

2014 Needs Assessment for Tuscaloosa

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Accomplishments

2014 Accomplishments from Past Year

County: TUSCALOOSA

CPC members have supported and/or hosted a number of events in Tuscaloosa County over the past year that have benefited the children of Tuscaloosa County and their families. The events include:

June and July 2013- TEAMS Summer Academy - provided juvenile court involved youth a safe positive environment during the summer.

July 2013 - Heatin Up the Diamond - a Girls Softball Tournament benefitting Tuscaloosa's One Place (TOP).

July and August 2013 - Child Development Resources (CDR) offered a 6-hour training for child care providers. This 3-part Discipline course, 'Behaviors That Still Challenge Us . . . Emotional Self-Regulation can Change Everything' included lecture, discussion, and active learning. July and August 2013 - Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) provided summer activities for the Bigs and Littles (with parents included for some activities), some of these activities included: a day with Fishing Future, swimming lessons, the opportunity for more than 80 kids to attend the Mark Ingram football camp.

July and August 2013 - Camp Smile provided enrichment activities and character education to children ages 5-10.

August 2013 - Parent Resource Library staff planned special activities for families during the UA Graduate Parent Support Fall Kick-Off held at the Child Development Research Center.

August 2013 - CDR hosted a SuperSpecial Saturday event for child care providers and early childhood teachers.

August 2013 - Tuscaloosa Backpack Coalition - assisted with backpack/school supplies distribution for community.

August 2013 - A Foster/Adoptive Parent Fun Day was held at Bowers Park. This event celebrated all the foster and adoptive parents in our community. There were over 200 people in attendance. There was food, bouncy houses, face painting and music.

October and November of 2013 - The annual Heart Gallery event was held which showcases children in the state of Alabama who need a 'Forever Family'. The UA Law School showcased pictures of our children late October and The Church at Tuscaloosa had pictures up all of November.

October 2013 - Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority at the University of Alabama hosted the Kappa Karnival for our Bigs, Littles, and their parents (BBBS). This fun-filled event consisted of bouncy houses, games, face painting, cotton candy, snow cones and other tasty treats. Sponsors donated books to the sorority for the Littles to take home with them for their reading enjoyment.

October 2013 - Circle K International, Inc. at the University of Alabama hosted a Pumpkin Painting Party for the Bigs, Littles, and their parents (BBBS). During this event, the Littles picked their own pumpkin and creatively designed it with paint.

October 2013 - TOP Fall Festival provided free games, food and family based activities to over 1200 participants.

November 2013 - 11th Annual No Show Ball benefiting Big Brothers Big Sisters was 'held.'

November 2013 - The Tuscaloosa City Schools sponsored a community Bullying Forum, entitled, 'Bullying: What Is It? How Do We Prevent It?' from 6pm-8pm at Central High School. We partnered with the David Matthews Center for Civic Life.

November 2013-December 2013 - TOP is hosted the first Tinsel Trail from November 24th through January 5th. A trail of twinkling trees will line the river across from the ice skating rink.

November and December 2013 - Holiday Heart is a Thanksgiving and Christmas Assistance Program. TOP provide families in our caseload with holiday meals and children with Christmas gifts.

November and December 2013 - Easter Seals West Alabama conducted its Holiday Ornament Sale.

December 2013 - The City of Northport hosted a 5K run. All the proceeds went to support foster children / foster care program in the county.

Easter Seals West Alabama 2013 Silent Walk

January 2014 - Tuscaloosa hosted the 8th Annual Doing What Matters for Alabama's Children Conference.

February 2014- The Tuscaloosa City Schools' district-wide HALT (Harassment Awareness Learning Together) program is designed to combat bullying behavior. The focus this year was on #Stand Strong# Think B4 U Txt' campaign.

February 2014 -TOP held the Tuscaloosa Glow Run a 5k Run/Walk event, a one of a kind night time experience that is less about how fast you run and more about enjoying the music filled glowing course with your friends and family.

February 2014 - TOP Marriage Banquet - 7 couples were recognized for healthy marriages

March 2014 - BBBS hosted the 2nd annual Tuscaloosa Krispy Kreme Challenge. Participants in the event begin a one mile race from 6th street at the Government Plaza, run/walk a mile loop, eat a dozen doughnuts, and run/walk a mile back to Government Plaza.

March 2014 - Nurse-Family Partnership held its first Client Celebration at the Tuscaloosa Career & Technology Academy.

