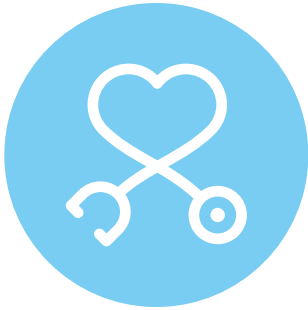


PROMISING PRACTICE

PARTNERSHIP | EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit –
Work Attributes Toward Careers in Health (WATCH)



A family-centered approach keeps parenting challenges from derailing the quest for health career education.

To boost class attendance and completion, the Work Attributes Toward Careers in Health (WATCH) Project provides tailored, whole family assistance to parents striving to achieve their health education goals.

With funding from a Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG), the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) is using a national model to overcome family obstacles and increase completion of healthcare career training.

Family responsibilities and challenges can stall even the most determined parent along his or her way to completing their healthcare education. Solving only one issue at a time, such as childcare needs, may help some families, but this approach often leaves problems that slow or stop a parent's education and career track.

WATCH staff noted that many of their participants were struggling to meet education and career goals due to family needs, and they decided to employ the Two-Generation Approach (2-Gen) to the meet challenge.

This model recognizes that a family's responsibilities and problems require integrated attention. 2-Gen focuses intentionally and equally on parent and child, striving for desired outcomes in health and well-being, economic assets, early child development, and other family advantages.

Research shows that when social services are coordinated to address issues important to the adult and child, both will become more engaged and motivated. This form of problem-solving can help participants stay on track with education goals and maintain their employment.

To achieve these lasting benefits, WATCH staff joined 10 other 2-Gen teams

in a national, year-long, collaborative learning process. The WATCH team concluded by creating its own sustainability plan and setting three goals: develop communication strategies for potential participants and partners, implement family-integrated activities to build participants social capital, and employ local evaluation methods to collect, analyze, and report data.

The WATCH staff begins by administering a family needs assessment to every participant. This gives each individual the opportunity to identify and review priorities, known as domains, to help them achieve a successful, self-sufficient family life. Domains include such core needs as housing, transportation, safety, parenting and child development. Each participant focuses on the barriers that keep them from achieving success one domain at a time with help from WATCH staff. This personalized assistance includes accessing appropriate support services. For instance, a student focused on the domain of parenting and child development has access to a lending library of age-appropriate activities for parents and children to do together. They also receive tips for promoting children's engagement in their parents' career goals. Every six months, new needs assessments are conducted to determine the next domain participants want to prioritize.

With 2-Gen, WATCH is helping participants identify their specific education barriers, prioritize solutions to help the whole family, and then take appropriate steps to break down those barriers into action that can achieve success.

“Being in WATCH has made becoming a nurse aide easier than I thought possible.”

– **Cassandra Neuffer,**
WATCH Program participant

This Promising Practice was self-identified by the grantee and information contained in this document was provided by the grantee.