

CHILDREN'S



COALITION



2006-2011 Community Plan for Children

Working together so our children can soar

Baton Rouge, Louisiana



THE CHILDREN'S COALITION OF GREATER BATON ROUGE

Vision

The Children's Coalition will be the primary catalyst to focus our community on the value and well being of children.

Mission

The Children's Coalition is a collective force united to effect community change to improve the lives of children and families through partnerships and advocacies in the Capital City Area.

History

The Children's Coalition originated in August of 1990 and has been responsive to a public outcry for increased family support. A national study funded by the Casey Foundation placed Louisiana dead last in the well-being of youngsters in 10 categories including teen pregnancy, dropouts, and educational expenditures per pupil.

The founders of the Coalition decided to promote awareness and public action. A three-step children's movement was launched in 1990.

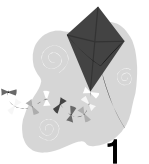
STEP ONE: With strong support from the city, organizers called for the entire community to focus on the status of its children via a parishwide town meeting: "Child of the 90's: Foundation for our Future."

STEP TWO: The first agenda for children was compiled as a result of this public input and subsequent neighborhood talks.

STEP THREE: The Coalition then fashioned a model for addressing the agenda, establishing a formal structure, and initiating partnership action. Philanthropic support from the Baton Rouge Area Foundation provided the start-up funds immediately matched by membership dues. As a result, 67 partnership initiatives were funded in years 1990 to 1994, and many more to date.

To keep the Coalition in touch and on the move for children requires constant planning with the community. In 1992, the Children's Coalition competed with more than 100 entities across the nation and received one of three pilot grants from the U. S. government. That grant fostered grass roots neighborhood planning and neighborhood action for youth.

Visit www.ccofgbr.org to learn more about your Coalition and becoming a member.



A stylized illustration of a kite with a dark diamond-shaped body and a tail with several bows, set against a light, circular background with faint spiral patterns.

2006-2011

Community Plan for Children

“I made you a kite so you would have to look up.”
Unknown

May this plan serve as an upward moving focal point for all of us. Adults and children alike need things for which we can hope and strive. This community has tremendous potential. To realize it, we must take responsibility for every child and accept that we all have a part to play.

Our children deserve no less—we deserve no less. This plan is not a list of competing priorities, but rather the cumulative wishes of our community for all our children. Just as we cannot say an arm is more important than an eye, we cannot prioritize one goal over another for our children. All are important and equally deserving of implementation.

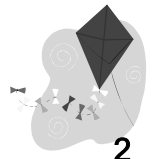
The enthusiasm, hard work, and commitment shown by everyone who participated in developing this plan have created a strong ground for us to “run and fly our kites.” This document is a living document. The strategies developed are a starting point. The Children’s Coalition stands ready to be the catalyst overseeing the plan’s development and implementation—your commitment is the next step.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue Catchings".

Sue Catchings
*Chair, Community Plan for Children
Director, Health Care Centers in Schools*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anna Fogle".

Anna Fogle
*Board President, Children’s Coalition
CEO, Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana*



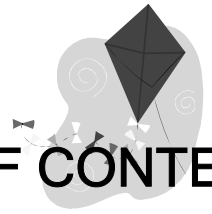
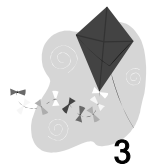


TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Process.....	4
Acknowledgements.....	5
<i>Safety</i>	6
<i>Health</i>	10
<i>Basic Needs</i>	13
<i>Early Childhood Care and Education</i>	16
<i>Education</i>	19
<i>Family Support</i>	25
<i>Arts and Recreation</i>	28
<i>Youth Leadership and Service</i>	31
Community Engagement and Implementation.....	33





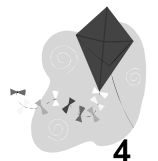
ABOUT THE PROCESS

The Children's Coalition since inception has honored the creativity, direct input, and ideas of the whole community of East Baton Rouge Parish. Creation of the 2006-2011 Community Plan for Children again honored the voice and direction of people from throughout the area. The four month planning process included three phases of development. The first phase focused on the building of a diverse, highly experienced writing team under the leadership of a Planning Cabinet of experts around each of the eight areas to holistically support children: Safety, Basic Needs including food, housing, and shelter, Health, Early Child Care and Education, Education, Family Support Services, Arts and Recreation, and Youth Leadership, Development, and Service.

Also in Phase I of the planning process, twenty institutional leaders were visited in face-to-face assessments on the needs of our young people. These included the leaders of local government, the school system, the United Way, the Chamber of Commerce, law enforcement, the faith community, the media, and representatives of each of the major philanthropic community foundations. Input from these sessions helped to shape the plan's goals.

Phase II of the work was totally devoted to the voices of youth. Focus groups were conducted in seven public and parochial schools aimed at garnering middle school input. Additionally, an on-line youth survey made it an open process for any young person who chose to participate to do so - especially those on the high school level. Hundreds of surveys were received.