April 2014 - Tuscaloosa's One Place along with Big Brothers Big Sisters, Child Abuse Prevention Services, Child Development Resources and United Cerebral Palsy of West Alabama helped recognize April as Child Abuse Prevention Month by collaborating on several events throughout the month of April: a Blue Ribbon Tree was decorated at Snow Hinton Park; 'Paint the City Blue' was held in Downtown Northport; Wear Blue every Friday and Blue Ribbons everyday campaign during the month of April.

April 2014 - Tuscaloosa Mayor Maddox and Northport Mayor Herndon proclaimed April Child Abuse Prevention Month for each city.

April 2014 - In recognition of the National Month of the Young Child the 4th Annual 'Backyard Bash' event was held with over 500 children, parents, and volunteers. This was a free community-wide outside event designed for children, birth to 8 years old, and parents to play together and to encourage nurturing and positive relationships

April 2014 - Parent Resource Library staff planned special activities to highlight the National Month of the Young Child.

April 2014 - Week of the Young Child & TOP - Tuscaloosa's One Place will observe Week of the Young Child April 6th through the 12th. TOP read books to children at area day care Centers, passed out parenting information, and held an Easter Egg Hunt for our Parents as Teachers program families.

April 2014 - TOP Parenting Classes - Tuscaloosa's One Place resumed parenting classes. Two programs are being offered, The Parent Project and Parent 2 Parent. The Parent Project is a behavior modification program which targets destructive adolescent behavior. Parents will learn to manage their teen's behavior concerning critical issues such as family conflict, poor school performance, truancy, teen violence, early teen sexuality, etc. Teens will work on character building such as: effective communication, responsibility, self-worth, respectfulness, etc. Parent 2 Parent is designed to strengthen more typical parenting skills such as: handling parenting stress, establishing routines, effective discipline, natural and logical consequences, etc.

April 2014 - Child Abuse Prevention Services held "All About Kids" Festival & 9th Annual Sky Lantern Ceremony.

April 2014 - Together Assisting People, an organization founded by former Alabama football player Chris Rodgers, provided a few of our Littles the opportunity of a lifetime by giving them a spending allowance at Academy Sporting Goods. The Littles really enjoyed picking out their items and getting football items signed by not only Rodgers, but also Robert Lester and Chris Fulton.

April 2014 - BBBS had a cheer team that cheered on participants in the Mayor's Cup Race. The BBBS team waved signs at participants, distributed water to them, and encouraged them to finish the race strong at the

half-way point of the race. The BBBS Littles & their parents were a lot of help for this event.

May 2014 Easter Seals West Alabama held the Champions for Tuscaloosa Ball.

June 2014 - TOP held 2nd Fathers in the Park will be held Saturday, June 7, 2014 a free family fun day for fathers and their children, over 450 people attended.

June 2014 - Anglers in Action, a Fishing tournament benefiting TOP, was held.

June 2014 - First Teachers @ Home - First Teachers @ Home is conducting summer classes for parents of preschool age children.

NFP participated in the Tuscaloosa County Health Department Health Fair and 13th Annual Early Intervention Update.

YEAR ROUND EVENTS:

Tuscaloosa's One Place offers various programs year round, including: after school programs at 11 area schools, home visitation programs, career development classes, parenting classes, GED/EDL classes, marriage/relationship classes, work with teens, Information and Referral, Intake and Assessment, fatherhood initiative.

Tuscaloosa County DHR's primary function is to make sure children in our area are safe. DHR will continue to investigate reports of child abuse and neglect. We will also continue to provide services for families in need and work towards permanency for all children in Tuscaloosa County.

The Alabama Medicaid Agency offers medical insurance through our Family Certification Division to help children, pregnant women, and low income families obtain medical coverage through Medicaid so that children and pregnant women can receive needed medical services.

The Bridge provided Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment an array of services for adolescents in need of substance abuse treatment in Tuscaloosa County since inception in 2000.

The Bridge has also been involved in the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) since inception in 2007/2008. The Bridge opened the Tuscaloosa Adolescent Support Services (TASS) program in October 2008 with assistance from Tuscaloosa County Commission and DYS as a program to prevent/deter adolescents from commitment to Department of Youth Services (DYS). This program continues to provide adolescents the opportunity to engage in a variety of services on a weekly basis. Services offered include but are not limited to Behavioral Modification, Basic Living Skills, Clinical Group Therapy, Individual therapy, Family therapy, Case management services, Job Readiness Skills, Employment assistance, Transportation (to include assistance with transporting adolescents to other community referred programs), On-Site GED services, On Site Mentoring Program, and Community service projects.

