

**Talbot Family Network
Community Plan Update FY 20
Focus Groups**

Six Focus Groups were conducted between November 20 – December 19, 2019. Focus Group participants were recruited from the following sources: Healthy Families, Temporary Cash Assistance recipients, Getting Ahead participants, Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center, TCPS Night School and Talbot Mentors Mentee Parents/Guardians.

Participants 67

Gender Female 53 Male 14

Age <18: 4% 18-24: 24% 25-34: 23% 35-44: 32% 45-54: 11% >54: 6% 1 skipped

Racial Demographics White 34% Black 31% Multiple 1% Other 33% 9 skipped

Hispanic Yes 58% No 42%

Highest Level of Education Less than HS 50% HS/GED 19% Some College 19% AA Degree 3%
Bachelors Degree 6% Graduate Degree 3% 3 skipped

Employment Status FT Employed 32% PT Employed 24% Not employed, looking for work 23%
Not employed, not looking for work 9% Retired 3% Disabled 9% 1 skipped

Current Housing Home Owner 10% Rent 76% Living with someone else 13%

Relationship Status Single 41% Married 24% Divorced 12% Separated 5% Partnered 18% 1 skipped

Household Size 1-2 7% 2-4 61% 5-6 27% >7 5% 11 skipped

Someone in Household receives

Free and Reduced Lunch 33% Disability 5% 12 skipped

WIC 47% Food Stamps/SNAP 38%

TCA 22% MA 53%

Is anyone in the household impacted by incarceration? Yes 19% No 81% 8 skipped

Family and Community

Community Survey Rank	Focus Group Discussion Responses
<p>#1 Affordable Housing</p>	<p>Hard to find a place that's affordable - \$1,100 for 2 bedrooms, \$1,200 for 3 bedroom– NS and TCA Need rent control-TCA Not enough and not affordable- CMRC Too expensive for one family alone - CRMC If a family doesn't have documents it is hard because landlords ask for a social security number, w-2s, etc. so have to live with other families and it's still expensive- CMRC Safe affordable housing is a huge problem. Was living in Parkway Apartments but couldn't let my kids play outside due to crime and drug activity- GA Lack of affordable housing-TM Even affordable housing isn't affordable-TM When new affordable housing was built on Matthewstown Rd it filled instantly – you have to know the right person to get a spot-TM All housing focuses on credit when they need to focus on rental history – people skip payments for other things and hurt their credit just so they don't miss their rent -TM Not enough and not affordable-HF Cost of housing has doubled in last 15 years-HF Make too much for income-based housing but can't afford regular housing – HF Credit is a barrier to housing - HF</p>
<p>#2 Trouble Affording Monthly Expenses</p>	<p>Trouble paying medical and ER bills – no assistance for this in Talbot County-HF and CMRC Lost job due to child's health issues – GA Significant issue-TM Make too much to receive assistance but not enough to be able to pay all the bills and live comfortably-TM "DSS won't help you when you are trying to help yourself"-TM A lot of help for people that are not trying but little help for families working and trying to help themselves – HF Do I quit and do nothing so I can get the help? -HF Cost of childcare, housing and other expenses of raising a family too much-HF The more you make the more they take- HF Shouldn't have to feel bad about yourself if you ask for help-HF Lack of credit and low financial literacy in the community-HF</p>

	<p>Need more help with energy assistance-TCA</p> <p>Everything is income based but they look at gross not net income – TCA</p>
#3 Racism	<p>See it in healthcare – must pay before they are seen – CMRC</p> <p>Child made fun of for her long hair in school- CMRC</p> <p>Yes! The way white people look at you – clutching their purse on the street – GA</p> <p>Starts early – children are experiencing in school from classmates and staff- TM</p> <p>Overwhelming agreement for all participants of color that racism is a significant issue in Talbot-TM</p> <p>Experience at medical appointments with support staff – being ignored or passed over for English-speaking patients- HF</p> <p>In hospital after birth of child staff ignored Spanish-speaking families request for a specific pediatrician and automatically assigned to Dr. Fritz – HF</p> <p>Hispanic participants state they get looks from other customers when they use WIC in non-Hispanic food stores-HF</p> <p>Black participant states she gets looks when she uses her SNAP card-HF</p> <p>Talbot’s not that bad- you get looks if you drive a nice car-TCA</p> <p>Racism between blacks too-TCA</p> <p>Not getting hired because of race-TCA</p> <p>Over hear white people claim they don’t get benefits because they are white-TCA</p>
Other	
Activities for Youth	<p>Kid’s don’t have anything to do. The cost and transportation to recreational activities is too high. There’s the ice rink but no way to get to the rink-TM</p> <p>Schools have greatly decreased the number of dances at the middle school- TM</p> <p>Sports recreational leagues stop after middle school so if you don’t make the team in high school there are no sports opportunities-TM</p> <p>Need more structured activities for middle school youth – things like Hang Time at YMCA are not structure enough for many kids-TM</p> <p>Not enough for kids to do- HF</p>
Impact of Incarceration on Children and Families	<p>2/9 in TCA group had experienced incarceration</p> <p>When I was locked up, I had to find someone to pick up my kids from school that day. Both parents were incarcerated so kids went to grandparents. Now kids are scared to leave parents- TCA</p> <p>Hard on my family when I was locked up-TCA</p>