Finally, additional feedback was obtained in Phase III of the work. Community-based open houses were held in six libraries parishwide. This highly accessible technique further opened the process for grass roots input as attendees could offer new ideas or give feedback on skeleton goals drafted by the writing teams. Those adults without time or transportation also were invited to complete an adult on-line survey on the Coalition web site. Harvesting the collective data and ideas of the three Phases, the leaders of the writing teams known as the Planning Cabinet then compiled the following 60 goals in the 2006-2011 Community Plan for Children. The goals blend a boldness of vision and serve as attainable, hard reality, practical approaches to the tough issues youth face today in La.'s Capital City. May they also summon us for focused action to improve the quality of life for all young people.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan could not have been developed without the participation and support of the following individuals.

-Mayor-President Melvin “Kip” Holden and the East Baton Rouge Parish Metro Council

-Institutional Leaders who participated in interviews

Lydia Acosta, Director, East Baton Rouge Parish Library
Lori Bertman, Program Officer Pennington Foundation
Dwight Brashear, CEO & GM, Capital Area Transit System
Reginald Brown, Constable, City of Baton Rouge
Greg Cotter, Huey and Angelina Wilson Foundation
John Davies, President, Baton Rouge Area Foundation
Jeff Day, Director, GBR Federation of Churches & Synagogues
Melissa Flournoy, CEO, LA Association of Nonprofit Organizations (LANO)
Joseph Greco, Mayor Pro Tempore, EBRP Metro Council
Ken Hinrichs, CEO, Capital Area United Way
Melvin "Kip" Holden, Mayor-President, Office of the Mayor-President
Linda Lightfoot, The Advocate Executive Editor
Elmer Litchfield, Sheriff, East Baton Rouge Parish
Rolfe Mc Collister, GBR Business Report Chairman and Publisher
Stephen Moret, President & CEO, Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce
Bill Palmer, Acting Superintendent, BREC
Charlotte Placide, Superintendent, EBRP School System
Joyce Robinson, GBR Federation of Churches & Synagogues
Paulette Senior, Publisher, Baton Rouge Journal
Pat Smith, President, EBRP School Board

-The Plan Cabinet Members noted throughout

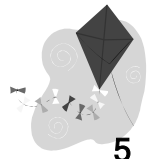
-Jan Bernard and Trudy Bell-Wickham, Program Developers
-Rosary Beck, Children’s Coalition Coordinator
-Marc Duhe, AmeriCorps Member

-2005 and 2006 Board of Directors

Anna Fogle, *President, PCA Louisiana*
Mona Pellerin, *Vice President Membership, Baton Rouge Community College*
Phil Woodland, *Vice President Advocacy 2006, Methodist Minister, retired*
Alvin Mack, *Vice President Advocacy 2005, BREC*
Pabby Arnold, *Secretary, EBRP Library*
Jenola Duke, *Treasurer, Community Activist*
Genny Nadler Thomas, *Immediate Past President, Community Activist*
Charles Armstrong, *B.R. Police Dept.*
Jerry Arbour, *EBRP School Board*
Bill Blount, *BREC*
Sue Catchings, *Health Care Centers in Schools*
Wanda Crump, *EBRP Schools*
Ken Hinrichs, *Capital Area United Way*
Carmen Jones, *LINKS*
Jackie Mims, *Mayor-President’s Office*
Dena Morrison, *Family Road of Greater Baton Rouge*
Debbie O'Connor, *Children’s Advocacy Center*
Amy Plaisance, *Baton Rouge Parents Magazine*
Charlotte Provenza, *YWCA Early Head Start/YK Project*
Roberta Vicari, M.D., *Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center*
Roxson Welch, *Mayor-President’s Office*
Lynell Whipple, *NASW -LA Chapter*

-Advisory Council

Trudy Bell-Wickham, *Consultant*
Jan Bernard, *Public Affairs Consulting*
Mary Frey Eaton, *Senior Advisor/Community Activist*
Willie Johnson, *Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce*
Isaiah Marshal, *Office of Workforce Development*
Virginia Pearson, *Consultant*
Adren Wilson, *LA DSS, Office of Family Support*





For the children of the Greater Baton Rouge area to achieve their fullest potential, we must endeavor to assure that each child lives in a safe home and a safe community. Our children deserve safe places and structured activities in which to learn and grow. We must aim to protect our children from child abuse, online predators, crime, teen-on-teen violence, and preventable injuries - the number one killer of children ages 1-18; and, we must provide our children with safe venues where they can go before and after school for stimulating, adult-supervised activities that are physically safe, caring, developmentally challenging, accessible and affordable. Additionally, our community must improve our ability to respond to emergencies and disasters for the security of our children. Given the paramount importance of safety to the overall well-being and success of our children we propose the following goals to improve safety in our community.

