



## OVERVIEW

Grundy Partnership for Children (GPC) is a county-wide collaboration comprised of a variety of organizations that work to prepare children for school. By uniting organizations with similar goals, Grundy Partnership for Children will coordinate and strengthen resources, educational materials and access to support for children and families in Grundy County.

## MISSION

The Grundy Partnership for Children collaborates with organizations, stakeholders and community members to prepare young children in Grundy County for lifelong learning, by identifying and addressing early childhood care and education issues.

## GOALS

The goals of the GPC include: Increase parental awareness of healthy child development, Ensure children have access to developmental screenings, and Increase highly qualified and well prepared professionals.

## HISTORY

**June 2003**, the Community Foundation of Grundy County (CFGC) (formerly the Morris Community Foundation) entered into a 5-year partnership with the Grand Victoria Foundation called *CommunityWorks*, which has three main focus areas: child care, land use & protection, and workforce development. Over the five years, the CFGC was to scan the community, assess need and status, develop an impact plan, and establish an endowment to forever fund projects and solutions to the issues.

**November 2003**, CFGC hosted the first *Child Care Summit* ever to be held in Grundy County. Attendees included child care providers, Child Care Resource & Referral, Joliet Junior College, Grundy Area Vocational Center, Education Service Network, the faith community, public education, and local government. As a result of the summit, the Birth to Five Network was formed. The Birth to Five Network held monthly meetings of the professionals in Grundy County who serve families with young children. During those meetings it became clear that "child care" was too narrow of a term and it was expanded to "early childhood care and education." The invitation list was expanded to include health care and recreation. This team acted as the advisory committee to the CFGC and helped develop the impact plan that was published in September 2006.

**May 2009**, the group expanded yet again to include school age children, as the lack of before-and after-school programs is an issue in Grundy County. This revised group is now the Grundy Partnership for Children (GPC) and continues to meet monthly.

**April 2011**, GPC teamed up with Positive Parenting DuPage for a *Positive Technical Assistance Project (TA)* for one year of training to build local collaboration and cross system collaboration. The goal of the TA is to replicate systems-change strategies in Grundy County by advancing community systems development work that is responsive to local need and focuses on systemic change, collaboration building, and multi-system model that goes beyond typically defined early childhood services. *TA support for the GPC by Positive Parenting DuPage is funded through a grant from the Grand Victoria Foundation.*

**June 2011**, through the TA provided by Positive Parenting DuPage, GPC hosted a *Collaboration and Systems Building Training and Planning Event*. Approximately 30 individuals attended this event from a variety of community organizations and individuals involved in healthy development of young children. This event gave participants an opportunity to learn characteristics of the continuum of local collaborative systems, develop hands-on use of the Community Systems Development Resource Toolkit, discuss local coordination of programming in Grundy County, and plan for community level response to pressing needs for families of young children.

**July 2011**, based on the outcome of the training in June, the GPC established the following distal goals:

1. Increase parental awareness of healthy child development.
2. Ensure children have access to developmental screenings.
3. Increase highly qualified and well prepared professionals.

Over the next few months, the GPC developed a plan to address the distal goals by identifying Intermediate Goals, Rationale, Strategy and Activities, and Outcomes. GPC continues to strengthen and adjust the plan in order to address the greatest needs for families with young children in Grundy County.

**Community Involvement** – Members of the GPC also attend meetings of the Behavioral Health Alliance for Grundy County and the Grundy County Interagency Council.

**Community Engagement** – GPC continues to seek community organizations, entities, and individuals involved in healthy childhood development.

## STRUCTURE

The work of Grundy Partnership for Children is driven by strong collaboration between community-based organizations. Grundy Partnership for Children wishes to expand the partnership network and currently draws expertise from the Community Partners that are listed on the back of this sheet. Since the need for involvement from diverse organizations at a variety of levels is always present, GPC welcomes additional Community Partners.

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Leadership Team of Grundy Partnership for Children is comprised of individuals with diverse strengths, knowledge, skills, and experience.

