Cook Children’s 2015 Parent Focus Group: Summary Report

Sponsored by:

Cook Children’s Health Care System

August 2015

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Community-Wide Children’s Health Assessment and Planning Survey
Cook Children’s 2015: Parent Focus Group Summary Report

OVERVIEW

ETC Institute conducted ten focus groups with parents and guardians of children ages 3 to 14-years-old living in Tarrant County. In addition to the focus group sessions with parents, trained Child Life Specialists from Cook Children’s Medical Center led guided discussions about health with children of the parents who participated in the adult focus group sessions. The purpose of the focus group sessions was to clarify a list of priorities identified from the Community-wide Children’s Health Assessment and Planning Survey and to identify specific steps that Cook Children’s Health Care System should make to address these issues. The focus group findings were also compared to the results from the parent focus groups administered in 2009 and 2012 to determine how perceptions of the major issues have changed.

METHODOLOGY

The adult focus groups were conducted Monday, April 13th through Wednesday, April 15th. Parents were selected at random from a sample of residents living in Tarrant County who fit the following criteria: 1) they had completed the 2015 regional children’s health needs assessment survey and 2) they had at least one child living in their household between the ages of 3 and 14-years-old who was available to participate in the child focus group sessions. The adult focus group sessions were designed to gather detailed feedback about the following issues:

1) Child Safety
2) Child Abuse
3) Child Fitness and Nutrition
4) Mental Health
5) Dental Health
6) Access to Medical Care
7) Education/Information
A total of 113 parents, 8-13 participants per group, attended each focus group session. The sessions were 90 minutes long and were moderated by a representative from ETC Institute.

A brief summary of the topics and major findings of the adult focus group sessions are provided below and on the following pages; comparisons to the 2009 and 2012 focus groups results are made when applicable.

ADULT FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS BY TOPIC

**Topic #1: Child Safety**

1.1 Major Child Safety Concerns/Issues
The child safety issues that parents mentioned most frequently were: child predators, neighborhood safety, home safety, car safety, recreational safety and adult supervision. Several parents also expressed concerns about Internet safety, bullying in schools, and playground safety. Overall the child safety issues discussed in the 2015 focus group sessions were very similar to those discussed in the 2012 and 2009 sessions. The main difference was that in the 2015 focus groups there was a little more discussion about Internet safety than in previous years.

1.2 Specific Child Safety Comments
Listed below and on the following pages are summarized comments made by parents about child safety; these comments are organized by topic.

**Child Predators**
- Children are innocent, and need to be protected from predators.
- School teachers and staff need to be aware of possible child predators. Background checks are very important.
- Teach kids about “stranger danger”.
- Education children about “stranger danger”.
- Talking with kids about “stranger danger” can help prevent abductions.
- Parents need to constantly be on the lookout for sexual predators.
- Stranger Danger.
- Child predators come to mind.
- Stranger danger is an issue, but people also need to be aware of the people they know and trust.
- The idea of child predators is extremely scary. Are there red flags we should be aware of?
- Stranger danger is a concern of mine.
- “Stranger danger” - Avoid child predators.
- Keep children away from harm not only from strangers, but keep an eye on acquaintances as well.
Home Safety
- Always keep medicine cabinets locked and out of the reach of children.
- Parents need to keep children out of harm’s reach at home.
- Firearms should always be locked up and kept out of the reach of children.
- Parents need to make sure their homes are child proofed properly.
- Children should feel safe at home.
- It’s important to properly proof your house for infants and toddlers, such as door knobs, electrical outlets, etc.
- It’s important that our children feel safe at home.
- I’d like to see more public service information about child proofing your home.
- I worry about my child getting hurt from falling or climbing. You have to constantly keep an eye on them.
- It’s important to keep your child safe in the home.
- There are a lot of dangers at homes, such as medicines and chemicals.

Car Safety
- Car seats, seat belts, bike helmets, and water safety are all important.
- Car seats are very important.
- Parents should make sure they’re following all rules related to car seats.
- Seatbelts and car seats.
- Car seats and seatbelts.
- Car seats.
- It’s important not just to use a car seat, but make you’re following all the rules. Using the correct size car seat, making sure it’s strapped in correctly, etc.
- I hate when I hear stories about parents leaving their kids in cars while they run inside a store. This should never happen, even if parents think they’ll only be inside “for a minute”.

Neighborhood Safety
- Having a feeling of safety in their neighborhood is important.
- Make sure kids are staying safe when they’re playing outside in the neighborhood.
- Neighborhood watches can be really helpful, and make families feel more comfortable.
- Make sure kids understand the dangers of playing in the streets.
- Parents need to make sure kids aren’t playing near streets, especially ones with a lot of traffic.
- Unfortunately I don’t feel my children are safe out in our neighborhood by themselves.
- Teach kids road safety.
- I’d like to see more neighborhood or community watches. Good communication between neighbors can be a huge help for parents.
- Parents need to keep an eye on children outside in their neighborhood, and other public places as well.
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- I get concerned when I see young kids crossing the streets by themselves. Parents need to keep a closer eye on their kids.
- I would like to see more police patrolling in neighborhoods, especially low income neighborhoods.

Recreational Safety
- Bike helmets and water safety are important.
- Bicycle safety.
- Water safety.
- Bike helmets and water and pool safety.
- Parents should introduce swimming lessons at a younger age. Maybe Cooks could sponsor this.
- Safety and supervision around playgrounds and churches.
- Keep an eye on what kids are doing, since some are fearless and don’t have much of a concept of danger.
- Pool and water safety.
- Outdoor safety is important. Especially if there is traffic nearby where kids are playing.
- Bike helmets

Adult Supervision
- It’s important to keep a close eye on kids to make sure they stay safe, both inside and outside the home.
- There are a lot of hazardous that require close adult supervision, such as seatbelts, helmets, water safety.
- It’s important to know not just who kids are hanging out with, but also know the parents of the kid’s that they’re hanging out with.
- Adult supervision and protection is crucial.
- It is difficult to make sure my kids are safe and being supervised adequately while I am at work.
- Watch over kids closely because they can disappear quickly.
- It might seem obvious that rules and supervision are important, but some parents don’t care about these issues enough.
- Parents have to keep an eye on their children from the moment they wake up until the time they go to bed.
- Know where your child is at and who they’re with at all times.
- Trying to balance proper supervision for you children with a busy work schedule is difficult.
- Some parents don’t pay close enough attention to what their children are doing.

Internet Safety
- Internet safety is a growing concern.
- Children are getting online at a younger age than ever, so Internet safety is more important than ever.
A lot of kids play games online, so it’s important to know who their online “friends” are.