Education and Employment

Community Survey Rank	Focus Group Discussion Responses
<p>#1 Transportation</p>	<p>Can't afford drivers education or car with what I get paid-NS Barrier to night school-NS Process of driver's education is difficult – cost, getting to classes, having someone to do driving practice hours with – NS Transportation to medical services because services aren't available in Easton with Spanish speaking staff-CMRC Getting to appointments is hard if you don't have a car or if you don't have a license-CMRC It is hard to get a license if you aren't documented- CMRC Getting a license is an issue for individuals that have been in the country a short time-HF Causes a barrier in getting to medical appointments-HF Can lead to legal issues if driving without a license-HF Issues for 5/9 in Focus Group-TCA Either no car or no license-TCA</p>
<p>#2 Childcare</p>	<p>Expensive even with a sliding scale-CMRC Too expensive so can't go to work-CMRC Hours of childcare is an issue. Babysitter can do more hours than daycare but it costs more-CMRC Summer even YMCA with discount is still \$60 per child per week which is very expensive-CMRC Need extended hours-GA Judy Center doesn't provide any services like in other counties-GA Early Head Start's care hours are too limited-GA Using family to try to get by but concerned about whether it's too demanding on grandparents-TM The hours that childcare operates are restrictive- can't get second shift jobs-TM Cost is a huge barrier-TM Not enough infant care slots-TM Can't afford quality childcare-HF Difficult to trust-HF Many participants don't work because they can't afford childcare and/or they don't trust the childcare they may be able to afford-HF No infant care-HF Purchase of Care is confusing-HF Talbot doesn't have a 24-hr childcare center-TCA Childcare is difficult. Costs too much and not worth working because of the cost-TCA</p>

	<p>Vouchers (POC) are hard to qualify for if you are working because you make too much money but you don't qualify if you aren't working – TCA</p> <p>Early Head Start has limited hours-TCA</p> <p>Head Start – not enough slots or didn't get in and no one called them back. Others said change in staff during application process and things got lost-CMRC</p>
#3 High School Graduates Ready for Higher Education	<p>Daughter graduated from EHS from program to prepare for Physical Therapy, went to Chesapeake College but wasn't prepared for college and dropped out-TM</p> <p>Not all kids will go to college-TM</p> <p>Focus needs to highlight trade school options-TM</p> <p>Education standards have declined. Lowering of grading system so that a 60 is passing brings the level of education down. Pushing kids through-HF</p> <p>Kids need more life skills-HF</p>
Other	
Bullying	<p>Majority of night school participants indicated they were bullied in regular school-NS</p> <p>Couple of parents indicated that their children experience bullying in school but stated it depends on how well the teacher is paying attention-CMRC</p> <p>Happening at all age levels-TM</p> <p>Intensified by social media-TM</p> <p>Leads to trauma for many kids-TM</p> <p>Real issue especially when children are younger and haven't learned how to take care of self-HF</p> <p>In schools adults aren't paying enough attention to the little things – the daily micro aggressions so when it escalates into violence then the bullied kid is blamed-HF</p>
Employment	<p>Lost jobs</p> <p> Due to mental health – bipolar. Worked for Sea Watch for 3 years (4 different times). They loved me because I pack fast but have anger issues-TCA</p> <p> Due to child's health issue – child was hospitalized for 3 weeks. Had worked there for 10 years. Employer told her she needed to be home with child-TCA</p> <p> Due to son with ADHD having issues at school. Constant calls and meeting-GA</p> <p> Accident on the job and they let me go-GA</p> <p>Jobs are hard to find even if documented. If undocumented it is harder, or the employer will make you pay your own insurance in order to work-CMRC</p>
Schools	<p>Issues with school safety and structure-TM</p> <p>Hallways in school are unsupervised. At EMS 6th graders were having sex under the stairwell-TM</p>

	<p>Parents are expected to be constantly available when a child has issues like ADHD-GA Calls from school cause stress at work-GA Need more flexibility when scheduling IEP and 504 plan meetings so parents don't have to leave work-GA Middle school doesn't have an interpreter and doesn't send home translated documents so if there is an issue, they have to use CMRC to help-CMRC</p> <p>4/9 TCA Participants dropped out of school -things you learn in school you don't use in the world. Never taught me how to manage a bank account or understand a lease-TCA -Didn't want to be in school-seemed irrelevant-TCA -Was bullied in school-TCA -Need to focus on life skills-TCA</p>
Disconnected Youth	Yes! But when discussed no one in group could actually think of someone that was DY-TCA