LEADERS

Debbie O'Connor

Child Advocacy Center of Greater Baton Rouge

Kathy Trahan

Safety Council of Greater Baton Rouge



TEAM MEMBERS

Karen Ahmad

Our Lady of Lake Children's Hospital

Renee Barbier

Safety Council of Greater Baton Rouge

Michelle Bellinger

LA Office of Youth Development

Reginald Brown

Constable, East Baton Rouge Parish

Ann Marie Erie

YWCA of Greater Baton Rouge

Kay Hessick

Office of Community Services

Louis Hicks

American Red Cross/LA Capital Area Chpt.

Debra Hutcherson

EBRP Schools Nurse

Jeff Leduff

Chief of Police, City of Baton Rouge

Ashlie Lucas, MSW

EBRP Schools

Lou Munson

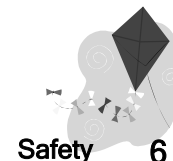
Amber Alert Foundation

Melissa Sparks

Safety Council of Greater Baton Rouge

Susan Weathers, RN

EBRP Schools Nurse



GOALS AND SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN

GOAL **Improve the availability of safety education for children, parents, and schools**
Refer to Education Goal page 23 and Family Support Goal page 26

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Increase public awareness on injury prevention
- Include gun safety in education programs
- Implement injury prevention/preparedness programs in 50% of all elementary and secondary schools by 2011
- Support local schools in resolving safety issues specific to physical plants to reduce slip and fall risk.
Example: slick restroom floors, outdated playground equipment, ground coverage, etc.

GOAL **Improve safety on the roads of our community**

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Ensure safe routes to schools for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Ensure the safety of children en route to school and after-care activities by school bus.
- Provide low cost/no cost convertible child restraints on an expanded scale to the Baton Rouge community
- Provide child restraint education and fitting assistance on an expanded scale to the Baton Rouge community
- Work with Louisiana Highway Safety Commission to develop a community-wide campaign on motor vehicle safety and courtesy including issues such as defensive driving and cell phone usage

GOAL **Improve emergency and disaster preparedness**

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Implement training initiatives that take into account illiteracy, language barriers and economics
- Update emergency broadcasting equipment to ensure appropriate communication following emergencies (i.e. child abductions)
- Expand the availability of child identification kits that include photographs and fingerprints

GOAL **Implement Internet safety initiatives to protect children from Internet predators**

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Partner with local library systems, schools and parents to augment Internet safety education

GOAL **Decrease the risk of youth violence and delinquency through positive intervention**

Refer to Education Goal page 24

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Seek new ways to bring relevant parenting resources that encourage parental involvement to a wider audience
- Provide opportunities to teach conflict resolution, communication, decision-making, and leadership skills to youth to decrease teen on teen violence
- Promote safety of youth offenders by providing appropriate services and treatment in the least restrictive environment
- Promote enforcement of youth curfew laws
- Develop a strategy to reduce truancy and to promote school attendance

“Hope is knowing that people, like kites, are made to be lifted up.”

Anonymous



GOAL **Protect youth from crime in the community**

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Provide opportunities for police to establish relationships with children through neighborhood policing, police-led youth camps, and school resident officer partnerships
- Secure funding for education of children on the impact of drugs, alcohol, and criminal activity
- Enhance programs such as Night Out Against Crime and Neighborhood Watch
- Improve security on school campuses and other public venues frequented by children and youth

GOAL **Continue to improve the response to child abuse and neglect**

Refer to Family Support Goal page 26

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Provide better access to medical exams for abused children through the creation of a specialized clinic
- Improve collaboration of the agencies and professionals that respond to reports of child abuse and strengthen services of the Child Advocacy Center
- Increase opportunity for training of law enforcement, health, and social service professionals, with a focus on forensic interview training for law enforcement
- Increase services available for abused children and their families
- Improve ability to respond quickly to calls of child abuse and neglect
- Develop plan to address the immediate safety needs of a child in imminent danger
- Improve access to primary child abuse and neglect prevention programs such as Circle of Parents
- Increase public awareness of the Safe Haven Law and domestic violence laws

GOAL **Improve the safety of parks and recreation centers**

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Establish a safe radius around each BREC facility to encourage children to use recreational centers
- Establish a partnership between law enforcement and BREC to address findings of BREC's security pro-active Task force
- Provide a reporting system for people who notice suspicious activity at local parks
- Support BREC in the on-going meeting of current standards for ground surface and playground equipment



HEALTH



There are thousands of children and youth in East Baton Rouge Parish; all of them need access to high quality, preventive health care. The authors of these goals represent experts in the fields of physical, medical, dental, and mental health as well as health education from Baton Rouge whose cumulative service to the children of this community represents hundreds of years of experience in Baton Rouge.