Kids spend so much time on the Internet these days, it’s important to know what they’re looking at and who they’re interacting with.

There are a lot of dangers lurking on the Internet, and kids access the Internet all the time, often unsupervised, so it’s scary.

With social media being so popular, parents need to know who their kids are “friends” with.

**Bullying in Schools**
- Feeling of safety from bullies is always a concern.
- Bullying is a problem, and it usually starts at home.
- A lot of times it seems like bullying extends beyond just school, and onto social media.
- Bully in schools and social media need to be watched.
- Bullying is a problem not just during school hours, but also on social media. A lot of bullying takes place on Facebook, Twitter, etc.

**Playground Safety**
- We should put more qualified people on duty to supervise on playgrounds at daycares.
- Make sure children aren’t playing alone or unsupervised.
- Playground safety is a concern.

**Other Child Safety Comments**
- There should be security systems in schools.
- Parents should teach kids to be aware of their surroundings.
- Gun and knife safety is an issue.
- Dog safety is a concern.

**1.3 Suggested Solutions to Improve Child Safety**
Parents were also asked to identify specific things that could be done in the community to improve the safety of children and the role that Cook Children’s should play in addressing these issues. Very similar to the 2012 and 2009 results, there was a general consensus among all groups that parents needed more education and information to keep their children safe and that Cook Children’s involvement in this process would be beneficial. Parents also suggested involving the police department or law enforcement to address child safety.
1.4 Comments Related to the Suggested Solutions

Summarized comments made by parents are listed below and on the following pages:

**Education/Information**
- Teach children to always be aware of their surroundings.
- It would be great if Cook’s came out to schools and talked to kids about various safety issues.
- Articles on Cook’s website about child safety issues could be beneficial.
- Cook’s should offer free parenting classes, especially to first-time or younger parents.
- Education children about ways to stay safe and certain risks to avoid.
- Communication is the key.
- Workshops to educate parents about child safety, and having them localized so that it’s not too inconvenient for parents to attend.
- It would be great if Cook’s was involved in educating parents about various issues related to child safety.
- Talking with kids about safety issues, especially “stranger danger” is important.
- There should be more public service announcements about child proofing your home.
- How about having recurring classes once a month in schools to discuss safety issues.
- Be aware of phone apps that kids are downloading.
- Schools and parents should be proactive about keeping kids safe.
- Kids need to be taught to be independent early and practice making good choices for themselves. If we don’t teach them, we can’t expect them to make good decisions and know what to do in a crisis.
- More education and awareness is always needed, especially for younger parents.
- Helping parents know how to set an example for kids is important.
- I’d love to see more child safety classes that include both parents and children, so they can learn together.
- We need to teach our kids proper behavior by not just telling them what to do, but explain why it’s important.
- Parents could use help finding age appropriate ways to teach kids the rules.
- Parents should take it upon themselves to learn about whatever they feel are the biggest issues and concerns for their children.
- Educating your kids and spending time when your kids. Parents need to be involved.
- Cooks should also focus on preventative education.
- In general parents need more education.
- Pamphlets are brochures are always helpful.
- Maybe Cook’s could go out to preschools and daycare centers to let people know what services and resources are available to parents.
Perhaps sending a flier/brochure with information on child safety in utility bill would help.

Parents have to teach their kids boundaries and limitations. Too often parents often think “these things won’t happen to me or my family.”

Education and information is crucial, whether it be through Cooks or other organizations. Parents just don’t know where to go sometimes to find the information they need.

Parents need to take every opportunity to teach their children about safety issues.

I’d like to see Cooks present at different activities to pass out information on various child safety issues.

Children think differently at different stages, and every child is different. Parents need to consider this when they’re trying to communicate with their children.

Communication is key for parents and children.

We need to inform parents about the seriousness of child safety. We need to also find ways to change the way children think about these issues.

I’d like to see babysitting and home safety courses taught in schools.

As parents we need more resource to tell us what we should be doing to keep our children safe.

Many safety issues, such as car safety and home safety, are always changing so it would be great to have a place to get the latest information.

Cooks should provide education through community outreach in schools, churches, libraries, etc.

Getting Law Enforcement Involved

I’d like to see a better job done monitoring sex offender laws.

There could be better communication with regards to making sure that sex offenders are kept a safe distance from kids.

Get to know your neighbors, so you know who can be trusted.

There needs to be more police patrolling in neighborhoods, especially in low income neighborhoods. I don’t seem them in my neighborhood often enough.

How about harsher laws and consequences for offenders.

I’d like to see tougher background screening for daycare employees.

Other Suggested Solutions

It’s ultimately the parents’ responsibility to protect their children. It should only be Cook Children’s responsibility if the child is brought to the hospital.

There’s a lack of sidewalks in our neighborhood, so kids have to walk in the street.

I’d like to see more places for kids to go after school to stay out of trouble.

Parents need to talk to their children more openly. It’s not always easy, but make them comfortable so they will talk to you.

Having trust among neighbors and other parents can be a huge help.

Cook’s should partner with schools.
I think some parents are entrusting kids too early to babysit or be on their own.

I’d like to see more affordable activities for older kids so we can keep them out of trouble.

Parents need to get more involved. Get to know their neighbors, teachers, parents of their kid’s friends, etc.

It’s so important to have good relationships with your neighbors. It’s a great resource to have them help you be on the lookout for suspicious activity.

Always be aware of your children’s surroundings.

I’d like to see more adult supervised activities and organized activities. If an adult is present some of these issues could be prevented.

I would like to see Cooks work with the schools, churches and local libraries to provide information and education to parents.

Having Cook Children’s Hospital involved in child safety issues would be ideal. The name “Cook’s” has a lot of credibility, so they should be a leader in promoting child safety.

**Topic #2: Child Abuse**

### 2.1 Major Child Abuse Concerns/Issues

The child abuse issues that parents mentioned most frequently were: not knowing how or the best way to talk to their children about abuse, neglect, psychological abuse, and accessing help for child abuse. Some of the other child abuse issues that parents felt were important were: discipline, abuse in schools, sexual abuse, knowing the warning signs of abuse, and abuse caused by a lack of parenting skills. These were all major topics in the 2015, 2012 and 2009 focus group sessions.

