

# LIVINGSTON COUNTY GREAT START LIVINGSTON FACT SHEET

## Health and Human Service Needs FACT SHEET

### Early Childhood Needs in Livingston County 2014

*“The future of any society depends on its ability to foster the health and well-being of the next generation. When we fail to provide children with what they need to build a strong foundation for healthy and productive lives, we put our future prosperity and security at risk.”<sup>1</sup>*

#### What are the needs of Livingston County’s estimated 10,293 children under age 5?

##### Community Conditions

- Approximately **1,245** or **10%** of Livingston County young children live below the federal poverty level.
- **21.5%** of K-12 students enrolled in Livingston County public schools during the 2013-2014 school year qualified for free or reduced priced lunch (up from 12.4% in 2006-2007).
- **12.2%** of children 0-8 received food assistance in 2013.
- The unemployment rate in 2013 was **8.1%**.

##### Pediatric and Family Health

- In 2012, **23.1%** of live births were to women with less than adequate prenatal care and **20.9%** of live births were to women who smoked during pregnancy.
- Babies who weigh less than 2,500 grams (approximately 5 lbs. 8 oz.) at birth are considered low birth weight. In 2012, there were **6.6%** live births with low birth weights.
- Babies born prior to 37 weeks of pregnancy are considered preterm. In 2012, **9.8%** of the live births were preterm.
- As of December 2012, **73%** of Livingston County children are immunized.
- Among Medicaid eligible 1 – 2 year old children in Livingston County, **61.9%** were blood tested for Lead in 2013.
- The percent of children in Livingston County ages 0-5 insured by Medicaid for 2012 was **30.9%**.

### **Child Care and Early Childhood Education**

- In 2013, the total capacity of licensed or registered child care spaces for children is **6,334** for the estimated 37,226 children 0-14 years of age in Livingston County.
- The total number of child care businesses was **151** in 2013, compared to 209 in 2010. Over 30% of child care businesses have been lost due to: economic climate, increased licensing regulations, and increased requirements of the rating system.
- There are approximately **1,260** early childhood workforce personnel in Livingston County (2013). The annual turnover rate of the early childhood workforce personnel is **43%**.
- The percentage of Livingston County children under age 6 with all parents in the is 68.4% for years 2008 – 2012.
- Early On identified **212 children** in 2013 between birth and age three at risk for developmental delay.
- Total enrollment in LESA early childhood programs in 2012-2013 was 401; including 56 children with diagnosed disabilities. (211 Head Start, 171 Great Start Readiness and 19 Great Parents/Great Start)
- In 2013, there were **308 children** ages 0 to 5 identified and receiving special education services.
- Percent of children who achieved reading proficiency in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in 2013 was **73.4%** and the percent who achieved math proficiency in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in 2013 was **45.6%**.

### **Social and Emotional Health/Family Support**

- The percent of Livingston County births paid for by Medicaid was **23.7%** in 2012.
- The percent of children participating in WIC has increased from 28.1% in 2009 to **33.4%** in 2013.
- The rate per 1,000 children ages 0-8 what are substantiated victims of abuse and neglect when from 9.5 in 2012 to **12.1** in 2013
- From the Parents and Families Survey, families are most interested in finding low cost/free family activities and kindergarten readiness. They are also aware of many of the Great Start Livingston Partners.
- In 2013, **64%** of kindergarten children were proficient based on our local Kindergarten Observation Survey administered by Kindergarten Teachers. Within that score, less than half were proficient in Social/Emotional and Approaches to Learning skills.

### **Why are these Facts about Young Children's Lives Important?**

- From birth to age 3, early experiences shape the architecture of the brain – including cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional capacities – at a phenomenal rate. During this critical period, children are most at-risk for poverty and most vulnerable to its effects, which can permanently affect their ability to learn.

- Brain research tells us that toxic stress, like homelessness, or child abuse can permanently damage brain architecture.
- Maternal depression is a significant risk factor affecting the well-being and school readiness of young children.
- A study on the long-term effects of high-quality early care and education on low-income 3 and 4 year-olds documented that adults at age 40 who participated in a preschool program in their early years were more productive resulting in a return to society of over \$16 for every tax dollar invested in the early care and education program.
- Families and communities play critical roles in helping children get ready for school. Children from economically secure families and those that have healthy relationships are more likely to succeed in school.

## **What Services Exist in Livingston County to Assist with Raising Young Children?**

Livingston County has a variety of quality early childhood programs and activities. This includes: home visiting programs, parent education programs, preschool for all families, play groups, parent/child activities, and more. Parenting materials are available through local libraries, organizations such as Child Connect for Family Success, and on line at [www.GreatStartLivingston.org](http://www.GreatStartLivingston.org). You can also follow Great Start Livingston on Facebook for local events and activities.

## **What Can the Community Do to Help?**

- Spend time reading to children and encouraging parents to talk, sing, and read to their children.
- Educate yourself about the important first few years of life and how to support young children's growth and development.
- Join Great Start Livingston, through the Collaborative, Parent Coalition or Workgroup, to assist in planning to meet our children's needs.
- Support quality child care initiatives, ongoing training for child care providers, and seek licensed, quality childcare for your own children.
- Donate funds or resources to local programs that support the needs of young children and families.
- Support funding for quality early childhood services for children prenatal – 8 years old.

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*For more information or to get involved, go to [www.GreatStartLivingston.org](http://www.GreatStartLivingston.org).*