This plan for health and well-being is a call to action for every citizen of East Baton Rouge Parish, no matter their individual circumstances (money, race, religion, etc.); the challenges set forth in the plan emphasize human dignity for all of the children. The community of Baton Rouge will advance the physical, medical, mental, and dental health of children and teens 18 years of age and younger through utilizing community conversations and collaborations to attain the following goals.

LEADERS

Roberta C. Vicari, MD
OLOL RMC Pediatric Center
Sue Catchings
Health Care Centers in Schools

TEAM MEMBERS

Karen Ahmad
Safety Council of Greater Baton Rouge
Sandra Daigle, PhD
Clinical Psychologist
Ron Feinstein, MD
Adolescent Pediatrics, Earl K. Long Memorial Hospital, LSU Health Sciences Center
Holley Galland, MD
Health Care Centers in Schools
Paige Gaudet, DDS
Pediatric and Adolescent Dentistry
Barbara Golden, MD

Stewart Gordon, MD
Pediatrics, Earl K. Long Memorial Hospital, LSU Health Sciences Center
Dawn Marcelle, MD
Medical Director, Pediatric Hospitalist Service, Baton Rouge General Hospital
Tasha Shanin, MD
Chief of Pediatrics, Baton Rouge General Hospital
Steve Ripple, DDS
Pediatric and Adolescent Dentistry
Deborah Tennyson
Professor, Our Lady of the Lake College of Nursing

GOALS AND SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR THE HEALTH OF OUR CHILDREN

GOAL Secure access to quality, primary preventive health care for all children

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Expand school-based health-care and link it to community healthcare providers
- Investigate use of electronic medical records (EMR's) and telemedicine to provide broader access to primary care providers including physicians and physician extenders
- Develop outcomes-based data systems to benchmark results against evidenced-based medicine. Identify strengths and gaps in services to special needs children

GOAL Expand and promote opportunities for physical exercise in the community and in the schools

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Identify local programs with whom to partner for more physical playtime experiences throughout the calendar year
- Apply for any and all national, state, and local resources that will increase the physical activity of children, (ex. "Safe Routes to School" funding, PEP Grants, etc.)
- Solicit local high school and college athletes to serve as ambassadors of healthy choices for physical activity along traditional and nontraditional lines
- Incorporate physical activity into all after school programs

GOAL Secure access to quality, primary preventive dental care for all children

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Engage dental health care providers and the Louisiana Dental Association in dialogue concerning dental health in this parish
- Ensure that every child has dental care through resource planning (ie, 50% in two years, 75% in three years, and 95% by 2010)

GOAL Establish a task force to define the tenets of appropriate mental and behavioral health (MBH) services and secure access to those services for all children

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Convene public and private providers to articulate the vision of what "good access" to mental and behavioral health services should consist of in EBR Parish
- Identify access points for children and families to receive MBH services
- Identify "best practices" in mental and behavioral health services and treatment
- Establish a liaison for every school to direct access for students and their families

GOAL Form a coalition of youth, educators, healthcare professionals, community leaders and faith-based leaders to support the adoption of a comprehensive pro-health curriculum for schools and community programs in the parish

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Incorporate educational programs that define and promote the following:
 - a. acquisition of life skills,
 - b. lifestyle patterns and knowledge that support nutritional health,
 - c. mental and behavioral health, physical fitness guidelines,
 - d. sexual health education, and
 - e. wellness education
- Provide a timeline for the institution of these educational programs into our community schools and for establishing priorities in educating children and teens in this parish around the above health issues





BASIC NEEDS

Louisiana ranks 49th among all states in a recent state-by-state report on the well being of our citizens. Nine percent of Louisiana's children live in low-income households where no adult worked in the past year, the highest of any state nationwide. In 2003 fourteen percent of all teens in Louisiana were not working or in school. Louisiana ranked 44th among all states in out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

The Basic Needs of children ranked number one in priority ranking by the Institutional Community leaders and those who responded to the Adult Survey. The committee addressed the areas of food/clothing, housing, transportation and child care as the areas needing focused, priority attention if we are to expect advancement by our indigent, vulnerable citizens. We feel passionately that the goals and strategies outlined for you are only starting points for community leaders. It is incumbent for all sectors of this community to come together and share the responsibility of working towards a better life for all citizens of Baton Rouge. This is the time to "seize the day."

LEADERS

Janice Allen
Cahtolic Community Services
Ken Henrichs
Capital Area United Way

TEAM MEMBERS

Henry Bass
Baton Rouge Crisis Intervention Center
Shannon Cerise
Community Volunteer, Parent
Karen Hebert
LA Department of Social Services
Wendy Hellinger
Vic Howell
American Red Cross
Jessica Keich
Albemarle

Beth Manning
Woman's Hospital
Patty Rives
Baton Rouge Crisis Intervention Center
Jane Shanke
Volunteers of America
Dorothy Wallace
Carmen Weisner
*National Association of Social Workers
Louisiana Chapter*

GOALS AND SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR THE BASIC NEEDS OF OUR CHILDREN

GOAL Increase public knowledge of food banks and emergency food availability for specific items (i.e. infant formula) for those experiencing food insecurity