### 2.2 Child Abuse Comments

Summarized comments made by parents regarding these issues are provided below and on the following pages:

**Talking to Children about Abuse**

- I see a lack of communication from parents towards their children about this topic.
- Getting kids to sit down and talk to their parents can be difficult, but it’s important.
- Parents need to encourage their kids to express their feelings.
- Don’t suppress a child’s opinion and voice.
- There needs to be an ongoing discussion with children about what is “normal” and what is actually considered abuse. Some children have been brought up thinking that the abusive behavior they’re experiencing is normal.
- Often we’re scared to talk to our children about abuse, but we need to find a way to do it because it’s so important.
• How much information should we consider too much information to say to our kids? I’ve always had trouble with this.
• What is the appropriate age to talk to our children about abuse?
• As parents need to educate our children on when to tell that they’ve been abused. However, in order for them to do that, our children need to understand what is considered abuse.
• Education and communication is the best way to prevent abuse from happening or even from continuing to happen.
• Many kids are in a lot of situations now where we as parents are not present. We need to teach them good touch versus bad touch, and make sure they are comfortable talking to us about any issues that might be considered abuse.

Neglect
• Some parents don’t take care of basic needs or make sure they are safe.
• I consider leaving a child in a car by themselves as neglect and abuse.
• Not being attentive to a child’s needs is a form of abuse.
• Lack of attention to details is a problem.
• Neglect is an issue and a form of abuse.
• Neglecting a child’s medical needs is a form of abuse. It’s so important for parents to have access to medical care, and that parents understand the importance of medical care.
• Not giving children the proper care and guidance in life is a form of abuse.
• Lack of attention or making children feel ignored.
• Neglect is an often an overlooked form of abuse.
• Emotional abuse and neglect are big issues. Not showing your kids enough love and attention.
• I see a lot of issues of child neglect in our neighborhood. Parents just not paying enough attention to the needs of their children.

Psychological Abuse
• Lack of affection and love can lead to children having psychological problems.
• Verbal abuse can cause psychological problems.
• Not taking care of a child’s mental and emotional needs is an issue.
• Verbal abuse can lead to low-self esteem.
• Psychological abuse is another form of abuse.
• Mental and verbal abuse is a problem, not just from parents. It can come from many sources, including teachers, coaches, etc.
• The scary thing about psychological abuse is that it sometimes isn’t as easy to identify.
• Abuse comes in many forms, not just sexual or physical. Verbal abuse and psychological abuse are underrated problems.
• Emotional abuse is problem, and another form of abuse.
• Abuse can be in many forms, including physical, verbal, and emotional.

Accessing Help
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- CPS can only do so much and they often seem overwhelmed. There needs to be other programs and community outreach options available.
- I’d like to see a hotline for help before the abuse happens. A number that parents can call without a fear of reporting abuse.
- The system of reporting abuse cases needs to be improved. The length of time that you wait to talk to someone on the telephone takes forever, and cases take way too long to be checked into.
- I’d like more information on who to contact if I see abuse.
- Who do you call if you see others, such as neighbors abusing children? I don’t know who to call.
- People should be able to report child abuse without fear of it making things worse for the child.
- I’d like to see an alternative way to report child abuse besides just calling CPS. CPS is too overwhelmed, and they can’t handle the issues in a timely manner.

Discipline

- Spanking is sometimes necessary, but you should never use too much force.
- Short-tempered parents can take discipline too far.
- I think some parents don’t know how to discipline their children, and therefore it can be abusive.
- Some parents over-discipline children to the point of it becoming abusive.
- Excessive “corporal punishment” is definitely a form of abuse.
- A lot of parents think that spanking is okay, but I think sometimes it goes too far and becomes abusive.
- There’s a fine line between “corporal punishment” and physical abuse.

Abuse in Schools

- I see a lot of bullying in schools that is abusive.
- Bullies in schools are a problem.
- Abuse can also come from teachers, not just other students. Some teachers need to be more careful in how they speak to children. I know my daughter felt totally humiliated in class by her teacher one time, and it was just because she asked a question.
- Abuse during school, as well as texting and social media are problems.
- There’s been a lot of publicity about bullying lately, and it does seem to be getting better, but it’s still a problem.

Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse not just by strangers, but from family members.
- To me the worse kind of abuse is sexual abuse.
- Parents need to be wary not only of strangers, but anyone who comes into contact with your child, including family members.
- Sexual abuse is my biggest fear as a parent.
- Sexual predators can be anywhere.
Knowing the Warning Signs of Abuse

- There should be a class that educates parents on the signs of abuse.
- Some parents don’t know the signs of abuse, so it would be great if others in the community, such as teachers, church leaders, etc., would also keep an eye out for signs of abuse.
- Sometimes it’s hard to tell the difference between poverty and neglect. We all need to keep any eye out for abuse, but also don’t be too quick to judge.
- Pediatric doctors should always be looking for the signs of abuse.
- Parents often overlook children that are not their own. As parent we should all be on the lookout for signs of neglect.
- I wish I was more informed on the signs of abuse. The signs of physical abuse are obvious, but I’m not sure if I would pick up signs of other types of abuse, such as emotional or verbal.

Child Abuse Caused by Lack of Parent Skills

- A lot of parents don’t understand that talking negatively to a child can be a form of verbal abuse.
- I see complacency in some young parents that nothing bad will happen to their child, so they don’t pay close enough attention to potential signs of abuse.
- A lot of parents either don’t realize or don’t care that verbal abuse is a form of abuse.
- A lot of parents don’t know how to ask for help when they’re stressed.
- There’s a lack of education for parents trying to handle difficult children.
- A lack of education and parenting skills are a big cause of child abuse.
- Parents need more support and education regarding abuse. Many parents are too young to have kids, and they don’t have the skills to know how to raise their children properly. This often leads to abuse.
- Letting kids watch inappropriate things on TV or exposing them to issues that they aren’t emotionally equipped to handle.

Other Child Abuse Issues

- Anything that harms a child, whether it be mental, physical, or emotional, should be considered child abuse.
- It’s a shame that it seems like many good social workers are over-worked and ending taking other jobs. The whole system needs to be improved.
- Social media is a more and more common place for abuse to take place.
- Texting is becoming a bigger and bigger problem.
2.3 Suggested Solutions to Prevent Child Abuse

The suggested solutions to help prevent child abuse were generally the same in the 2015, 2012, and 2009 sessions. When asked what they thought could be done in the community to help prevent child abuse, most parents agreed that more education and information about child abuse should be made more available for both parents and children. Parents felt that education efforts should focus on ways to prevent abuse by teaching parents and children the types of behaviors that constitute child abuse versus those that do not, the warning signs of abuse and more classes about general childcare. Parents also expressed a need for more outlets for parents to alleviate stress before child abuse occurs.

