Spanish Welcome Baby packets
- Design/print new BTR expectant parent postcard with new branding

4. Presentation/Discussion: Mary Schubert, Munson Medical Women's and Children's Services

Mary noted that women's and children's services are the top priority for Munson. Women's health impacts powerfully on children's health and an unhealthy child is likely to become an unhealthy adult. She shared statistics that illustrate how critically important this goal is:

- The US is ranked # 64 in the world in maternal morbidity and mortality – in spite of having the highest health care costs.
- Michigan is the 8th worst state in the US – 42 others states are doing better
- In northern Michigan, 40% of pregnant women smoke – the highest percentage in the state.

Munson's goal is to deliver quality care close to home, expanding community liaisons and advocating for women's and children's health services across the region, state, and nation. Many new efforts are underway to enhance close to home high-risk fetal medical services, 24/7 pediatric care, specialty clinics, mobile crisis response, psychiatric and drug treatment services, as well as expanded partnerships across the region.

We discussed the link between children's health and early literacy -- as demonstrated in brain development research, as well as anecdotal stories (like Missy Smith's) about responses of infants in the NICU when being read to.

Betsy noted that parents who deliver babies at Munson come from a wider geographic area than the 5 county region now targeted by Born to Read. Many of these communities don't have access to the resources we've pulled together in support of early literacy. There is great potential for replicating the Born to Read model to reach all parents who deliver at Munson -- involving other Rotary Clubs, local libraries, school districts, community organizations, and volunteers to work together in promoting early literacy with families of newborns across northern Michigan.

Next Steps:

The 3-year strategic plan we developed in 2013 has been effective. We reached our goals and enhanced the quality of Born to Read. It may be time to step back, envision the next 3 years, develop new goals, and define strategies for reaching them.

Special Thanks to:

- Betsy Hardy for arranging our meeting place and inviting Mary Schubert to join us.
- Amy Shamroe for donating 4 large boxes of new board books and proceeds from last year's Traverse City Children's Book Festival to Born to Read.
- Ruth Bay's friend Toni for donating many handmade quilted book bags for Power Book Bag distribution.

Next Meeting: Please mark your calendars!

Tuesday, September 19, 3:00-4:30 pm
5toOne Neighborhood Center at Old Mission Library