SUGGESTED STRATEGY

- Use public service announcements, church bulletins, word of mouth (networking) advertisements on buses, benches, and other public transportation

GOAL Develop a client profile database on a community center neighborhood service level

SUGGESTED STRATEGY

- Engage Institutional leaders in collaboration with Louisiana Department of Social Services, City Parish Government, 211 line, and Schools (i.e. federal free lunch providers) to station staff at Community Centers, and faith based organizations to facilitate applications for food stamps, LaChip and Medicaid and other needed services

GOAL Target existing buildings suitable for rehab as multi-family housing

SUGGESTED STRATEGY

- Establish a collaboration of Louisiana Housing Finance Authority, City of Baton Rouge, and HUD and other non-profits

GOAL Increase funding of low-income energy assistance

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Educate decision makers at the local, state, and federal levels beginning this legislative session.
- Continue education through the collaborative efforts of Catholic Community Services, 211 line, Louisiana Housing Finance Authority, and Louisiana Home Energy Assistance Program

GOAL Re-craft transportation infrastructure and free public transportation for indigent families who work second and third shifts

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Establish and organize collaborators to accomplish these goals include CATS, DSS, TANF
- Reintroduce bus tokens
- Increase bus routes

GOAL Support the development of a quality rating system and access to affordable childcare in collaboration with the LA Department of Social Services

Refer to Early Child Care and Education Goal page 17





EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION

During early childhood, from birth until 5 years of age, a child undergoes tremendous growth and development. Research tells us what we know instinctively : caring, responsive relationships and encouraging environments that are safe and healthy set the stage for early learning experiences. These positive experiences provide a foundation for future success in both academics and life. Regardless of setting, quality early childhood care and education nurtures children by using developmentally appropriate practices such as imaginative play and hands-on learning. Early language and literacy, math, science, and social skills are all developed through everyday routines and positive interactions with adults.

Relationships with parents and families are of primary importance and parents are valued as their child's first and life-long teacher. Quality early learning experiences improve health and safety outcomes and provide support for children whose families are struggling with social and economic stressors. Investing in high quality early childhood care and education is critical for our community because it truly is an investment in our future.

LEADERS

Sherry Guarisco

LA Department of Social Services

Carmen Jones

Baton Rouge Chapter of the LINKS

Charlotte Provenza

YWCA Early Head Start

TEAM MEMBERS

Amber Aguillard

LA Technical College

Baton Rouge Association for the Education of Young Children

Anjenette Holmes

Baton Rouge General Medical Center-KinderCare

Deborah Jones

Baton Rouge Parent University

Gail Kelso

LA Association for the Education of Young Children

Mary LeBlanc

Baton Rouge AIDS Society, New Heights

Janie Starks

Volunteers of America, Partnerships in Childcare

GOALS AND SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR THE EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN

GOAL Establish the Early Childhood Task Force to encourage interagency collaboration among early childhood care and education providers ensuring capacity to seek funding and related opportunities

GOAL Expand universal Pre-K, Early Head Start, Head Start, faith-based & private/public providers for all children who are eligible to enroll in these services

SUGGESTED STRATEGY

- Increase the capacity of quality early childhood care and education

GOAL Implement 3 sites in EBR where there is co-location of early childhood care & education services (birth to five) through community partnerships

GOAL Aggressively advocate public support to be the most successful parish in implementation of the LA new quality rating system for child care facilities

GOAL Expand high quality early childhood care and education opportunities for all children birth to five years of age through networking and shared data collection

GOAL Provide information to policy makers and businesses about the role of early childhood care and education programs in supporting and strengthening families and in economic development of our community



GOAL Establish linkage in Greater Baton Rouge community to become involved in early child care and education

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Engage community based resources such as School Readiness through the Arts, EBR Parish libraries, Louisiana Arts and Science Center, BREC and others
- Engage and encourage the involvement of local businesses; foundation and other civic organization in the investment and support of early childhood care and education
- Encourage partnership in NAEYC accreditation program, QUILT, LA Pathways Child Care Career Development System and other state, regional and national professional development organizations

GOAL Promote career opportunities in the field of early childhood care & education in order to grow and strengthen the industry of providers





EDUCATION

Our community is at a critical juncture in public education. The final settlement consent decree in our desegregation case expires at the end of the 2006-2007 school year. We as a community must step up to our responsibility to educate all our community's children. As a community concerned about economic development and the quality of life for all, vibrant education is the foundation for Baton Rouge to achieve the vision of becoming a learning community.

Our public school system has its first ever Strategic Plan with the goal *"To become an exemplary pre-kindergarten through 12th grade school system with rigorous teaching learning where ALL students and adults meet high expectations."* These education goals, crafted by stakeholders throughout the Greater Baton Rouge, are ones that the community can work on together to improve the education of our children. Universal pre-kindergarten would increase our ability to achieve these goals.