2.4 Comments Related to the Suggested Solutions

Summarized comments made by parents are provided below and on the following pages:

Education/Information

- More education is needed to make kids aware of the possible dangers.
- Cook Children’s could assist parents in the education and prevention of child abuse.
- I’d like Cook’s to reach out more to communities throughout the area, especially schools.
- Cook Children’s should make parents aware of services that are offered.
- There should be more education regarding how to spot signs of abuse.
- I’d like to see some after hour classes that would make it more convenient for parents.
- Focus on increased awareness of child abuse issues.
- Offer parenting classes for various age levels, such as infant, toddler, teens, etc. Each age group as their own set of issues and concerns.
- Teach parents alternate ways to discipline their kids.
- More education and resources should be made available.
- I think more information is needed on post-partum depression and how it can be prevented and treated.
- Cook’s should partner with schools to educate parents about child abuse. Maybe adult students could mention younger students.
- I feel that it’s Cook’s responsibility to educate about child abuse, but I also think it takes a network of adults to look out for children.
- Classes could be offered at Cook’s for people who have questions about the proper way to discipline children at various ages.
- Maybe Cook’s could provide more public service announcements.
- I’d like to see classes that help first-time or young parents deal with life without taking it out of the children.
- Cook’s could have Child Life Specialists education us on the best ways to talk to kids based on their age level. I think a lot of parents struggle in this area.
I’d like to see a centralized place for education and information about child abuse.

I trust Cook’s, so I’d like them to provide as much information as possible about child abuse.

Education is key in addressing this issue, so information Cook’s could provide would be helpful.

I’d like to see more information online that parents and children could use to get information.

Cook’s could always run more commercials, since kids (and parents) watch so much TV.

How about training to show children what abuse looks like. Parents might try their best, but many parents probably don’t know what to teach their children.

I’d like to see Cook’s come into schools to educate teachers on sign to look for about abuse.

I always like the idea of Cook’s working closely with schools about child abuse related issues.

The Cooks name is a brand that people trust, so they should use their name recognition to get the information out there. Their name is the biggest asset they have; the name is trustworthy to people.

Support for Parents

- There needs to be more support for each other, especially among neighbors.
- Community outreach efforts, especially from churches, would help parents.
- Let’s find ways to support parents who may be stressed out rather than passing judgement or accusing them of being bad parents.
- It would really help parents if teachers were always aware of what’s going on with kids, and looked for signs of abuse.
- Getting parents involved in churches or other groups to help them deal with daily stresses in life could make a big difference.
- There should be more counseling and resources available to help overwhelmed parents.

Other Suggested Solutions

- I’d like to see Cook’s provide services that aid in prevention of abuse, rather than as a reaction to abuse.
- Pediatric doctors should be a great source in helping to spot signs of abuse.
**Topic #3: Child Fitness and Nutrition**

3.1 Major Child Fitness and Nutrition Concerns/Issues

The fitness and nutrition issues that parents mentioned most frequently were: lack of education about proper exercise and nutrition, availability of recreational activities in the community, quality of fitness and nutrition in schools, obesity, the cost of healthy eating, and technology vs exercising. Overall the issues that were identified as important in both the 2009 and 2012 focus groups sessions were again identified as important in 2015. The only exception is that in 2015 the issue of children spending too much time with technology instead of spending time exercising and playing outside was mentioned much more frequently.

3.2 Child Fitness and Nutrition Comments

Summarized comments made by parents about these issues are provided below and on the following pages:

**Lack of Education/Information**
- Parents need to teach their children at a young age the importance of eating healthy and exercising.
- We need to teach children why it’s important to eat right and stay active, such as participating in organized sports or playing at the park.
- Sitting down with a child to eat a healthy meal will help teach them what they should be eating.
- Teach children that it’s okay that snacks are okay, but it should go along with healthy eating.
- Start teaching children at a young age how to eat nutritiously.
- Parents and children both need to be taught about portion control.
- Parents need to set the example for their children by eating healthy.
- Parents need to understand that they have control over their kids eating habits. They’re the ones that buy the food at the grocery store.
- Having structured playtime can help kids learn to stay active.
- I see a lot of parents who don’t set good examples for their kids. Maybe they need more information and education on how to live a healthy lifestyle.
- A big problem is that a lot of parents aren’t educated about proper nutrition and exercise, so they can’t properly teach it to their children.
- More information and education is always necessary.
- Parents need to educate themselves. We’re the ones bringing the food into our homes.
- Children are being influenced not just by their parents, but also by their peers.
- The importance of exercising and proper nutrition needs to be taught to our children at a young age so that it becomes a part of their daily lives as they grow up.
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I’d like to see more information about healthy eating, especially portion control. No one taught me about portion sizes as a kid.

Schools seem to be taking physical education out of the schools. We need to change this.

As parents we should definitely try to set the example, but we also need to educate our kids.

Availability of Recreation Activities in the Community

It’s important that there are safe recreational opportunities. Safety places a big role, because if recreational opportunities aren’t safe, kids won’t use them.

We need to have more indoor areas for older kids to play.

There seems to be a lack of recreational activities available for children, especially teens and pre-teens.

We need more affordable recreational activities for children to do. This is lacking in our area.

Kids need to get outside and play more often.

Parents need to get to know their neighbors and their community so they can feel comfortable letting them play outside more often.

Overall this region seems to be lacking safe recreational activities for children.

Quality of Nutrition and Exercise in Schools

I’d like to see more emphasis on P.E. in schools. It should be daily.

Public schools need to get back to serving nutritious meals for breakfast and lunch.

There are a lot of unhealthy options available for school lunches.

Schools need to get back to the “food pyramid”, or 4 basic food groups. Schools don’t serve healthy food anymore.

Schools are starting to make some improvements in school lunches, but it still needs a lot of improvement.

I think schools need to get back to having P.E. classes everyday.

There should be more health and fitness programs offered all the way through high school.

Lack of recess during school is a major concern when it comes to the health of my child.

Vending machines in schools need to have more healthy options, or just get rid of them.

We definitely need to reintroduce recess into the schools every day. I think this contributing to the problem.

Obesity

Preventing obesity is a big issue.

Obesity seems to more of a problem than ever. I think a lot of this has to do with overeating.
There is a definite problem with obesity. Making kids go outside to play would help.

It’s not surprising that we have an obesity problem in our country. We don’t eat healthy enough, and we don’t get enough exercise.

The obesity problems seem to be getting worse in our country, and it starts in the schools.

Obesity needs to be addressed in childhood. Otherwise it will become a problem throughout the person’s life.

