

**AAUW Healthcare Committee**  
**Final Report 2014-2015**  
(word file 2015 annual report)

**PROJECTS**

- 1. Program for membership meeting—Report on Women’s Health in Dutchess County  
May 14, 2015**
- 2. Poughkeepsie Mother’s Group**

The Mother’s Group provides new mothers in the Poughkeepsie area parenting and health education, social support, and access to local services at this important and vulnerable time in their lives. We meet at the Family Partnership Center two Wednesdays a month from 4:30pm-6pm. The meeting opens with an art project, followed by discussions of the parenting curriculum, nutrition, women’s health, infant care, etc. Healthy snacks are provided and time is set aside for the mothers to socialize and learn from one another.

**Poughkeepsie Mother’s Group provides:**

A familiar face for new mothers: to listen to, acknowledge and help with their problems,

Parenting education, and health education, to help them to be the good mothers they want to be.

Interaction and support from other mothers, which helps reduce isolation, and increases confidence and self esteem in their job of being a mother.

Information and referrals to the many family and health services available in Poughkeepsie.

We also have support and volunteers from many other community organizations including: HRHC, Dutchess County Healthy Families, Family Services, Cunneen Hackett Arts Center, Americorps, Girl Scouts, and faith based organizations including Vassar Temple, Temple Beth El and St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.

**Poughkeepsie Mother’s Group**

Twice monthly meeting Wednesdays from 4:30 to 6:00 pm at the Family Partnership Building.

Different programs and fliers: “Mother’s Group”, “Mom’s Café, now “Mom and Baby Evening Out”

Average of 4-8 moms at each meeting, with babies and other children

**At each meeting:**

Parenting education with discussion, curriculum called Nurturing Parenting, community edition

Art projects : painting, photos, crochet lessons, mobiles, art show, book on Mom’s Best Advice

Healthy snacks

Mothers participating in planning and running activities

Time for socializing/social support

Help with the infants and children while they do activities

Provide transportation if needed

**Other activities have included:**

Speakers from other organizations including: Grace Smith House, PPH, Healthy Families, DOH, Dutchess County Cooperative extension

Stress management

Women's health education

Mother's journals

Collection of Advice for new moms

Pregnant women participating during final weeks of pregnancy for mother's advice

Holiday party

Playgroup

Raffles/incentives

Infant book giveaways

**PLANS FOR EXPANSION AND THE UPCOMING YEAR**

We have 4-8 participants per meeting, want to increase to between 10-20 per meeting

1. Spanish
2. More fun activities, involving the moms in running them...upcoming plans for "Mom and Baby Evening Out": Manicure Night, Cupcake Decorating, Bingo, Parenting Jeopardy
3. More focused education, for their specific problems, with another volunteer in charge of parenting curriculum...Susan Colodner who works for Astor Early Childhood program
4. More personal attention for their specific problems,with more volunteer help in other areas, I will have time to do this
5. More knowledge for referrals, Randi Chalfin who works for Children's Center at Family Court
6. New program "Mom and Baby Evening Out" is activity once a month; and a planning meeting once a month, in which the moms participate

## Other Goals

7. Children's Literacy program at each meeting.....help to have homes that are literature rich environments, a book once a month
8. Better access to assistance and referrals.....with a plan for who to send them to and follow up

## **Continuing volunteer needs**

Volunteers to come to meetings and help hold babies

Connections to local colleges, interns, etc. for volunteers

Connections to the Girl Scouts, organize a schedule of help for the meetings

Grant writer

Facebook/social media

Submitted by Kay Bishop and Lula Allen, Healthcare Committee Co-Chairs