In the 2000 census in East Baton Rouge Parish 26.2% of our population was under 18 – 101,109 children. Post- Katrina that number of children has increased. The better we educate our children, the brighter the future of our community will be.

LEADERS

Jenola Duke

Community Activist

Margaret Mary Sulentic Dowell

East Baton Rouge Parish School System

TEAM MEMBERS

Tracy Bell

LA Resource Center for Educators

Judy Bethly

Volunteers in Public Schools

Wanda Crump

Prescott Middle School

Joanie Herrmann

Neighbors Federal Credit Union

Marion Johnson

Teach for America

Paula Johnson

EBRP School s

Willie Johnson

Baton Rouge Area Chamber

Deborah Jones

Baton Rouge Parent University

Eva Kleinpeter

Southern University

Janet C. Langlois

LA Reading Association

Mary LeBlanc

New Heights

Jen LoPiccolo

Academic Distinction Fund

Ruth McNeiland

Jefferson Terrace Elementary

Rhonda Postleweit

Montessori Parent

Geraldine Roberts

East Baton Rouge Parish Schools

Pat Ross

Baton Rouge AIDS Society

Joe Scimeca

Catholic Schools Office

Gwyn Shamlin

ICARE

Adam Smith

Park Forest Middle School

Elizabeth Willis, LSU

GOALS AND SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR THE EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN

GOAL Research and pilot 3 multi-service community schools which include school day education, school based health services, and quality before- and after- school programs offering tutoring, arts, recreation, etc.

Refer to Health Goal on page 12

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Convene interested parties to research and design the scope of services for the EBR model, identify potential locations, funding, and time line
- Educate current and future school board members and other public and private institutional leaders on the vision for new community schools for EBR

GOAL Incorporate quality life skills education (i.e., money management, parenting skills, career options, Character Counts, sex education, etc.) in all schools

Refer to Health Goal on page 12

SUGGESTED STRATEGY

- Create a Task Force of education, faith, business, university Human Ecology professors and social service providers to create scope and sequence for life skills (4th - 12th grades)

GOAL Ensure equity of staffing, resources, and educational opportunities for all EBRP students in all public schools and participating parochial and private school systems

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Invite all public, private, and parochial schools to participate in the assessment
- Advocate for an independent assessment to be conducted at 1/3 of participating schools each year
Post and publish findings and submit written recommendations for further equity improvement
- Post all after-school activities with a geographic radius of each school campus on the GIS web system to improve public accessibility to all activities

GOAL Continue to improve instruction for Kindergarten through High School in the East Baton Rouge Parish Public School System Kindergarten through High School

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Increase the number of skilled teachers
- Decrease class size
- Provide more technology with increased computer access and programs
- Provide improved course work - more choices, better content, more hands on activities, more field trips
- Expand arts education programs
- Provide more gifted programs at more schools

GOAL In partnership with the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, improve academic achievement of students and performance on all state mandated tests (including iLEAP, 4th and 8th grade LEAP, and Graduate Exit Exams), so that all schools are at the state average or above by 2011

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Expand and coordinate extended day and tutoring opportunities for school age children, beginning in lowest performing schools and including middle schools
- Provide learning support opportunities for students who fail academically so they will be better prepared for the tests
- Provide quality standards for all EBRPSS after-school programs

GOAL Provide accessible preparatory classes for ACT and SAT

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Learn from the Catholic School System's pilot of an in- school preparatory class
- Expand and coordinate extended day and tutoring opportunities for school age children, beginning in lowest performing schools

GOAL Improve literacy skills of children so that all children are reading and writing on grade level by the end of third grade

SUGGESTED STRATEGY

- Expand Volunteers in Public Schools' EveryBody Reads program, exploring a coordinated partnership with LSU and SU utilizing service learning students, and promoting reading community wide

GOAL Support the development and implementation of more alternative education opportunities for those students not well served by current programs

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Develop programs for over age students
- Expand number and hours of operation of elementary alternative programs to 4 geographically accessible programs to be more accessible to children and parents by 2009

GOAL Address the increased mental health needs of students
Refer to Health Goal on page 12

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Develop an interdisciplinary team of education, medical, and community agencies to develop the plan
- Train guidance counselors, teachers and parents to recognize signs of mental health problems and be knowledgeable of preventative, diagnostic and treatment resources

GOAL Promote academic service learning and community service opportunities in schools
Refer to Youth Leadership and Service Goal on page 32

GOAL Develop articulation agreements with post-secondary training institutions such as Baton Rouge Community College and Baton Rouge Vocational/Technical School, etc., to provide advanced training and learning opportunities

GOAL Increase business and government involvement in education and career/workforce development

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Expand business and government involvement in career preparation including: school-based Career Days, mentoring, job shadowing and Career Connections
- Promote greater business involvement with schools through Partners in Education in collaboration with VIPs and the Baton Rouge Area Chamber
- Promote business and community investment to attract, retain and support teachers

