



Assessing Child Advocacy Ministries in the Parish



1. Involving Key People
2. Governing Practices
3. Assessing existing Interest & Involvement
4. Determining Your Congregation's Resources
5. Assessing Unmet Need & Identifying those who will help
6. Matching Resources to the Needs
7. Building Partnerships to help Child and Families
8. Raising Awareness, Educating the Congregation & Issuing the Call to Mission



Assessing Child Advocacy Ministries in the Parish

1. Involving Key People
 - a. Who are the people who need to be sitting at the table?
 - b. Committee jurisdiction
 - c. Professional expertise
 - d. Special Interest in Children's Concerns

2. Governing Practices
 - a. Are there any Denominational or Congregational governing practices that define how you should proceed?

3. Assessing existing Interest & Involvement
 - a. Use attached questionnaire
 - b. Additional Questions may come to mind too

4. Determining Your Congregation's Resources
 - a. Premise: The Congregation plays a Vital Role
 - i. ...a community already committed to love of God and neighbor.
 - ii. Members know each other and work on projects together.
 - iii. ...a willingness to listen to the individual's ideas.
 - iv. Congregations bring together a variety of skills, talents and expertise that are essential in running any project.

5. Assessing Unmet Need & Identifying those who will help
 - a. Talk about the questions listed on "A Community Assessment."
 - b. Work through "A Congregational Resources Assessment."
 - c. If you are able to focus in on one particular need additional "Information Resources Worksheets" are available for: Child Care, Education, Vulnerable Children & Families, Homelessness & Housing, Maternal and Child Health, Youth Development & Teen Pregnancy Prevention, and Family Income

6. Matching Resources to the Needs
 - a. Talk about the questions listed on "The Next Step: Matching Resources."
 - b. Work through "Putting it all Together: Matching Your Congregation's Resources with Children's Needs."

7. Building Partnerships to help Child and Families

- a. Don't reinvent the wheel. Consider supporting or enhancing an existing program.
Consider partnership in unexpected places!
 - i. Other Churches: ecumenical or denominational
 - ii. Local/State Council of Churches
 - iii. Child Advocacy Coalitions
 - iv. United Way
 - v. Head Start
 - vi. U.S. Department of Agriculture or Education
 - vii. Association of Retarded Citizens (ARC)
 - viii. Retired Teachers Association

8. Raising Awareness, Educating the Congregation & Issuing the Call to Mission

- a. Worship
- b. Study Groups
- c. Programs & Speakers
- d. Bulletin Announcements & Inserts
- e. Celebrate

A Community Assessment

- How many children need child care? Is childcare available? Are there waiting lists at area programs?
- How many teenagers drop out of school?
- What proportion of our children grow up in poverty?
- How many incidents of child abuse are reported each year? Are the cases increasing or decreasing?
- Are teenage drug and alcohol abuse, gangs, or crime a problem in our community?
- What is the infant mortality rate in our city or state? What is the rate of low-birth weight births? What proportion of pregnant women receive early prenatal care?
- How many teenagers become parents each year?
- Does our community have work opportunities for teens?
- How many of our children and families go without adequate public or private health insurance, or have none at all?

The Next Step: Matching Resources

- Look at the children's needs you have identified. Which needs are most pressing?
- Look at the congregation's resources you believe to be available. Which are the greatest resources? Do you have enough resources and potential support to work on the priorities you have identified? If not, can you begin searching for others with whom you can join forces?
- Review the existing programs, agencies, and organization in the community. Did any ask for some specific support? Is that support something that draws on your congregation's strongest resources?
- Put this information together and determine what effort or programs you will pursue. Use the worksheet "Putting it all Together". Plan a time, after an appropriate initial period, to evaluate your new effort and make any necessary adjustments.