

# ***MOMS COMMUNITY***

LISTENING FORUM

August 10th, 2018

## **Summary Report**

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# Sponsors

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**ROUND ROCK TEXAS**  
LIBRARY



*Mommie*  
Support Network

EDUCATION, ENCOURAGEMENT AND NETWORKING



## Acknowledgments

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### Panel Organizations

Annunciation Maternity Home

Bluebonnet Trails Community  
Services

Dell Children's Health Plan

Georgetown Health Foundation

Hope in Life Counseling

Maximus

### Planning Committees

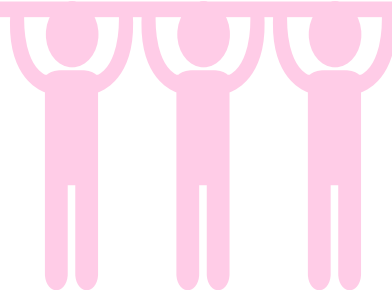
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*Thank you volunteers and childcare workers for your support and assistance!  
Special thanks to the mothers who participated on the speaker panel. We  
appreciate you for taking time to share your experiences with the community!*

# About the Forum



*What is a community listening forum?*

A community conversation about an area of mutual interest.

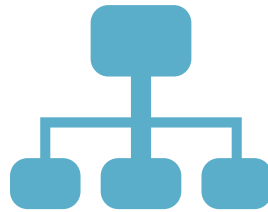
The Mother's Listening Forum gives the community a chance to hear directly from mothers, whose voices may sometimes go unheard. This open forum stimulates a community conversation about the service gaps that exist for mothers in Williamson County.

## The forum consisted of:



### A speaker panel of mothers

Each mother had three minutes to discuss their primary health concerns, challenges, and needs.



### A listening panel of community organizations

Each community organization member had three minutes to discuss the services their organization provides.



### An audience of community members

After both panels spoke, all individuals had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss topics from the forum.

## Details

Hosted at Round Rock Public Library

Free Childcare and Snacks

Raffle Prizes

56 Attendees

### Purpose

Provide a public opportunity for mothers to express the challenges that hinder their ability to maintain a sense of well being, as well as an opportunity to bridge the connection between mothers and community organizations in Williamson County.

### Objectives

1. Identify the top concerns of mothers who speak on the panel at the forum.
2. Identify specific resources currently available within Williamson County to meet these concerns.
3. Provide a findings report to local service organizations and the community at large.

# Recruitment and Promotion

Information and registration posted on [healthywilliamsoncounty.org](http://healthywilliamsoncounty.org) and other agency websites.



## Maternal & Infant Health



The Maternal and Infant working group focuses on a healthy environment for the physical, mental, and emotional health of women and their families. The working group will strive to implement strategies designed to improve access to healthcare, collaboration of related healthcare organizations and the continuity of care.

[Join our mailing list](#) for up to date information about activities and events!!!