GOAL Increase the involvement of parents/caregivers in the education of their children
Refer to Family Support Goal on page 26

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Provide parent/care givers with information and skills to improve student academic achievement and to establish high expectations for students
- Encourage schools to provide meaningful communication and opportunities for parents/care givers to be involved in the education of their children

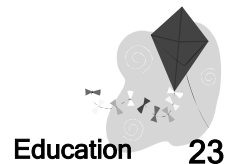
GOAL Reduce truancy and improve school attendance
Refer to Safety Goal on page 8

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Support the comprehensive, collaborative community plan, including the Truancy Assessment Center, to reduce truancy and provide support for regular student attendance in schools K-6
- Expand the comprehensive, collaborative community plan and the Truancy Assessment Center to reduce truancy and provide support for regular student attendance in middle and high schools

“True courage is like a kite; a contrary wind raises it higher.”

John Petit-Senn



GOAL Increase students' sense of belonging in their schools

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Promote programs and services that develop a positive school climate providing all students a sense of connection and identification with their school
- Promote conflict resolution and youth safety programs in the schools including an emphasis on the reduction of “bullying” on and off campus
- Provide more interaction among students including after school activities such as parties/dances
- Expand learning opportunities that address diversity issues, including Heritage Panels, BRIDGES, and Teaching Tolerance





FAMILY SUPPORT

Children are our future and families are their foundations. Families come in all shapes, sizes and colors. Because of this complexity, our approach to support families must be as diversified. One of the major goals for Family Support is to nurture efforts at raising informed, healthy and happy children so that they may become productive adults. In addition, we must “pop” the family bubble that keeps us from taking responsibility for all children—no matter where they come from or to whom they belong. We all have a role to play in assuring children and their families have what they need. Understanding the impact we have on each other will bring great improvements to the status of our community.

LEADERS

Dena Morrison

Family Road of Greater Baton Rouge

Takesha Matthews

Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana

TEAM MEMBERS

Jeanne Albarado

Discovery

Neal Chevront

Discovery

Ann Marie Erie

YWCA Family Resource Center

Karen Funderberg

Early Childhood Supports and Services

Mary LeBlanc

Baton Rouge AIDS Society, New Heights

Shirley Moloy

Discovery

Stanley Mong

Capital Area Human Services District

Ann Pace

Prevent Child Abuse LA Volunteer

Jerry Patton

Discovery

Lydia Pelz

LA Dept. of Social Services-OFS

Latoya Stell

Discovery

Lenell Young

YWCA Early Head Start Center

GOALS AND SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR FAMILY SUPPORT

GOAL Educate the community through a broad based initiative to emphasize the importance of quality parenting including the community's role in taking responsibility for all children in East Baton Rouge Parish
Refer to Education Goal on page 23

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Promote traits of a healthy family to include non-traditional parents
- Conduct an aggressive media campaign to engage high profile media leaders as speakers and advocates
- Create a monthly "Best Parent" salute
- Launch or conduct expo about parenting initiative

GOAL Improve cultural diversity and competence in our community through the training of school and social service professionals on sensitivity/awareness as well as competency in working with children and families with diverse heritage and living in poverty

GOAL Increase positive outcomes for children and family by addressing policies and procedures that impact children and families, and set aside funds for programs to be available to the underserved

GOAL Implement comprehensive parenting and life skills training
Refer to Health Goal on page 12 and Education Goal on page 23

GOAL Train social services' staff and adopt policy regarding teaching family skills by developing family plans that guide families toward self-sufficiency and incorporating community education through peer-to-peer outreach

GOAL Increase access to services by implementing extended and non-traditional service hours by both nonprofit and state social service agencies

GOAL Increase awareness of community leaders, social service agencies, and faith-based institutions on the needs of families and improve coordination of service delivery



ARTS AND RECREATION



Recreation, Arts and Culture are areas that are critical to the well being of all children. Often considered the “fluff” in the education arena, these areas support better learning and increase value in every day living. These areas are needed for the quality of life. Recreation is a tool in dealing with obesity. Play time for the very young is the first education a child receives. Art is one of the first learning tools for little ones , learning colors and shapes. Art as expression is therapeutic, as a non threatening way for children to express themselves. Art, performance or visual, is communication and brings great pleasure to children. Cultural Activities offer our children the appreciation of heritage and our different cultures. Recreation and childhood play are a foundation for lifelong health. Arts, Culture, and Recreation enhance and support all the other areas of the Community Plan for Children - Health, Education, Early Childhood and Child Care, Youth Leadership and Service, Family Support and Safety.