The Special Programming for Achievement Network (S.P.A.N.) of Tuscaloosa County is a non-residential, co-educational, comprehensive approach to meeting the service and training needs of at-risk youth, who are involved with the Juvenile Court System, and their families. The purpose of our program is to develop social, behavioral, academic, and family skills needed to become productive members of the community. The S.P.A.N. Program is a year-round program serving court-referred youth, males and females, ages 12-18 years old. Indian Rivers Mental Health Center (IRMHC) - Children's Services - IRMHC provides therapeutic services (including individual, family, and group therapy), In-Home Intervention, basic living skills, psychiatric services, medication monitoring, family support/education, case management, and diagnostic testing at our main office, as well as some services in the community. IRMHC has a Juvenile Court Liaison (JCL). The JCL works exclusively with youth and families who come to the attention of the juvenile courts and have mental health needs.

Easter Seals West Alabama (ESWA) performed (14) Speech-Language and Hearing screenings in a local preschool. Easter Seals West Alabama performed (558) Speech-Language therapy sessions to (69) Tuscaloosa county children.

Easter Seals West Alabama (ESWA) provides educational and occupational services to at-risk youth in Tuscaloosa County through the Future Promise Program. During this program year, Future Promise served a total of 50 eligible youth. Of these 50 youth, three participants earned a GED, one participant earned a high school diploma, two participants are currently enrolled in post-secondary training, and five participants are scheduled to begin post-secondary training in August. Another 7 participants have achieved EFL gains meeting or exceeding two full grade levels. Future Promise has also helped 11 participants successfully enter the local workforce this year. Currently 31 participants are enrolled in GED classes.

ESWA Future Promise program has implemented several services to help Tuscaloosa's youth overcome educational and vocational obstacles. The semi-annual program's quarterly job-readiness workshops and Junior Achievement classes ensure that youth are engaged in positive activities throughout the year and, consequently, help them stay out of trouble and remain safe. Referrals to other local nonprofits seeking volunteers also help us reach this goal. Our twice-weekly tutoring and mentoring sessions help youth and their

families stay hopeful and positively engaged in the development of their education and careers. Future Promise also continues to positively reinforce the attainment of educational and vocational goals by awarding gift cards for reaching benchmarks.

Easter Seals West Alabama other year round services include: Need based transportation to and from GED classes, Case Management, Job Development/Job Placing, Mentoring, Semi-annual Junior Achievement classes, Referrals to Community Agencies, Referring youth with disabilities to The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Assessments/Counseling and Job Readiness Instruction including Microsoft Certified Computer Courses.

Bradford Health Services provided numerous services throughout the year that helped the children of Tuscaloosa County, including: assessing kids to screen for addiction and providing other programs including intervention referrals, education, and aftercare to adolescents who completed treatment.

Baby TALK is a collaborative community effort designed to encourage parents in the nurture of their very young children ages birth-3 years by providing basic child development information and suggestions for developmentally appropriate activities. This program is implemented through: hospital visits to new moms at two area hospitals, parent/child visits at University Medical Center Pediatrics, the Maude Whatley Health Care Clinic, and the WIC Clinic at Tuscaloosa County Department of Public Health; monthly Family Fun Events with Early Head Start families; and Baby TALK Times parent/child 8-week groups. A total of close to 9500 parents were served in the various sites.

CDR operates a free on-site Parent Resource Library (PRL) offering parenting resources and books, parent-child activity kits, and other materials to support families in their parenting. The Parent Resource Library has served approximately 350 parents during this reporting period.

Child Development Resources continued to provide services through Alabama's Parenting Assistance Line (PAL), a statewide parenting assistance phone line to provide free and confidential information, support, and tools to parents across the state of Alabama to make parenting more manageable. The PAL website has 140 different parenting and/or child development 'Parent Tip Sheets' as well as a means of contacting a Parent Resource Specialist directly. PAL served approximately 2000 parents and caregivers from across Alabama and 29 other states during this reporting period. In addition, CDR continued coordination of public awareness efforts that included television ads, live TV interviews, billboards, published articles, and print ads in markets throughout Alabama, Alabama, as well as presentations and/or exhibits at events across the state. Parents as Teachers, a new program in Tuscaloosa County, will serve families who have children ages birth to 5 years of age that have special needs. This program goes into the home to provide services and supports to parents and to teach them how to teach their child so that when children are ready to start school they are at an appropriate level for their age and development. Parent As Teachers provides children with free vision, hearing and developmental screenings. PAT also provides monthly group meetings which allow families to interact with other families from within the Tuscaloosa community.