Cost of Healthy Eating

- A well balanced diet of fruits and vegetables is important, but it’s also expensive.
- Unfortunately fast food and bad food is cheaper.
- It is not always that families don’t want to eat healthy, but a lot of families can’t afford it.
- Parents don’t always have the time or money to fix a healthy meal, and they go with something cheap and easy, which usually means unhealthy.
- I love fresh fruits and vegetables, but they’re expensive. I would like to eat them more often.

Technology vs. Exercising

- There is too much time spent playing games, and not enough time spend playing outdoors.
- We need to get kids away from video games, and have them spend more time outside.
- Limit electronics for kids. Get them active.
- Limit technology for younger kids. Teach them to play outside and remain active.
- Parents should play outside with kids so that they’re setting the example.
- Parents should make kids limit the time spent playing on the computer, and spend more time outside.

3.3 Suggested Solutions to Improve Nutrition and Fitness

When asked to identify specific things that could be done in the community to improve the quality of fitness and nutrition for children in the region, parents generally felt the best way to improve nutrition and fitness was to educate parents and children about why it is important to eat healthy and be fit, and best ways to accomplish that. Some of the specific suggestions made by parents to address the fitness and nutrition issues were: revising the food pyramid as a teaching mechanism, adding programs or classes in the schools and offering free or discounted gym memberships to children.

3.4 Comments Related to the Suggested Solutions

Summarized comments made by participants are provided below and on the following pages and are organized by major topic:

Education/Information
• Have Cook’s volunteers come out to different areas of the community to make it convenient for parents and children to learn more about fitness and health.
• Maybe Cook’s could partner with schools to teach kids to get involved in various health and fitness related activities.
• Some parents need to learn healthier ways to cook. Some parents come from families that have always cooked and eaten unhealthy meals.
• As parents we need to set the example for making healthy choices, but some parents need help knowing what the right choices are.
• Providing fitness or nutritional events might be beneficial, but ultimately it’s the parents’ responsibility to set an example and make sure their children are eating right and exercising.
• There should be more information available about proper portion size.
• I’d like to see Cook’s develop a partnership with local schools to help educate the parents and children.
• Parents need to lead by example and limit the amount of junk food in the house. Children can only eat what’s available in the house.
• Most of the responsibility for eating healthy and exercising falls on the parents. Maybe Cook’s could help to education and provide information to parents about following a healthy diet and exercising.
• Educating children about family history with regard to health issues can promote healthy lifestyle choices.
• Cook’s could provide information that explains what happens to the body when certain foods are eaten over a prolonged period of time, rather than just saying “this food is bad for you”.
• It would be great to have help from Cook’s, or other organizations, but as a parent it’s ultimately our responsibility to teach our children healthy eating and exercise habits.
• Cooks could provide more information and education on how diet affects your entire well-being.
• I feel like most parents try to provide health meals for their family, but they don’t always have the time or energy to prepare healthy meals. I’d like to see more education on how to make meals that are quick, easy, and healthy.

Classes/Programs
• I’d like to see more activities for children under age 6.
• Community centers should offer more daytime programs for toddlers and those not yet in school.
• I’d like to see activities where parents and children can do things together, like a cooking class.
• Some affordable cooking camps and fitness classes for kids would be great.
• If Cook’s offered cooking classes for kids and parents would be great.
• It would be great if Cook’s could come out to communities to educate families about fitness and nutrition.
• I’d like to see nutrition classes available for children, not just parents.
• It would be great to have classes teaching parents how to cook healthy meals on a budget.
• How about a program that teaches children about growing vegetables and fruits and the importance of making them a part of their diet. This could be useful for parents also.

Other Suggested Solutions
• I think that eating together as a family helps. Cooking and eating together instills traditions and togetherness that cannot be found in a fast food drive-thru.

Topic #4: Mental Health

4.1 Major Mental Health Concerns/Issues
Some of the most frequently mentioned issues identified by parents regarding the mental health of children in the region were related to the lack of education and awareness of mental health in the region, access to the testing and treatment of mental health and bullying in schools. Several parents also expressed concerns about the overprescribing of medicine to children, misdiagnosis of ADD/ADHD, stigma of mental health and the insurance and costs.

The major mental health issues identified by parents were generally the same in the 2015, 2012, and 2009 focus group sessions. The only differences were that eating disorders were not mentioned as frequently in the 2015 sessions, but issue related to insurance and cost were mentioned more frequently in 2015 than in previous years.

4.2 Mental Health Comments
Summarized comments made by parents are provided below and on the following pages.

Lack of Education and Awareness
• I wish there were more education and awareness about what type of help is out there.
• Parents need more education about mental health issues. Mental health for children often goes hand-in-hand with the parent’s mental health.
• I think abuse can lead to mental health issues later on in life, and parents need to be aware of that.
• Parents should be aware that verbal abuse can lead to mental health issues for children.
• We’d like more information on local support groups for children with autism.
• I’m not sure at what point you go for help. And who do you go to? There a lot of unanswered questions on this topic.
We need to be educating parents on how to help the children. This is a tricky subject for a lot of parents. Kids aren't always opening up to their parents about whatever issues they're facing. I think many parents don't know what's going on with my child until it's too late. I'd like to see more resources and information to help us talk to our children about some of these issues before it's too late.

I feel like there's a lack of understanding regarding issues such as anxiety. This leads to poor self-esteem, especially when teachers don't understand it and openly criticize students in front of their peers.

People don't realize that sometimes physical activity and diet can play a part in mental health issues.

It seems that so many more children are suffering from depression and anxiety issues. I would like to know the statistics and information about what to look.

As a society we need more information on mental health problems that affect children.

I have tried to get information on different mental disorders, but it's hard to find.

I don't think the general public takes depression seriously enough. Depression is a legitimate mental health problem, and I wish there were more information available about it.

It would be good to have classes for the parents to learn the signs of various mental health disorders.

There is still a stigma towards mental health, and if parents knew more facts they would know it's not always as bad as they might think.

Parents need more resources. For a lot of people this is a difficult topic to understand.

It would be great to have more information about how to talk to my teen about issues she's facing as school.

Access to Testing and Treatment

I've had trouble finding qualified help for kids who have mental health challenges.

For some reason there aren't a lot of resources in the area; there's a long waiting period to make an appointment.

Doctors aren't really invested in the treatment of their patients because they see so many of them.

There are long waits for evaluations.

We end up relying on school psychologists for information because of the inability to get timely care.

It's hard to find specialized care for Autism and Asperger's within close proximity.

