

You Spoke. We listened.

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Organization: Healthy Families Partnerships

Meeting Date: 3/21/11

in Attendance: 17

- I live down in Wythe, I would really like to see the HFP retain all funding. My personal situation does not really matter but I am a single parent with 2 girls. HFP was there by our side throughout my fiancé's difficult pregnancy. Currently now HFP is there with us putting me in the right contact even if outside their scope. I know there are programs offered here at HFP that will help my children throughout and they are very valuable to all citizens. I know other people in the program and they don't have resources available to them, but HFP is a great resource. System and programs are an invaluable resource and provides referrals to city, state and federal resources.
- The investment early pays off later. This is a huge gap to try to fill. I do think that dollars spent in the early years benefit us so much, the whole community. If we can get them in a good beginning, they will contribute to the community as they get older. What HFP does makes such a difference in our lives. The parenting classes are tremendous. I think it is so import to give families the support system that HFP provides.
- I found out about the program with my daughter with Acid Reflex. Her dad was deployed. I needed a how to book. I needed a lot of help, HFP dropped off materials during the week which was helpful and it made me feel like I had a family away from my family. Father is away in military so has not been around to help. I know if I needed anything I can call HFP. They have showed me so much about how children grow and their needs and things to be looking out for. The caring of this whole organization is so needed for single parent families. They even stop by and give assistance with my daughter for an hour. This organization has taught me more about my child and how to bond with my daughter. I really think this organization needs to stay.
- We actually came to speak at the meeting last year and we have been a part of this program ever since our baby was born. Participate in massage, play groups, etc and it has been a great experience every time we come here. The staff are so much more knowledgeable than anyone I know about kids. Information I got from other organizations was so outdated compared to what we got from HFP. It is things that apply to our baby right now as he is growing. Right now he is lacking in communications but exceling in motor skills. We would not have known this without what we have learned from HFP programs/day care where we can compare our children with others. I know people that will come from surrounding cities to here just to use this program because there are not other programs like it. I am saying ADVANCE funding for this program. I feel if you can get the word out more about HFP you can actually receive random donations so you wouldn't need so much funding. Need more advertisements and getting the word out – that is ONE way.
- Someone said seeing young families and having a support group. We are in our 40s with our first child so it is not easy. We have helped other people with their children but having them 24/7 is a totally different story. We had same questions about where he should be, behind, or ahead. Through this program we know he is ahead of the game. We owe it to what we have learned through this program. This program works. Bringing our son here to see how he interacts with others teaches us a lot of where they are at in growth. She is a stay at home mom and I work in Norfolk, the only reason we are in Hampton is because of "Mary" (staff person with HFP).

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- My daughters were born premature which puts them behind the development curve. HFP gave weekly visits and shared where they are and what they should be looking for. Girls are actually a head of the curve for where they should be now and I would attribute that to Healthy Families. HFP still gives tools to help child develop.
- My daughter is also beyond and I attribute to HFP to this.
- My son is 2 years old but acts like he is 7. He too is developing so fast. Plus he hangs around a lot of adults.
- I have been with HFP since my child was born and he is now 5 and graduates from the program and I don't want to give up the program. I think one of the absolute best things that this program has done is that I was given so much advanced notice about things I would need as a single mother. HFP staff made me aware of possible court proceedings and therefore headed off so much court traffic regarding custody for her son. I got my certification that I needed to take to Judge that I got through this program and now his father is around and once again with the class I took here at HFP I was able to know pitfalls not to fall into when the parents were on opposite ends of the spectrum. She also gave me advance notice about putting my son in the school he is in, helped with registration. Being members with HFP is a plus. Now my son is way ahead of the game. The program is worth its weight in platinum, not even gold. There is no way I could have accomplished the things with my son without this HFP program and the wonderful staff. There should be no legitimate reason for funding reduced for this program. It should be advanced.
- I think we should look at the children that are in the program against the children that are not. The children in the HFP are so advanced. You will see the value of HFP.
- I can attest to that. My daughter is in the 4th grade and still thinks she is supposed to get visits from the city. I stayed in the program for the whole 5 years. I had 3 children. I was in a homeless shelter and working, going to school and still had my visits. The staff got me through a lot. Without the HFP staff I can't say where I would be. I graduated from Johnson and Wells and doing well. My children's father was not there and I did it all by myself. The staff was a positive influence. Recipe swaps, clothes swaps were also good programs; that was a good way with trading out clothes without paying anything. The program itself was very educational. I push the program to my friends to have their child develop correctly.
- Has there been any partnership with fleet and family services? There are a lot of people that do not know about the program. How is the information/program advertised?
- I was a part of the WIC program and was asked about HFP and best decision I made. We need to get the word out about the program.
- As a retired person on a fixed income, I want to say increasing the tax rate is entirely appropriate to do so we have a stream of revenue
- I agree and I have a retired husband.
- I heard about the pros and cons on boat fees, but I still think that we could have a tax for those that have big boats. I think that would generate some money and it could be a minimal amount that would not run people off but would still help.
- I work in Portsmouth and I have to have a vehicle to get back and forth to work so I get taxed for it and someone with a pleasure boat does not get taxed for it. That's not right. It does not make sense not to tax someone with a boat.
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- I think the way to get the word out about the HFP program is to have something at HU to share information about the program. We need to talk to the people that are going to need this program one day.
- Regarding the real estate tax you have to take the good with the bad. Several years I was not paying personal property tax but the fact that things were going out of control and the city chose to lower the rate says a lot. I think we should keep it the same instead of coming down.
- The programs we offer are sometimes paid programs by participants if the fee structure was changed would it be valuable enough to increase a fee.
- I utilize different programs I have been HFP since I was 17 and she helped me finish school, housing, etc. The program is good. My question is what about all this road work going on, is it necessary?
- It isn't really the roadwork, but do we need the brick pavers?
- Commerce, shopping is something we do every day. It is obviously the city is putting a lot of money into the Peninsula Town Center. In doing so you brought in so many new shops that I would go to but with just as many coming in I see leaving (even restaurants). I spend a lot of money at other localities, why don't we bring some of those shops here? More money would be spent here if the variety of shops were here like other localities, i.e. MAC Cosmetics and Polo. There are people here willing to spend money for certain stores and travel to other destinations to shop.
- What exactly does the Downtown Hampton Development Project do?
- Please explain funding for that (DHDP).
- What is the difference between downtown and Coliseum Central. It seems to me there is a lot of free advertising for the bars. I get the Downtowner (newsletter). Do we really need to advertise their bars and give them advertising funds?
- Am I correct that everyone who pays a tax is accessed an additional tax goes to the newsletter, promotional events, etc.
- If a business owner is apart of the partnership then they have an agreement that they pay additional money to the partnership.
- There are two events, has the city of Hampton ever thought of charging a small fee for some of the events. In Norfolk they had the Afram Festival and it was free, now there is a fee to attend the event. Charging a fee has not daunted attendance. Would it be so wrong to charge \$3 for events?
- How do we get more jobs that pay more money? I have been looking for a job for a long time.

All questions were answered.

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