
Reclaim - Family Advocacy Collective

“Reclaiming our community, our joy, and Our Future”

OVERVIEW

Community-based family support collective that is equipped to help families navigate educational, medical/health, and governmental services to ensure positive outcomes for our children's future.

- Equipped to provide and/or connect families with
 - Developmental Screenings & Special Needs Advocacy
 - Parental Resilience and Family Wellness Education
 - Reproductive Healthcare Access
 - Adult Literacy & Education Access
 - Medicaid & MIBridges Navigation

CONCERN ADDRESSED

Within Kalamazoo, there has been a significant decrease in the community's ability to access behavioral health support, special needs parenting guidance, and parenting services for families with low resources and school-aged children. Program participants will receive appropriate education, guidance, and toolkits that will help them to feel more confident in their role as advocates for their child.

GOALS

1. Increase access to quality of life supports and organizations for families and children, “Many hands make light work”
2. Establish a touchpoint for families in need who do not feel heard in traditional settings, “Amplify the voice and publicize the need”.
3. Build trusted relationships and connections as a safety net for all families, “Rebuilding intentional social safety nets based on mutual aid and trust.”

PLAN

- Parent Meetups (3rd Thursdays)
 - Activities for children, across age groups (simple activities and crafts)

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- Wellness modalities normalized for parents (tea blends, breathwork, self care)
 - Child development info and screenings readily available
 - Medicaid/MIBridges navigation (paperwork, certs, etc.)
 - Fellowship with other families, creating an intentional community and opportunities to belong to a village

SUPPORT AREAS & INITIATIVES

- **Family Function and Concrete Resources**

- Establish MDHHS cases and adjust standing for assistance services (Have 1 Community Navigator, need a minimum of 4 on staff)
- Education/Credential attainment for adults (Adult Education, GED, Literacy, etc.)
- Job Training for adults (MI Works, Momentum, Trades @ KVCC, etc.)
- Michigan Reconnect, Kalamazoo Promise - access to higher ed

- **Parenting Education**

- Exploration of Basic Parenting Types
- Parenting for Development
- Personal Exploration - What Kind of Parent Am I and What Kind Do I Want to Be?
- Gentle Parenting Private Sessions (mediated family discussions)

- **Parent-Child Attachment and Bonding Activities**

- Parents as Teachers Curriculum, ASK Family Services (Erin & Mackenzie),
Emotional refueling work to help family members see each other rather than the title and duties they carry.

- **Educational Advocacy and Support for Student Needs**

- IEP/504 Plan development
- Step-by-step guidance through the process
- Templates for request letters and information requests
- Accompany participating families to IEP/504 meetings to provide support as the family's advocacy partner (draft release as needed)
- Educational resources for explaining different disabilities and conditions, improving the family's understanding of why children have the needs they do
- Improve access to the local school system's student support department

- **Social Emotional Learning for Youth & Young Adults**

- Young Scholars programming
- Teen Rite of Passage/Personal Development Program - Torchbearers (*Tagline: Finding purpose and lighting the way for others*)

PARTNERS/COLLABORATORS

- PRIMARY - Healthy Families Kalamazoo County (local parent support agency within health dept.)
- PRIMARY - Institute of Public Scholarship (community-based academic nonprofit)
- KRESA (pending confirmation)
- Maternal Counseling Svcs (pending confirmation)
- Fatherhood Initiative (pending confirmation)
- Kalamazoo Community Foundation (Marcel Price - Community Impact Officer/Activist)
- MSUE (Nutritional Education Demos)