Current Leadership Team Members:

Devan Gagliardo, Program Director [devan@cfgrundycounty.com](mailto:devan@cfgrundycounty.com)  
Community Foundation of Grundy County (815) 941-0852

Chris Bzdon, Executive Director [cbzdon@childcarehelp.com](mailto:cbzdon@childcarehelp.com)  
Child Care Resource & Referral (815) 741-1163

Karen Nall, Executive Director [knall@unitedwayofgrundycounty.com](mailto:knall@unitedwayofgrundycounty.com)  
United Way of Grundy County (815) 942-4430



## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

(as of January 2012)

<b>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Will and Grundy Counties</b>	(815) 723-BBBS	<a href="http://www.bbbswillgrundy.org">www.bbbswillgrundy.org</a>
The Big Brothers Big Sisters' mission is to help children reach their potential through one-to-one relationships with mentors that have a measurable impact on youth. They help children realize their potential and build their futures. They nurture children and strengthen communities.		
<b>Child Care Resource &amp; Referral</b>	(815) 741-1163	<a href="http://www.childcarehelp.com">www.childcarehelp.com</a>
CCR&R serves Will, Grundy, Kendall, and Kankakee counties as part of the Illinois Statewide CCR&R System of IDHS. CCR&R is a not-for-profit agency providing child care information and services to families, child care providers, and employers.		
<b>Child and Family Connections – Service, Inc.</b>	(815) 730-2617	<a href="http://www.childandfamilyconnections.org">www.childandfamilyconnections.org</a>
Child and Family Connections is part of a statewide system responsible for ensuring that all referrals of children under the age of three to the Early Intervention Services System receive a timely response.		
<b>Community Foundation of Grundy County</b>	(815) 941-0852	<a href="http://cfgrundycounty.com">http://cfgrundycounty.com</a>
The Community Foundation of Grundy County is devoted to the maintenance and improvement of the quality of life of Grundy County. They bridge people who care with causes that matter.		
<b>Easter Seals Joliet Region</b>	(815) 725-2194	<a href="http://joliet.easterseals.com">http://joliet.easterseals.com</a>
Easter Seals Joliet provides exceptional services to ensure that all people with disabilities or special needs and their families have equal opportunities to live, learn, work and play in their communities.		
<b>Greater Joliet YMCA / Morris Family YMCA</b>	(815) 744-3939	<a href="http://www.jolietymca.org">www.jolietymca.org</a>
The Greater Joliet YMCA promotes youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. They provide programs and services that build healthy relationships among children, adults and families to strengthen our community.		
<b>Grundy County Health Department</b>	(815) 941-3138	<a href="http://www.grundyhealth.org">www.grundyhealth.org</a>
The mission of the Health Department is to preserve, protect and promote the health and welfare of the citizens of Grundy County. In order to achieve this purpose we offer various programs and services specifically designed to meet the needs of our community.		
<b>Grundy Workforce Services -Joliet Junior College</b>	(815) 942-0566	<a href="http://www.jjc.edu/continuing-education/grundy-workforce">http://www.jjc.edu/continuing-education/grundy-workforce</a>
Joliet Junior College is the nation's first public community college. A comprehensive community college, JJC provides occupational education leading directly to employment, adult education and literacy programs, workforce development services, and student support services.		
<b>Morris Hospital and Healthcare Centers</b>	(815) 942-2932	<a href="http://www.morrishospital.org">www.morrishospital.org</a>
Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers has been improving the health of area residents since 1906. Morris Hospital is the largest employer in Grundy County. Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers is known for its compassionate and personalized approach to healthcare. The hospital commits significant resources annually to continually enhance its diagnostic and treatment capabilities.		
<b>Step By Step Child Care Center, Inc.</b>	(815) 941-1122	<a href="http://www.stepbystepccc.com">www.stepbystepccc.com</a>
Step By Step Child Care Center, Inc. teaches children valuable problem-solving skills that will help them learn throughout their lives. They believe there should be many avenues of learning through experience and repetition and that learning should be made fun so children will want to learn throughout their life. Step by Step Child Care Center, Inc. reinforces these learning experiences by using a variety of learning centers. They offer before and after school, preschool, and summer camp programs for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age.		
<b>UIC - Division of Specialized Care for Children</b>	(309) 693-5350	<a href="http://www.uic.edu/hsc/dscc">http://www.uic.edu/hsc/dscc</a>
DSCC's mission focuses on public service, education and research as a basis to provide, promote and coordinate family-centered, community-based, culturally competent care for eligible children with special health care needs in Illinois.		
<b>United Way of Grundy County</b>	(815) 942-4430	<a href="http://www.unitedwayofgrundycounty.com">www.unitedwayofgrundycounty.com</a>
The United Way of Grundy County strives to improve lives by uniting the caring power of our communities. United Way of Grundy County vision is to build a stronger America by uniting our communities to improve people's lives in Grundy County.		
<b>We Care of Grundy County</b>	(815) 942-6389	<a href="http://wecareofgrundycounty.com">http://wecareofgrundycounty.com</a>
We Care of Grundy County assists approximately 6,000-7,000 families annually with food, rent, utilities, prescription, and holiday assistance.		