



Land of Waterfalls

# TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY

NORTH CAROLINA

<http://www.transylvaniacounty.org/departments/administration>

## EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE

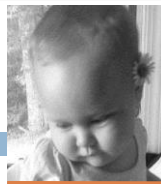
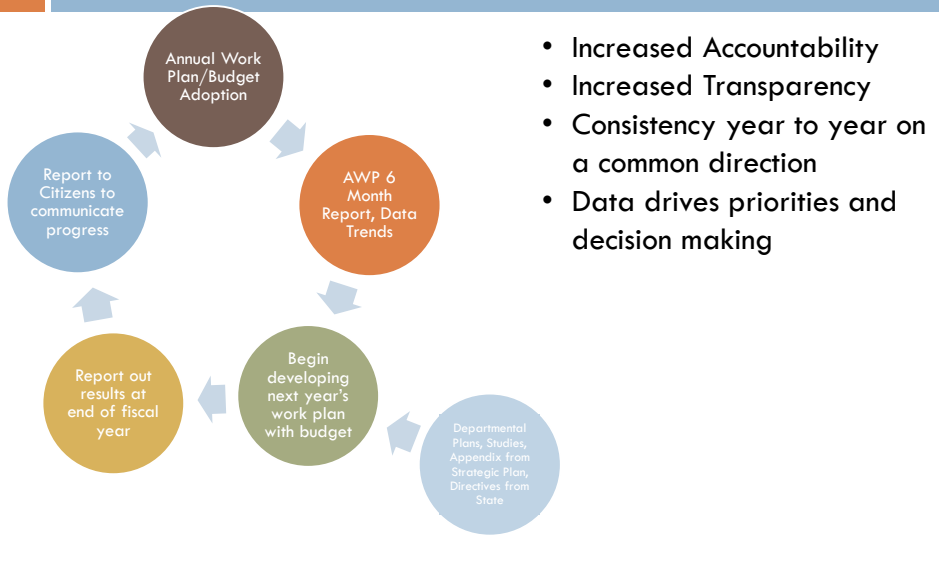
August 11, 2017

## Setting the Stage



- Strategic Plan
- Organizational Change
- Process Improvement
- Efficiency
- Collaboration

## The Data Driven Organizational Direction



## State of the Young Child in Transylvania County December 2015

*A population that does not take care of the elderly and of children and the young has no future, because it abuses both its memory and its promise.*

— Pope Francis

*There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children*

—Nelson Mandela

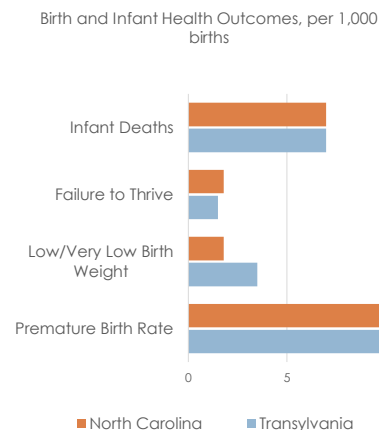
- There is a 16% return on investment with 80% going to benefit the general public. In other words, there is an \$8 return for every \$1 invested with \$6.5 for public benefit (Federal Reserve Minneapolis)
- Dowell Myers, Director of the Population Dynamics Research Group at the University of Southern California says the declining nationwide birthrate is creating an imbalance in the economy, with a growing gap between working age populations that fund social programs and populations that are dependent on those programs
- Short and Long term Economic Development Impacts

## Engagement Structure

- **May 2015: Kick off meeting**
  - Open invitation to stakeholders from commissioner
  - Facilitated discussion on issues facing 0-5, developed discussion topics
- **Summer/Fall 2015: Monthly focus meetings**
  - Encouraged bringing data around topics to show issues
  - Vetted data in the meeting
  - Live screen documentation of key points, data sources
  - Topics: Health/Mental Health, Education and Child Care, Family Life and Poverty, Recreation
  - Utilized in house resources
- **Winter 2015: Report Issued**
  - Commissioner meeting
  - Press Release/Social media release
  - Community Presentations begin
  - Importance of a quick read and a detailed report

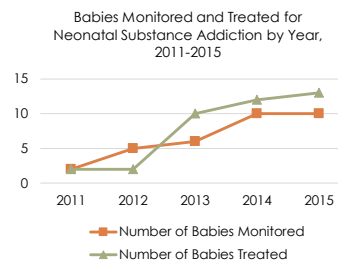
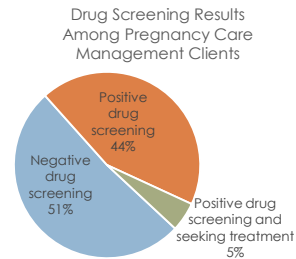
## Highlights- Health and Mental Health

- **83% of children are up to date on vaccinations exceeding the state goal of 76% for 2015**
- **51% of children ages 1-5 who have Medicaid do not use any dental services**



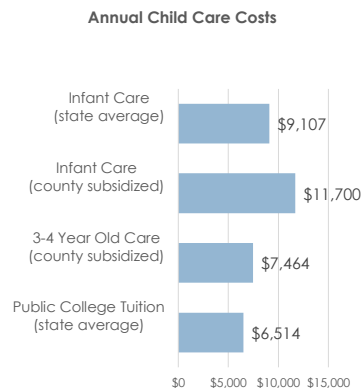
## Highlights- Health and Mental Health

- 17 out of 35 infants enrolled in Care Coordination for Children were undergoing treatment for opiate withdrawal symptoms
- That is a rate of 4,560 per 100,000 births, more than 7 times the statewide average of 620 per 100,000 births