We often have to wait at least 6 months to get an appointment with specialists. I can't believe it takes so long.
• In this area the demand for mental healthcare for children seems to be outweighing the supply for appointments, testing, and diagnosis. The whole process takes too long.
• There is always a huge waiting list at Cooks. The system is very backed up, and there needs to be more places available to go.
• It’s such a long process to even get your child in to be tested for mental health issues. It takes so long to get in to see a doctor that you can’t afford to have to reschedule the appointment because it would take forever to get another appointment.

Bullying
• A lot more people are aware of bullying, but it’s still a huge problem; my children have been bullied in grade school.
• Sometimes I don’t think that schools and teachers do enough to prevent or address bullying.
• I feel that bullying can play a major role in children having mental health issues.

Over-Prescribing Medication to Children
• Doctors are too quick to prescribe medicines rather than counseling the child and getting to the root of the problem.
• Kids should be taught coping skills and not be prescribed medication so quickly and unnecessarily.
• I feel that many kids are overmedicated.
• Proper diagnosis of disorders and counseling rather than quickly prescribing medications.

Misdiagnosis of ADD/ADHD
• If a child is hyper or anxious, it seems that doctors and parents are too quick to give them medicine, rather than try alternative methods to help them
• Parents and doctors are too quick to diagnosis children with ADHD.
• I feel like ADD and ADHD are diagnosed way too often.

Stigma of Mental Health
• There’s a stigma that comes with children having mental health issues, and they get labeled as “bad” kids, when really they just need help.
• I feel like there’s a stigma against parents with kids that have disorders. I think it makes some parents hesitate to admit their child has mental health issues.
• There’s definitely a stigma surrounding mental health issues.

Insurance/Cost Issues
• Insurance needs to be better.
• There are always insurance issues with mental health related doctor’s appointments.
• Most insurance have poor mental health coverage.
Executive Summary

Mental health issues are being largely ignored by insurance companies. This need to change.

The lack of affordability of mental health services needs to be addressed.

Other Mental Health Comments

- It’s important that parents are “tuned in” to their child’s daily life, so they can tell if something is bothering them.

4.3 Suggested Solutions to Improve Mental Health

There was an underlying theme in most of the groups that the most important way to improve the quality of mental health for children was through education/information. Parents also felt it would be helpful to have support groups for both parents and children suffering from mental health issues and collaborating with the schools to improve the awareness of mental health issues.

4.4 Comments Related to the Suggested Solutions

Summarized comments made by parents are provided on the following pages:

Parental Support

- More education is needed to let parents know what resources are available.
- Cook’s should extend support services to parents. Maybe provide information at clinics and pediatric offices.
- Cook’s could be an amazing resource for providing education and information about mental health issues. Especially as Autism and other issues become more prevalent.
- Support groups are needed to help parents cope with these issues.
- There should be a strong marketing campaign to emphasis intervention and treatment. This would be very helpful for parents.
- Cook’s could have “fun days” to learn different activities. This could help families see Cook’s not only as a place for medical help, but also a partner in helping their child live a healthy lifestyle.
- Maybe there could be some type of mentoring programs for parents.
- As a parent I found it very isolating to think that my child had a mental health issue. I’d like to see support groups to help parents realize that they’re not alone.
- It’s important to educate parents on how to help their children.
- Parents need more resources and information. A lot of parents are unfamiliar with mental health issues.
- Sometimes parents need support groups as well as their children when their child is suffering from mental health issues. It would be good to talk to other parents about what works best in certain situations.

Support/Tools/Information for Kids

- There needs to be more resources available for improving mental health.
Executive Summary

- Cook’s is already playing a role in providing counseling services, and they should continue to do so.
- We need to give kids better tools to learn to manage their stress.
- Mentoring programs for children would be great.
- Parents should start early to build a child’s self-esteem. Provide a positive environment.

Collaborate With the Schools

- Cook’s should go to teachers meetings to help them identify issues that might present themselves, such as ADHD, autism, etc.
- Some level of training should be required for all teachers.
- A partnership between Cook’s and schools could really help address some of these issues.
- I’d like to see Cook’s works with schools and provide them with information about a variety of mental health topics.

Improve Access

- There should be counseling services available outside of the typical 8am to 5pm timeframe.
- It just takes way too long for appointments.
- As parents we need better access. Our kids need help and they often can’t afford to wait.

Other Suggested Solutions

- Maybe Cook’s could provide a series of mental health topics for the public to learn about and discuss.
- I really like Cooks magazines, but I’d like to see more information on mental health related issues.
**Topic #5: Dental Health**

5.1 Major Dental Health Concerns/Issues
The dental health issues that parents felt were most important were education/information about the importance of dental healthcare, cost of dental care, access to pediatric dentists, and overcoming a child’s fear of the dentist. The major dental health issues identified by parents were generally the same in the 2015, 2012, and 2009 focus group sessions.

5.2 Dental Health Comments
Summarized comments made by parents are provided below:

**Education/Information**
- Teaching kids at an early age the importance of brushing, flossing, and regular checkups is crucial.
- We need to stress to parents and children that dental health relates to overall health.
- Teach kids that smoking and drugs can also have a negative impact on dental health.
- I feel that some parents don’t understand the importance of regular check-ups, and brushing and flossing everyday.
- Parents need to understand that children need regular checkups.
- The community needs more education about how certain foods and juices affect your teeth.
- People forget how important dental health is to overall health. We need to remind people to be proactive and preventative dental care rather waiting for a cavity to come.
- Parents need to understand the importance of regularly brushing teeth, flossing, and having check-ups.
- Bad dental habits can lead to other health issues; this needs to be addressed.
- Educating parents about when to start their children’s dental care is important. Until I had kids, I had no idea how that children needed to start dental care at such a young age.

**Cost**
- Dental care is usually one of the first things to be cut from the household budget if there are money issues.
- Dental care is expensive.
- It seems like even people with excellent medical insurance rarely have good dental insurance.
- Lack of dental insurance is a problem for some people.
- My husband has great medical insurance, but it’s horrible for dental. I don’t understand why.
- It’s hard to get dental care if you don’t have insurance.
• If you have good insurance, then good dental care is accessible. But if you don’t then dental care can be costly.
• Cost is a real issue for a lot of families when it comes to dental care.
• Dental care is too expensive, especially when you have so many other things to take care of.
• We often put our dental health on the back burner because of the cost. Unfortunately other things come before it.

Accessibility of Pediatric Dentists
• It’s really hard to find a good pediatric dentist.
• It’s difficult to find age appropriate dentists for young kids. Even if the dentist accepts, sometimes there are issues with the insurance.
• A lot of the dentists just aren’t good with kids. It’s hard to find a good pediatric dentist.