## Aug. 2018 Special Event:



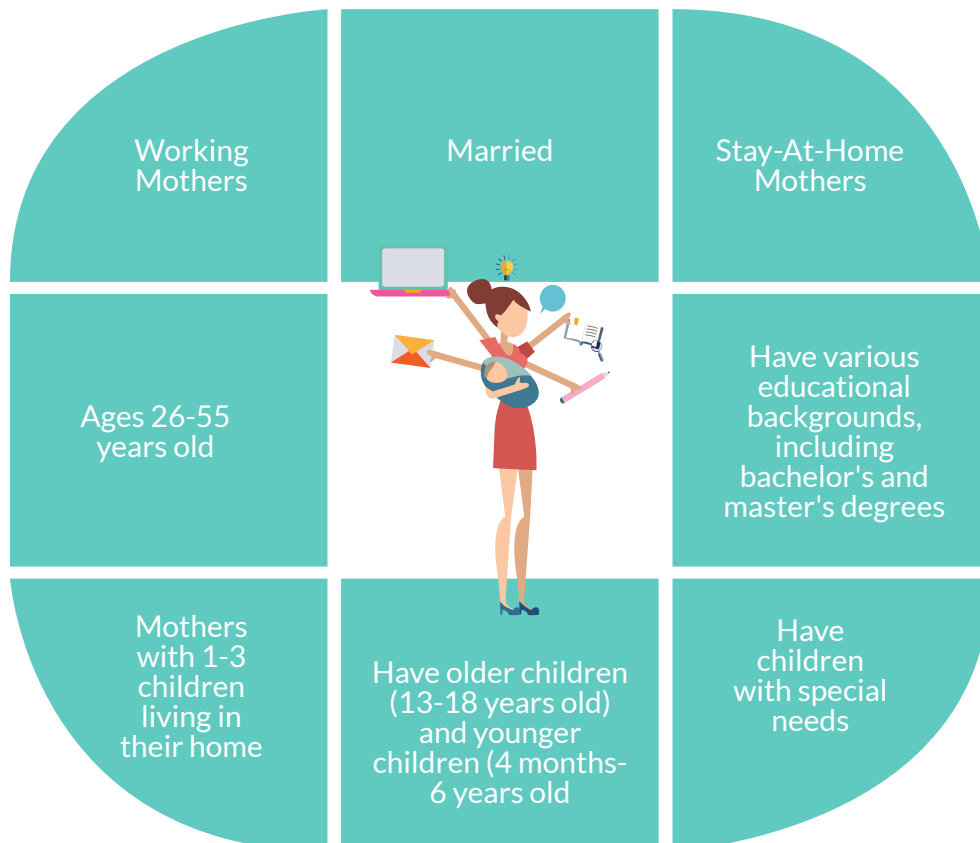
Flyer shared at Wilco Wellness Alliance (WWA) meetings, emailed in the WWA newsletter and posted in community buildings.



Facebook event shared by community organizations and sponsoring agencies.

# Speaker Panel

The speaker panel consisted of seven mothers that all reside in Williamson County. Below are characteristics of the speaker panel:



# Values and Concerns

The mothers on the speaker panel shared their experiences regarding personal health and wellness. Below are their top concerns:



## 1. Managing Mental and Emotional Health

- Post-partum depression
- Stress, anger, worry

## 2. Struggles of Motherhood

- Finding childcare
- Navigating motherhood for new moms
- Juggling multiple commitments
- Obtaining financial assistance
- Having a child with mental health issues or special needs

## 3. Lack of Support and Sense of Community

- Lack of understanding in the workplace.
- Lack of empathy/sympathy from healthcare professionals
- Lack of continued support through major life changes

Within these concerns, values emerge. Value and concerns are strongly correlated; an individual's values determine how they perceive their sense of wellbeing, health, and quality of life. Below are their top identified values:



## 1. Strong support system

- Church
- Facebook Support groups
- Mother Support groups
- Children Support groups
- Family and Friends
- Inpatient Support

## 2. Self-advocacy

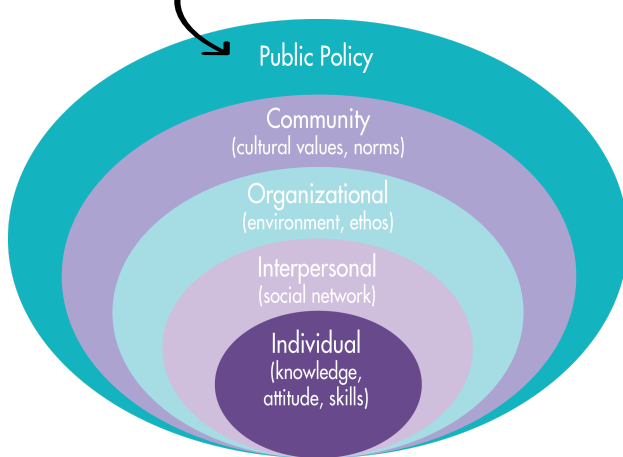
- Seeking a therapist/counselor
- Letting go of mental health stigmas
- Voicing needs and boundaries in the workplace
- Finding a healthcare professional who will listen and take personal issues seriously
- Taking care of oneself in order to care for children

## 3. Strong sense of community

- Need to "mobilize troops"; "it takes a village to raise a child"

# Discussion

Questions from panel and audience members helped guide the conversation towards ideas and solutions to foster a stronger connection between mothers and community organizations. Additionally, the Texas legislature plays an important role in addressing the concerns of mothers, as shown below in the Socioecological Model. The model is centered around the individual (mothers), and extends out to display the factors that determine their behavior and quality of life. To create individual-level behavior change and improve quality of life requires an enabling environment on all levels of the model, especially “removing bottlenecks that inhibit change at the community, organizational, and policy levels.”