The Community Service Programs Early Intervention Program has provided to services to an average of 149 children per month. Our ongoing services, provided to children with or at risk for developmental delays, train, equip, and support parents/caregivers in being the first and best teachers for their child. The Community Service Programs Early Intervention Program also works with local organizations to connect families with additional service providers and funding sources as appropriate.

The Kids and Kin Program was created and implemented to meet relative child care providers' needs of training, resources, and support. The program provides educational workshops, resources, and support activities which positively impact the quality of child care. Our focus group is the extended family, relatives who provide care: grandparents, aunts, uncles, and older sibling that are at age least age 18. A total of 22 Kids and Kin workshops have been conducted from July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014.

2-1-1 is the Information and Referral service of the United Ways of Alabama. 2-1-1 connects people to valuable information about health and human services and resources for everyday needs. 211 Connects Alabama serves every county in the state, operating 24/7. Each year we receive thousands of calls from residents who need help with basic needs. We also provide assistance to families who need school supplies, summer camps/daycare, Christmas gifts, health insurance, diapers, tutoring and child/infant car seats and cribs.

Success By 6 Jump Start summer programs was held at various elementary schools. Jump Start is a half day, five week program for children who are about to begin kindergarten and have had little or no preschool experience. Children receive the academic and social skills necessary to succeed in school. The kindergarten teachers who are employed during Jump Start will continue to be the children's teacher during the academic school year. By the time school begins, these children will have bonded with their teacher and fellow classmates, be comfortable in a school setting, and have grown academically, socially, and physically.

Approximately 250 children benefitted from Jump Start last year.

Success By 6 Getting Ready for Kindergarten readiness calendars are free for all four-year-olds in Tuscaloosa County and outlying counties that United Way serves. The purpose of this calendar is to prepare four and five-year-olds to enter school. It is an August to July calendar for the year before kindergarten. When the child finishes the calendar, it will be time to begin school. Each month focuses on a different learning topic with suggested activities parent/guardian and child can do together. This is the tenth year for the calendar and the response from public Pre-K teachers, childcare workers, and parents has been very positive. More than 5000 calendars are given out just in Tuscaloosa County.

Success By 6 Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL) is a book gift service funded by Success By 6 and the Dolly Parton Foundation. Each month, the foundation mails a new age appropriate book to every child within a designated area. The child will continue to receive these free books until the age of five. The books are high quality and timeless classics. Presently in Tuscaloosa County, more than 2,200 children are receiving free books each month.

Nurse-Family Partnership provides home visitation services performed by registered nurses to low income, first time moms. Clients will be enrolled in NFP by their 28th week of pregnancy and home visits will continue to the child's 2nd birthday. Nurse-Family Partnership enrolled a total of 54 new clients over the last year, of which 23 of those clients were under age 21. The current active caseload is 74 clients. Twenty-six (26) of the 67 total babies born over the last year were born to clients under the age of 21. Four (4) clients under the age of 21 with five (5) babies were disengaged from the program during this year.

The Tuscaloosa Children's Policy Council has considered and supported numerous grant applications for local agencies; including: numerous city and county schools, Big Brothers Big Sisters and Child Abuse Prevention Services.

Upcoming Events:

The Tuscaloosa County Children's Policy Council is kicking off a new program - The Battle of the Best. The Battle of the Best is a collaborative program created to address the ongoing problem of juvenile delinquency in our county by developing and implementing innovative strategies aimed at promoting school attendance and reducing juvenile offenses by offering incentives to students for positive behavior while in school and the community. The program will involve 4 local middle schools and the school with the least number of juvenile court referrals, school absences and to school tardies will be declared the winner. The winning school will receive and end of the year celebration with prizes and most importantly, bragging rights. Each school will have an advisory council of students helping to lead the battle, plan school promotional and educational activities and inspire their peers. The student advisory councils from the 4 schools meet at the end of July at the University of Alabama Bryant Denny Stadium for a tour and an introduction. The Battle of the Best will be announced at each school during the last week of August and also at each school's open house.