LEADERS

Pabby Arnold

East Baton Rouge Parish Library

Alvin Mack

BREC

Genny Nadler Thomas

Community Activist/Artist

TEAM MEMBERS

Bill Blount

BREC

Toni Brown

Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge

Wilbert Carroll

BREC

Melanie Couvillion

Playmakers of Baton Rouge

Ashton Hawkins

BREC

Yvonne Wilson

BREC



GOALS AND SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR ARTS AND RECREATION FOR OUR CHILDREN

GOAL Create a community task force to identify needs and to advance arts and recreation in every neighborhood

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Research why arts and recreation are undervalued or under appreciated by EBR residents
Refer to Education Goal (quality after-school programs of the future) page 20
- Clearly identify barriers to participation, i..e., lack of transportation, Information, and education in regard to importance of the arts.
- Educate adults on arts and recreation opportunities for young children and youth
- Identify ways to communicate, engage, and recruit young children and youth to participate in recreation and art programs, by possibly forming a creative council for kids for their ideas and input

GOAL Establish partnerships to coordinate quality arts and recreational after school programs
Refer to Education Goal reference on page 20 and Health Goal reference on page 12

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Collaborate and coordinate with the Mayor's committee on youth that is currently planning a youth survey outlining resources, services and needs of BR youth
- Encourage and support partnership opportunities between recreational organizations, art organizations, public library system, schools, community centers and other support systems
- Increase youth access to sports leagues, and recreational and art activities by promoting use of recreational facilities, community centers, public libraries, and by encouraging community partnerships with arts organizations and schools

“Throw your dreams into space like a kite, and you do not know what it will bring back, a new life, a new friend, a new love, a new country.”

Anais Nin



GOAL Create and/or advance partnership opportunities between recreational organizations, the public library, schools, community centers, and other community support systems

SUGGESTED STRATEGY

- Promote youth access to art programs, including all forms of drama, music, visual arts and dance by creating the opportunities for agencies working with youth to partner with art organizations

GOAL Research and develop supplemental transportation to safely get children and teens to local recreation centers

GOAL Implement funding assistance effort for low-income youth to be able to participate in art and recreation activities

GOAL Open additional schools and recreation centers after school hours for sports, art and tutorial programs for all children

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Create clusters of parks, libraries, theater and sports field arenas
- Partner and enroll private and parochial school children in neighborhood to be enrolled

GOAL Create better, safer, larger parks
Refer to Safety Goal on page 9





YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

The Children’s Coalition of Greater Baton Rouge recognizes the importance of youth leadership in our community. This community plan embraces the value of the youth voice, their solutions and contributions. Through forums and surveys, we want to actively consider their thoughts and ideas about building a brighter future for all youth and children in the Greater Baton Rouge area. This is only one example of how we should support our youth and help them to become engaged, productive citizens of Baton Rouge.

“Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life.” This famous quote of Marian Wright Edelman directs our community to a very, precious value we must instill in our youth--”giving back”. Making a difference in life begins with service and ultimately produces well-rounded, caring leaders. Service and leadership development combined teaches our young people about civic participation, democracy and public voice...the true attributes of citizenship.

LEADERS

Christy Reeves

Girl Scouts, Audubon Council

James Riley

Baton Rouge Youth

Chip Peters

LA Assembly on School-Based Health Care

TEAM MEMBERS

Ronnie Edwards

Urban Restoration Enhancement Corps

Valerie Maurice

LSU AgCenter

Mona Pellerin

Baton Rouge Community College

Patty Rives

Baton Rouge Crisis Intervention Center

Jessie Williams

Working to Achieve

GOALS AND SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

GOAL Empower youth to influence program and service through citizenship, advocacy and public policy

SUGGESTED STRATEGY

- Poll agencies and systems on how youth are currently engaged in citizenship, advocacy and public policy

GOAL Conduct youth-led/oriented forums or venues on public issues

GOAL Implement community service opportunities, service learning, character / team building programs, and public recognition
Refer to Education Goal on page 22

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Empower youth to influence programs and services through active participation on community committees and Boards of Directors
- Engage young professional leadership programs to mentor youth

GOAL Build collaborative, web-based, information sharing by encouraging youth creation and development of youth-specific resource directory

“Imagination is the highest kite one can fly”

Lauren Bacall





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

And now the work begins. This plan is the launching of a new opportunity. We cannot wait for others to do the work we know needs to be done, the work that will help all children grow up to be safe, nurtured, healthy, and happy. We must also realize that we all play a part. We all fit together to complete the solution. If our families are not getting what they need, it will not matter how strong our education system is. It does not matter if we have the best art programs in the world, unless we have a safe place to do them.

All children have the right to be raised in a society that values them and understands that there are no “their children” and “our children”. “Our children” grow up with “their children”. We all impact the world we live in and the quality of life for all. We all have a part to play.

The implementation of this plan will be hard work for all of us. The Children’s Coalition will do our part by organizing around these goals and creating opportunities for the service sector, the public sector, the faith sector, and for private citizens to be involved at making a difference in the lives of all our children.

So what will you do? What part will you play?

Visit www.ccofgbr.org to tell us.

