

A photograph of four young girls in a field, one holding a baseball bat, with a blue overlay. The girls are smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred field with trees.

Community Engagement Update

WHY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

Students learn best when schools, families, and communities work together as partners in education.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICE

- Consolidating outreach events
- Strengthening existing partnerships
- Creating meaningful engagement opportunities
- Elevating school-based community engagement activities/events
- Continuing to build network of partners
- Continuing to build knowledge of community resources

IDENTIFYING STUDENT AND FAMILY NEEDS

Connecting with Families

- Direct family outreach
- Referrals from social workers, counselors, and secretaries

Top Needs of 2025-26

- Housing support (rent/utilities/housing)*
- Food resources
- School supplies
- Vision care resources**
- Transportation*

*Challenging need

**New need

REMOVING BARRIERS

Vision Care Resources

- Schools previously utilized the VSP voucher program before program pause
- Need for both low-cost and no-cost vision care options for eligible families
 - Low-cost providers: Midwestern Eye Clinic and Naperville Eye Boutique
 - No-cost resources: Villa Park Lions Club, People's Resource Center, and Outreach York

Transportation

- Options for transportation are limited in DuPage County
- Need for transportation before/after school
 - Outreach York and Tri-Town YMCA provide low to no-cost child care services before/after school

COMMUNITY PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

Outreach York Housing Support

Services include:

- Security deposit assistance
- Emergency rental assistance
- Rapid rehousing assistance
- Court-based rental assistance
- Temporary hotel stay assistance

COMMUNITY PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

Villa Park Area Early Childhood Collaborative (VPAECC)

Purpose

- Identify local early childhood education and care needs and develop community-driven solutions

Key Activities

- Connects families with children ages 0–5 to resources and early childhood programs
- Provides family education opportunities and professional development for child care providers

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

VPAECC *(continued)*

Steering Committee:

- District 45
- NuPage Communities (formerly NEDFYS)
- Outreach York
- The Parkview Collective
- This Little Light
- Tri-Town YMCA (fiscal agent)
- Villa Park Public Library (VPPL)

COMMUNITY PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

VPAECC (*continued*)

Opportunities for D45

- Provides engagement opportunities for families not yet connected to D45
- Provides opportunities for collaboration with community partners

Outreach Activities

- Baby Bags (fall)
 - Provided to local hospitals and clinics serving at-risk mothers
 - Provide diapers, clothing, and informational materials
- Healthy Kids Day Event (spring)
 - D45 table provided informational materials, registration reminders, and child-friendly giveaways
 - ~330 families with children 0-5 years old attended

EXPANDING OUR NETWORK

New Community Resource

VNA Health Care (101 E. St. Charles Road, Villa Park)

- Offers affordable primary care for patients of all ages
- Services include:
 - School physicals & immunizations
 - Mental/behavioral health services
 - Community programming
 - Benefits navigation

*Health insurance not required, sliding scale fees

EXPANDING OUR NETWORK

New Community Resource

The Lift Center (2S361 Glen Park Rd., Lombard)

- Offers a variety of services and resources to help meet community needs
- Services include:
 - LIFT Market
 - LIFT Legal Center (Administer Justice)
 - English Classes (World Relief)
 - LIFT Center Care

EXPANDING OUR NETWORK

100-Day Homelessness Prevention Challenge

- Agencies across DuPage County, Lake County, Peoria, Rockford, and Springfield participated in a 100-Day Homelessness Prevention Challenge
- Led by REINSTITUTE, these fast-paced initiatives drive rapid innovation and systems change in homelessness prevention

Participating organizations in DuPage County cohort:

- 360 Youth Services
- Catholic Charities
- *LIFT Center
- DuPage Continuum of Care
- DuPage County Community Services
- DuPage PADS
- *Elmhurst Walk-in Assistance Network
- Loaves & Fishes
- People's Resource Center
- *Salvation Army
- *School District 45

EXPANDING OUR NETWORK

100-Day Homelessness Prevention Challenge (*continued*)

D45 Participation Goals

- Expand network and knowledge of homelessness prevention resources
- Learn more about how service providers deliver and coordinate support
- Share insights from families and experience as McKinney-Vento liaison to inform system improvements

EXPANDING OUR NETWORK

100-Day Homelessness Prevention Challenge (*continued*)

Goal: Prevent 50 eligible single-parent/guardian households with minors in DuPage County from entering homelessness

What was challenged?

- Streamlining information sharing across relevant community sectors
- Feasibility and effectiveness of a warm hand-off across sectors
- Feasibility and effectiveness of follow-ups across sectors

Outcome: Working with DuPage Health Department to identify and invite relevant homelessness prevention service providers to be a part of Integrated Referral and Intake System (IRIS)

FUTURE PRIORITIES

- Continue to address resource gaps with organizations
- Enhance data collection

A young girl with braids is smiling and looking towards the camera. The image is overlaid with a blue filter. The text "QUESTIONS?" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters in the center of the image.

QUESTIONS?