Bright Minds, which is a new volunteer reading program where members of the business and healthcare community, University of Alabama students, and others read to local childcare centers, Pre-K's, and kindergarten students.

Summer 2014 - TEAMS summer program.

July 2015 - The First Annual Bass Fishing Tournament to benefit Special Programming for Achievement Network (S.P.A.N.) of Tuscaloosa, as a non-residential, co-educational, comprehensive approach to meeting the service and training needs of at-risk youth, who are involved with the Juvenile Court System, and their families.

July 2014 - BBBS will sponsor a match event trip for our Bigs and Littles to McWane Science Center in Birmingham.

July 2014 - Easter Seals West Alabama will provide Vision, Speech-Language and Hearing screenings at a local daycare.

August 2014 - CDR fully intends to continue to seek ways to further enhance or add services that meet our vision of improving the lives of young children and their families including a CPC collaborative Books, Balls, and Blocks event for parents and their young children to determine the child's developmental needs.

August 2014 - Assist with community school supply drive.

September 2014 - Easter Seals West Alabama will provide Speech-Language and Hearing screenings at a local daycare.

November-December 2014 - BBBS will sponsor the 1st annual Karaoke for Kids Sake. This fundraiser event will be open for all ages to participate and will work to not only bring exposure to the agency, but also to lower the number of children on our waiting list.

November-December 2014 - Easter Seals West Alabama Speech-Language Department will conduct a 2014 Annual Holiday Ornament Sale will continue to benefit the Speech-Language Department.

November-December 2014 - TOP Holiday Heart

January 2015 - Doing What Matters for Alabama's Children Conference

February 2015 - TOP Marriage Banquet

February 2015 - BBBS will hold the 3rd Annual Tuscaloosa Krispy Kreme Challenge. The funds that are raised will go towards events for Bigs & Littles as well as the cost associated to keep a match maintained for one year.

April 2015 - Events for Child Abuse Prevention Month

April 2015 - Events for Week of the Young Child

April 2015 - CDR 5th annual Backyard Bash event (April 2015).

May 2015 - BBBS will host the Shining Stars of Tomorrow Celebration Dinner. This event will honor the Bigs for their outstanding performance in our programs and the Littles for their academic achievements, leadership roles in schools/communities, as well as showcase their talents.

Spring 2015 - TOP Spring Fling

Spring 2015 - Champions for Tuscaloosa Ball will be held in spring 2015 and will continue benefitting Easter Seals West Alabama Speech-Language Department.

June 2015 - TOP will hold its Fathers in the Park family event.

DHR will host another Foster/Adoptive Parent Fun Day and its annual Heart Gallery event.

2014 Needs Assessment for Tuscaloosa

First Priority

Need related to children of this county

Juvenile Prevention

| Existing resources available to help meet this need include: | Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include: |
|---|---|
| Programs listed above. | Additional federal and local funding. Volunteers. Increased Public Awareness and Community Partnerships Childcare assistance Assistance with identification/documentation Transportation |

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. Continue to enhance early intervention programs by working in collaboration with the school systems, and the alternative programs offered through organizations such as TOP, SPAN, The Bridge, TASS, etc.
2. Continue to create mentoring programs for at risk youth and their families.
3. Continue to support faith based community to restore a sense of community in our neighborhoods.

2014 Needs Assessment for Tuscaloosa

Second Priority

Need related to children of this county

Parental Involvement

| Existing resources available to help meet this need include: | Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include: |
|---|---|
| See programs and resources above. | Additional federal and local funding. Volunteers. Increased Public Awareness and Community Partnerships Childcare assistance Assistance with identification/documentation Transportation |

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. Continue programs in existence.
2. Continue and encourage partnerships with local organizations, businesses and the school systems.

2014 Needs Assessment for Tuscaloosa

Third Priority

Need related to children of this county

Child Safety

| Existing resources available to help meet this need include: | Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include: |
|---|---|
| See programs listed above. | Additional federal and local funding Volunteers and Foster/Adoptive Families Increased Public Awareness and Community Partnerships Childcare assistance Assistance with identification/documentation Transportation Affordable housing in Tuscaloosa County |

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. Continue to create programs to partner with the member organizations/entities to increase awareness of signs of abuse and neglect.
2. Provide educational opportunities to address the impact of domestic violence on these matters.
3. Increase awareness of mental health and substance abuse issues and the role they play in abuse and neglect cases.
4. Increase awareness and availability of therapeutic counseling and in-home services.