Anxiety/Fear of the Dentist
• A lot of kids are afraid of the dentists, and as parents it’s tough to change their mind.
• My daughter had a horrible experience at the dentists years ago, and it’s still hard to convince her to go back.

5.3 Suggested Solutions to Improve Children’s Dental Health
When asked to indicate specific things that could be done to improve the quality of dental health for children in the region, parents generally felt it would be most beneficial to include more dental programs/services in the schools; many parents suggested having a mobile dental truck come to the schools and provide free or discounted services for children.

5.4 Comments Related to the Suggested Solutions
Summarized comments mentioned by parents are provided below:

Dental Care in the Schools
• Having more school programs involving dental care would be great.
• I’d like to see mobile buses that go to grade schools and outer communities to teach kids about the importance of dental care and provide them with free check-ups.
• I think the traveling dentists and mobile dentist programs are a great idea.
• I’d like to see the dental trucks come to the schools more often. For some children this is the only way they get decent dental care.
• The city I used to live in had mobile dentists that came to schools. Do they have that here?
• Maybe Cooks could find dentists that could come to the schools and teach classes about brushing, flossing, and explain why it’s so important.
• For some children school is the only place they get the dental care they need, so I think it’s important for the schools to continue to provide this service.

Other Suggested Solutions
• Cook’s should get the word out about their dental clinic.
• Maybe Cook’s could come out to neighborhoods to provide information about dental care.
• Parent’s need to be proactive about their children’s healthcare.
• It would be great to have instructional videos in waiting rooms at Cook’s to educate parents about dental care.
• Cook’s should educate parents on the importance of dental care as a part of a child’s overall health.

**Topic #6: Access to Medical Care**

6.1 Major Concerns/Issues Accessing Children’s Medical Care
Parents were asked to identify the items that they felt were most important when it came to accessing medical care for their children. In almost every group, parents felt that the accessibility of medical care was dependent on insurance and cost. Some of the other issues that were mentioned by parents included: lack of mental healthcare, inconsistency of medical care in the outlying areas of the region, lack of specialists, lack of information on what medical care is available in the region, the hours/wait times at doctor offices and the number of parents using Cook Children’s ER in place of a primary care physician. These same topics were mentioned in the 2015, 2012 and 2009 focus group sessions.

6.2 Comments Related to Accessing Children’s Medical Care
Summarized comments made by parents are provided below and on the following pages.

**Insurance**
• Lack of insurance plays a big role in the lack of regular care for children.
• There are plenty of urgent care facilities available, but many of them don’t take Medicaid.
• I which there was more information on what insurance is accepted.
• There always seems to be insurance hurdles.
• I feel like there’s a disconnect between what insurance covers versus what services are available.
• There seems to be a lot of confusion about how Obamacare has affected the cost of medical care.
• Access depends on the type of insurance you have.
Executive Summary

Parent Focus Group Summary Report

- For many people insurance is the biggest barrier to access. It seems like an emergency has to be considered a serious emergency for it to be paid for by insurance.
- Working through the insurance process is a real challenge for new or busy parents.

Cost

- Cost is a big issue when it comes to routine check-ups.
- Affordable medication is problem.
- Better and more affordable health insurance would be great.
- Provide low-cost or free immunizations for parents that have lost their job.
- Finding affordable and quality health care can be difficult.
- Everyone has access to medical care, but not everyone can afford it.
- I’m frustrated by the overall costs of medical care, and what’s not covered by my insurance.
- The price of medicine is the biggest issue.

Mental Healthcare

- Overall our medical insurance is very good, but it is terrible when it comes to covering mental health issues.
- Finding decent medical access for mental healthcare is a big problem. It’s hard to find, and it takes forever.
- Mental healthcare for children seems to be the least accessible health care service in the region.
- It’s really difficult to get in for a first visit to a mental health professional. The waiting list is so just long.

Inconsistent Coverage throughout the Region

- Overall I think there are plenty of urgent care facilities; parents just need to make their children’s health a priority over their own interests.
- There needs to be more pediatric care available up north.
- There isn’t enough access to medical care in certain areas.
- There should be more clinics in certain areas.
- There’s a lack of coverage in some areas. There’s a long distance to travel, long wait times, and inconvenient hours.
- I see more and more urgent care facilities springing up in the region, which is great. However, some areas do see to be underserved, especially in the more rural areas.
- The availability of doctors is not consistent throughout the region. Some areas definitely have more than others.

Lack of Specialists

- I know parents that find it very frustrating trying to find specialists in the area. Administrative coordination is often a problem also.
- There is definitely a general lack of specialists in our area. We have to come to Fort Worth to find the type of specialist we need.
- There is often a huge wait to see a specialist; often times up to 6 months.
• The area needs more specialists.
• The inability to get appointments with specialists is very frustrating. Whether it be lack of availability or insurance issues, it seems there are always obstacles to get appointments with specialists.

Lack of Information
• I would like to see more access to medical information on websites. Information such as doctor’s office hours, locations, etc. would be really helpful.
• I’d like to see more information on Cooks’ website about what resources are available.

Hours/Wait Times
• I’d like to see shorter wait times.
• There are often long wait times and inconvenient hours. Typically hours are 8am to 5pm.
• Urgent cares are great, but I wish the hours were better. I end up having to go the emergency room sometimes because the urgent care facilities are closed.

Emergency Room
• There’s a preference for urgent care facilities rather than emergency rooms, especially if it’s “after hours”.
• The wait times in the emergency room are terrible.
• The problem is that too many parents take their children to the ER for issues that aren’t emergencies. If more people took their children to urgent clinics for non-emergencies, the ER wait time wouldn’t be nearly as bad.
• The wait times at hospitals are way too long. More people need to take advantage of the services that urgent care facilities offer.
• Too many people use the ER as their regular doctor.

Other Access Comments
• Maybe schools could offer more regular vision and hearing checks.
• Transportation to and from the doctor is a problem for some people.
• The hospital billing system is at times very confusing and frustrating.

6.3 Suggested Solutions to Improve Access to Medical Care
The most frequently mentioned ways that parents would like to see Cook Children’s help improve access to children’s medical care would be to provide more satellite facilities or clinics or to serve as the primary source for information. Parents would also like to see Cook Children’s provide more information about how to access medical care.