*How can the Texas legislature help mothers?*

## Seek input and involvement from Texas mothers

*“Follow parents on a really bad day so that they can understand their actual lives and experiences.”*  
-Speaker Panel

Implement panels for the legislature to consult before creating policies that may not adequately address the concerns of mothers.

## School Reform

*“Remove STAAR testing to take the stress off our children, let them be kids again.”* -Speaker Panel

Create more vocational opportunities for students who can’t afford college or aren’t geared for college.

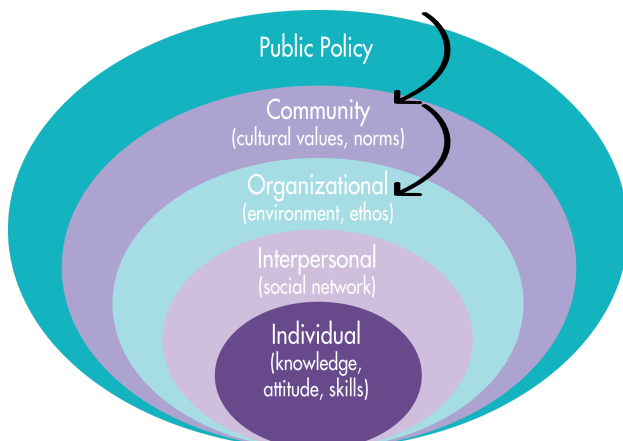
## Healthcare Reform

*“Premiums continue to rise and leave parents with nothing. It’s disheartening to navigate a system that doesn’t benefit families.”* -Speaker Panel

Provide more assistance for middle class families, who are struggling to survive.

# Next Steps

Services for mothers may be hard to find, especially if a mother lacks support and a sense of community. Additionally, services may be hard to access due to lack of transportation and walkability. Many times, programs rely on mothers to seek them out for assistance and support.



*How can community organizations reach mothers?*

*“Find out where moms are and go to those places.”*  
-Speaker Panel

1. Distribute information and resources to moms at places they most frequently visit, such as the public library, YMCA, or Chik-fil-A.
2. Create a “family survival kit” with all important resources and information in one place.
3. Implement a central location where mothers can receive services.
4. Collaborate with those who see mothers the most (e.g. ob-gyn and pediatrician).
5. Provide events just for mothers and include free childcare.



# Evaluation

All panel and audience members were encouraged to complete a Forum Evaluation form, which consisted of 10 statements that gauged forum satisfaction. Attendees indicated their level of agreement with statements, with “1” indicating strong disagreement and “5” indicating strong agreement. Thirty-one attendees answered the survey questions and there were 20 comments giving feedback and improvement suggestions. Below are the largest takeaways:

Survey Statement	Average Score	Comments
The speakers had adequate time to speak about their health and wellness concerns and needs.	4.33	<i>“More time for panel; have it run a little longer.”</i> <i>“This was terrific! The only thing I wish for is more time to listen!”</i>
The Listening Panel consisted of a representative group of Williamson County agencies and nonprofit organizations.	4.58	<i>“Invite a variety of agencies to speak about mental health.”</i> <i>“A variety of resources, even if the agency is unable to attend.”</i> <i>“Mothers of color support involving entrepreneur moms on the listening panel (i.e. doulas and midwives).”</i> <i>“Support for single mothers.”</i>
I am interested in receiving or organizing more trainings in this area.	4.69	<i>“Continue doing this so we can spread the word and reach out to more moms and the community.”</i> <i>“Great panel of moms and people from different organizations. Excited for the next listening forum!”</i>

# Photos and Media



# List of Contacts

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<u>Panel Member</u>	<u>Panel Organizations</u>	<u>Email</u>
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## Resources

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Learn more about the Maternal and Infant Health Group of the Wilco Wellness Alliance: [www.healthywilliamsoncounty.org/mih](http://www.healthywilliamsoncounty.org/mih)



Learn more about the Mommie Support Network: [www.mommiesupportnetwork.org](http://www.mommiesupportnetwork.org)

Free and low cost resources can be found at: [www.wilco.org/communityresources](http://www.wilco.org/communityresources)