Health

Community Survey Rank	Focus Group Discussion Responses
#1 Mental Health	<p>Have bad ADHD. Night school has helped a lot. Can get a lot of work done in 1.5 hrs. More condensed than traditional school-NS</p> <p>Issues for children and adults. For All Seasons has a free program but there is a waitlist-CMRC</p> <p>Multiple stressors recently- several deaths, heart surgery, bad relationship, single parent of 2, son was abused and other health issues. A lot of trauma in my life- GA</p> <p>Need more resource to decrease the delay in receiving services-TM</p> <p>Need for more trauma informed treatment-TM</p> <p>Find a way to decrease the turnover of therapist-TM</p> <p>While school-based may be helpful for some there was a question about if this is a "deep" enough service for kids with trauma history-TM</p> <p>Kids are more aware about mental health and more vocal about asking for support-TM</p> <p>Can't find a provider that accepts their insurance-HF</p> <p>Son was at Board of Childcare RTC and released with no aftercare or planning. Took 2 months to get him services he needed-TCA</p> <p>DSS has helped get a MH appointment-TCA</p>

	<p>Self-referral homeschooled children after father left. ESPS said needed their estranged father's signature. Finally, intake in April and then has not heard back from ESPS. Has gotten help at Bay Pediatrics and is on waiting list at Peace of Mind now-TCA</p> <p>Lost job- bipolar. Has anger issues-TCA</p> <p>Son is having issues in school. School calls frequent so I lost my job. Pediatrician says it's ADHD but I feel like it's more. Has an appointment at Kennedy Krieger-GA</p>
<p>#2 Alcohol and Drug Use in Youth</p>	<p>Yes- NS</p> <p>Especially high school age, though it starts in middle school-CMRC</p> <p>It happens in the bathrooms at middle school so kids are afraid to go or parents say they aren't allowed to go to the bathroom at school-CMRC</p> <p>Most kids have been exposed to it- some feel peer pressure-CMRC</p> <p>It's an adult issue too. Kids say they get it from parents-CMRC</p> <p>ADULT-lost house, living with mother and having trouble getting back into life/job-GA</p> <p>ADULT-MAT (Medical Assisted Treatment) makes me feel isolate. Life is not going where I want it to-GA</p> <p>Kids are uncomfortable using bathrooms in EMS because of vaping-TM</p> <p>Access to all drugs starting in Middle School-TM</p> <p>What is there for kids to do in this county? Need activities so they don't start using-HF</p> <p>Overdose across the street this morning-TCA</p> <p>Has taken Narcan training-TCA</p>
<p>#3 Emotional Trauma in Youth</p>	<p>Children's trauma is related to parental stress. When a parent is struggling and stressed, they don't have the patience with their children or the time to notice if their children are dealing with stressors-TM</p> <p>Parents are not accessible at home for their children-TM</p> <p>What impacts parents impacts kids-TCA</p>
<p>Other</p>	
<p>Access to Healthy Food/ Hunger</p>	<p>FARMS applications ask for social security numbers now which is intimidating but you can leave that blank-CMRC</p> <p>Healthy food is more expensive-CMRC</p> <p>Fruits and veggies are expensive even with WIC. You have to pick only 1 thing each week-HF</p> <p>SVDP is helpful but much of the canned food is not things we use for our families. Would like more fresh veggies-HF</p>
<p>Access to Health Care</p>	<p>To be seen the same day you have to go to Emergency Room which is very expensive so many go to the doctor in Seaford and wait in line – CMRC</p> <p>Dentists are expensive without insurance. The school will send the kids to the dentist but they have to get there and pay a lot for it-CMRC</p>

	<p>Language access is an issue. At Choptank in Easton there is only a Spanish speaker there one day a week. It is really hard to get services if there isn't someone there that speaks the language. Many have used language line and it works ok though at times it is hard to understand dialects of Spanish used-CMRC</p> <p>Process of applying for health insurance is frustrating in both English and Spanish. Assigned to an insurance provider that does not have a network locally-HF</p> <p>Finding healthcare is a challenge-HF</p> <p>Birth control is expensive-HF</p> <p>Difficult finding childcare so you neglect your own health care-HF</p> <p>Cost is a barrier-HF</p> <p>Interpretation services for medical and pediatric care is a problem-HF</p>
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TCA-Temporary Cash Assistance

HF-Healthy Families

CMRC-Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center

TM-Talbot Mentors

GA-Getting Ahead

NS- Night School