6.4 Comments Related to the Suggested Solutions
Summarized comments mentioned by parents are listed below and on the following page:

- We need more information and increased awareness.
- I’d be great if there were a traveling van/bus that could perform immunizations.
- Cooks should partner with as many organizations as possible. The Cook’s name would be a great asset to other organizations, so there would seem to be a lot of potential partnerships.
- It would be helpful if more information were available online.
- There needs to be improved emergency services at Cook Children’s.
- Streamline urgent care that’s not necessarily life threatening, but is still serious.
- Cooks should partner other organizations in the community, such as churches other religious organizations.
- How about having a Skype/video conference capability integrated in school nurse’s offices so an injured/sick child can get help without having to physically go to the hospital to get treated.
- Cook’s could do a better job of fine-tuning how a patient should be treated after an accident. There’s too much passing around of a patient between facilities.
- I’ve noticed more Cooks Children’s clinics being built up in various neighborhoods throughout the region, which is great.
- I think access to care at Cook’s is great. They’ve really expanded care in ways that are needed.

**Topic #7: Education and Information**

**7.1 Types of Education/Information Most Needed in the Region**

Parents were asked to indicate the specific types of education and information related to children’s health issues that they felt were needed most in the region. Summarized comments made by parents are provided below:

- How about improving the written literature available to reach out to the community about what resources are available.
- Overall more education and information are needed.
- More information is definitely needed, especially for disadvantaged families.
- I’d like to see more seminars, instead of just pamphlets.
- The patient portal at Cook’s is awesome. I’m not sure if enough people understand how much information this provides them.
- We live in a face-paces society and people don’t have time to process a lot of information, so it’s important to make education and information concise.
- I’d like to see Cook’s consider offering puberty classes for kids and parents so kids can understand changes in their bodies.
Sex education information is always needed, especially regarding how to talk to your kids about such a sensitive subject.

It would be good to know what all Cook Children’s Hospital offers. There are probably excellent resources and services available that I don’t know about.

I’d like more information about mental health issues. That seems to be the area that’s lacking the most.

### 7.2 Suggested Solutions to Improve Education/Information

Some of the specific ways that parents felt they would like Cook Children's and primary care givers to better educate parents about children’s health related issues were: having Cook Children’s take a leadership role in providing the information or education, offering classes for parents and/or children, collaborating with the schools, distributing printed materials and distributing materials electronically. These are the same issues that were raised in the 2015, 2012 and 2009 focus groups.

### 7.3 Comments Related to the Suggested Solutions

Summarized comments made by parents are provided below and on the following pages:

#### Cook Children’s Taking a Leadership Role in Providing Information and Education

- To make sure that children are developing normally, it would great to teach parents what milestones to look for with their children.
- If there’s not one already, there needs to be a resource center at Cook’s to get more information about various topics.
- We trust the Cook Children’s name brand, so I’d like to see them take a leadership role in providing more information.
- Cook’s could be more proactive in reaching out to communities throughout the area.
- It would be great if Cook’s provided information in a wide variety of areas, such as schools, doctor's offices, churches, etc.
- People don’t want misinformation that’s on the web, so maybe Cook’s could provide links to more specific scientific information, instead of just broad statistics.
- Cook’s should provide more information on what resources are available.
- Cook’s should work with doctors to get information to parents.

#### Classes

- I would like to see more classes available for parents during non-working hours, such as before 8am or after 6pm.
- Classes on a variety of topics would be helpful.
- I’d like more information on what classes/workshops are available, how to sign up, how much they cost, etc.
- Cook’s should take more initiative in marketing and social media efforts.
- We could always use more parenting classes.
- I would like to see more age specific parenting classes. The way to address a lot of issues changes dramatically, based on the age of the child.
I’d like to see more classes for new parents. This is an area that could always use more information.

Maybe offer a class where kids can learn things along with their parents.

**Collaborating with Schools**

- Schools should partner with Cook’s and other healthcare providers to educate parents and kids about various issues.
- Cook’s should work with schools and communities to get the word out.
- I’d like to see more peer groups available for kids with various issues.
- I’d love to see Cook’s partner with schools and other community organizations to educate parents on various of topics.
- It’s great when my kids bring home information from school. I’d like to see them bring home more information from Cook’s.
- Cooks should partner with the school districts. I think it’s a great natural partnership.
- It would be great if Cook’s could send healthcare professionals to schools and talk to the kids about a variety of issues, including many of the issues we’ve talked about in this focus group.

**Printed Material**

- I’d like to see more information available in various places. Maybe have more pamphlets.
- Don’t assume everyone has Internet access to get information. Make more printed materials available.
- This might already exist, but how about a booklet or pamphlet that has all of the important numbers to call.
- Put information not only online, but keep providing pamphlets.
- There should be more printed materials available, because not everyone has a computer.

**Electronically**

- Having more information available on the Internet would be very helpful.
- How about some postings on Facebook to make people aware of the resources that are available.
- As more and more people have access to the Internet, I think it’s important that as much information as possible is available online.
- There should be more information available on the website.
- More the website more user friendly and easier to use.

**Other Suggested Solutions**

- Some testimonials from people who have used Cook Children’s services would be helpful.
- Pediatricians should be more involved in educating parents.
- Maybe there could be periodic seminars at the library or other central locations.
I still think that billboards are a good source of information.
Information packets should be given at doctor’s offices for parents and kids.

OVERALL PRIORITY RATINGS

Of the seven major topics discussed in the focus group sessions, parents were asked to rank the top three items that they felt Cook Children’s should take a leadership role on addressing. The items that parents felt were most important for Cook Children’s to take a leadership role on addressing were: 1) access to medical care, 2) education and information, and 3) mental health. Parents felt it was least important for Cook Children’s to focus on dental health. The chart below displays the results of the 2015 priority ratings for all seven groups.

![Ratings of the Top Priorities for Cook Children's](chart.png)

Source: ETC Institute (2015)
As the chart below shows, there was an increase in the perceived importance of Cook Children’s taking a leadership role in addressing mental health and child abuse compared to the 2012 and 2009 focus group results. There was a decrease in the perceived importance of Cook Children’s taking a leadership role in addressing child fitness and nutrition. Access to medical care was rated as either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> highest priority for Cook Children’s in 2009, 2012, and 2015; dental health was the lowest rated priority in 2009, 2012, and 2015.
OTHER COMMENTS

Any additional comments provided by parents are provided below:

- This focus group has been very informative and helpful. It’s nice be get different perspectives from different people.
- The focus group was helpful and I would like to have more of them.
- I appreciate having a forum to hear feedback from other parents. I would like to have more discussions in the future. It’s important to share viewpoints about parenting.
- I’m glad that Cook’s is seeking input from the community to improve their services.
- It’s nice to hear everyone’s ideas and perceptions.
- I’d like to see Cook’s more involved in the community.
- It would be great to see a Cook’s presence more often in neighborhoods.