## Highlights- Early Education and Child Care

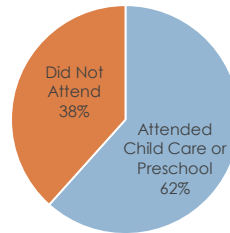
- The reimbursement rate to a 5 star center for infant/one year old care has increased by \$236 from last year and two year olds by \$202 effective Jan 1, 2016.
- Transylvania County is 6<sup>th</sup> highest in the state in child care rates
- It costs almost double to send an infant for care in our county than to send a child to a public college in NC
- The average two income household can expect to spend 27.8% of their income on one child in care and **over half** for two children



## Highlights- Early Education and Child Care

- 274 children in 9 full time regulated child care centers/preschools and 1 family child care home
- 20 developmental day slots for children with special needs
- 50 children with special needs served by teacher of service provider
- 255 children at 4 part time church based preschool programs and 1 non-traditional drop in center
- 47 children in Head Start at county child care centers
- 18 children in Early Head Start
- 15 children in Early Head Start at EHS childcare partners

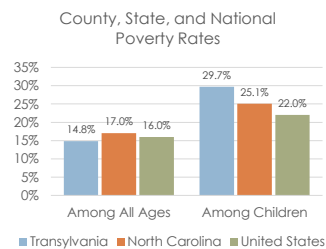
Child Care or Preschool Attendance by 2015-2016 Kindergarten Students



- 78% of kindergartners tested below or far below proficiency at the beginning of the 2015 school year.

## Highlights- Family Life and Poverty

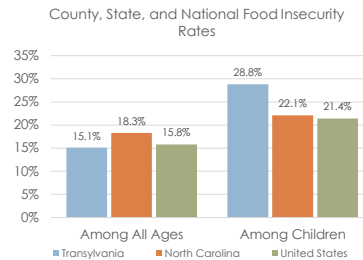
- A household with two adults and two children would need both adults to earn an hourly rate of \$13.96 (almost 300% of the poverty rate) to live in Transylvania County without assistance
- A child is more likely to be living in poverty in Transylvania County than the chances for all individuals



- Transylvania County median worker income: \$22,034 compared to NC: \$ 27,425
- Transylvania County median household income: \$46,556 compared to NC: \$41,952

## Highlights- Family Life and Poverty

- 18 children under the age of 18 are homeless in Transylvania County
- The Haven has served 42 children ages 0-5 in the shelter since 2012 and 45 children ages 0-18 in the Family House since 2014. 10 families are on the Family House waiting list.



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## Task Force and Next Steps

*Transylvania County Department of Social Services*  
*United Way*  
*Blue Ridge Community Health Services*  
*Transylvania County Library*  
*County Child Development*  
*Smart Start of Transylvania County*  
*Hendersonville Pediatrics*  
*Western Carolina Community Action*  
*Transylvania County Parks and Rec*  
*The Family Place*  
*Transylvania County Public Health*

*Brevard Academy*  
*Rise and Shine Freedom School*  
*Mountain Sun School*  
*Transylvania County Public Schools*  
*Children's Center*  
*Cindy Platt Boys and Girls Club*  
*Connect*

## Early Childhood Initiative (ECI)

- Monthly large group meetings to update/motivate
- Focus groups developed around topics, self identify and group appoints leader
- Initial focus on utilizing existing resources and aligning purposes through collaboration with partners
- No single agency or nonprofit “owner”
- County acts as coordination structure
  - ▣ Agendas, minutes, facilitation, meeting reminders
  - ▣ Commissioner/Staff Advocacy efforts

## Sub-grouping

- Preschool Education
- Health/Mental Health
- Recreation
- Family Support
- Fundraising- Smartly United Early Childhood Collective
- Advocacy

## Activities since report issued

- Workshop for preschool and kindergarten teachers
  - Increase communication
- First (and 2<sup>nd</sup>) Kindergarten Readiness Rally
  - Multi-agency representation
- Town Hall on Childcare
  - Citizens and employers 119 people
  - CCR&R need
  - Affordability and availability
- Summer family happenings published
- Partnerships between Family Place and Library
- Birth forward in summer reading
- Expansion of Headstart Slots through partnership between WCCA and TCPS
- Family Place started play and learn kits and Circle of Parents Groups

## Activities since report issued

- Transylvania Public Health has engaged with Dr. Hartye, the chair of the monthly Substance Abuse in Pregnancy Workshop through the Behavioral Health division of Mission Health, to address drug addiction during pregnancy and in newborns and has identified in county treatment options
- Mental Health Forum and Kiosk by Vaya Health
- Hendersonville Pediatrics has added a behavioral consultant and has a partnership with Smart Start for Reach Out and Read
- Parks and Rec added indoor preschool play time and summer camp for preschoolers as well as Start Smart Basketball for 4-5 year olds
- Institute of Emerging Issues at NCSU Forum on Early Childhood hosted Commissioner Page Lemel
- Family dinner series from health cooking to parenting classes coordinated through Family Place
- Community Resilience Training in March
- Week and Month of the Young Child



## Activities Upcoming

- State legislature has developed study committee
- IEI at NCSU will continue this issue next year
- Continued work on the economic development component
  - Child care as infrastructure for economy
    - Availability and affordability
  - Research on early learning
    - Baby 0-3 produces 700 new neural connections per second
    - Wages less than \$11 per hour, even for teachers with degrees
    - 22% decline in community college enrollment since 2008

## What about outcomes?

- Most meaningful look at measures will need to wait
- Early measures
  - 12% increase in kindergartners testing at proficient or above on entry
  - Decrease in babies born addicted\*