

**Special Services Advisory Committee Meeting
Waukesha County DHHS – Brookfield Room
October 22, 2009**

Members Present:

Jen Adler, Don Daniels, Sharon Fliess, Missy Kueht-Becker, Pam Klintner, Jessie Mireles, Trisha Nepper, Teri O'Grady, Sherri Perez, Heidi Schwendimann, Bonnie Siegel, Cheri Sylla, Julie Turkoske

Members absent:

Eve Altizer, Deb DeMaster, Kathy Evans, Dennis Farrell, Mary Jo Foye, Barbara Fredricks, Sheryl Gerstl, Nichole Hunkins, Patrick Jauquet, Mary Ann Jensen, Mary Beth Jezo-Sywoulka, Stephanie Mauck, Ken and Julie Perkins, Ann Shurte, Lora J. Sullivan, and Kate Wallenslager.

Meeting began at 1:05 pm.

Agenda Item #1: Introductions

Members introduced themselves and stated where they were from and whether they were a parent or a professional.

Don Daniels stated that at the last meeting there were not enough parents to have a quorum so we could not vote on our new committee co-chairperson. Don got 17 votes by email. They were all positive to appoint Teri O'Grady as our next co-chair person. There was one abstention, from a member who did not know Teri.

Agenda Item #2: Approval of Minutes April 23, 2009 and August 6, 2009

Missy Kueht-Becker motioned to accept the April 23, 2009 minutes as written. Sharon Fliess seconded the motion. The committee voted in unanimously favor to approve. Julie Turkoske made a motion to accept the August 6, 2009 minutes as written... Teri seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The vote was unanimous.

Agenda Item #3: Education Segment – advisory committee structure/format

Don asked for ideas on how we can move to make the committee meetings as beneficial to parents as possible, by addressing their main areas of interest. The county's desire is to increase parental "ownership" of the committee. Julie mentioned that she meets regularly with the State's LTC committee, and is willing to provide an update about State-level issues and concerns. Such an update will become a standard component of future agendas. Julie will provide Don with a schedule for those meetings.

Don mentioned that, in past meetings Dennis Farrell suggested reintroducing an educational-component as part of the meetings. The group liked that idea, believing it would help new parents and make the meetings more informative, rather than just following an agenda. The group made the following suggestions for educational topics: 1) Inviting other counties to tell us about their FSP program so that we could get a sense of how we are doing comparatively. 2) Inviting speakers from provider agencies. 3)

Inviting a representative from the State to update us on the possibility of regionalizing access to FSP, CLTS and Katie Beckett. 4) Educating parents about various waiver “types.” 5) Providing parents with information on “inclusion.” 6) Providing information about various types of respite.

Attention turned to the issue of how to inform families about upcoming topics. The suggestion was made that we use existing email distribution lists (UCP, Cheri Sylla and Don all have email lists to which they send information) to inform parents in an attempt to increase attendance. Jesse stated that the county would look into the possibility of creating an FSP-specific email distribution list. Missy suggested that every time the minutes go out, we should specifically invite parents to attend the meetings and ask them RSVP so we know how many people will be coming. The suggestion was also made to send out the meeting notice earlier – as soon as we know the topic and whom the speaker will be, with a second reminder email a week prior to the meeting. A final suggestion was made that Teri compose a letter to other parents stating, “We would like to invite you to our meetings and the dates are.” She agreed to work on that while the county considers ways to disseminate that letter.

Don asked whether it would be helpful for committee members have one another’s names and email addresses. All parties agreed that we could not share that information without the consent of the committee member.

Nichole Hunkins asked that Don report in her absence that UCP is hoping to eliminate its waiting list by the end of this calendar year. Using increased waiver funding to pay for respite (for those children who have that funding option) has freed up money to serve additional UCP waiting list families. All committee members recognized that the waitlist could quickly reform if new families apply, as is expected when word gets out that there is no wait. A number of members commented on the difficulty finding someone to watch their child. In response, a number of members mentioned respite options, including the UCP newsletter, which provides a list of possible providers. *R & R Club* through UCP is also available. Easter Seals and ARCH both have respite groups/activities.

Don also mentioned on Nichole’s behalf that the demographics of families that are applying for UCP respite is shifting. There are more kids with mental health disabilities asking for respite. Trisha said the FSP workers were educating parents that this service is not limited to children with a developmental disability.

Agenda Item #4: Birth-to-Three

Jesse explained that historically funding of Birth-to-Three has been a challenge to the county. Last year was the first time in a number of years that the program did not run a deficit. This year, there is a deficit again. LSS is questioning whether they can continue to provide the current level of service .

One of the budgetary problems is related to insurance. Private insurance must be used before families can use government service because the government (such as Katie Beckett) is the funding of last resort. It is a State mandate that the B-3 program has to

pay/absorb the private insurance copay/deductibles for children who have private insurance coverage. That fact drains the overall budget, since most families have a \$1000 to \$6,000 deductible. A high frequency of visits is required to meet this deductible before LSS can be paid by the insurance, and then only if it is a covered expense on the family's policy. Discussions are underway about LSS providing only "core services" (i.e. intake, screening, assessment and service coordination).

Regarding the parental payment liability, the most that the county can collect from many families is \$150/month, per the current cost share formula or \$1,800 per year. The cost share formula is based on gross family income and has a range of \$0-\$150. Over 1/2 of the families have a \$0 cost share and less than 25% have the maximum \$150 cost share. As a result, the financial "hole" grows deeper because private insurance is getting more expensive. In effect, LSS is providing therapy services with little or no reimbursement. It was Missy's belief that there is little understanding of the problem at the State level, or within the insurance industry. This problem seems to be larger in Waukesha than in some other counties because we have many working families that are insured. The State is looking at B-3 waiver programs in other states to learn how they are handling this problem.

Jesse mentioned that stimulus funds, know as ARRA funding, might provide a short-term solution that will allow some additional time for a longer-term solution to be sought. He stated that he would bring a plan to this committee and to the Health and Human Services Board, once it is developed.

Agenda number 5: Resource Sharing Subcommittee-progress report/input

A subcommittee has been formed to begin work on developing a resource fair. It is comprised of Julie, Cheri, Heidi Schwendimann and Don. Heidi has taken the lead. She reported that the fair would be in early March based on location (Steinhafels). The preliminary plan calls for approximately 35 providers of camps, music therapy, social skill groups, park-and-rec programs, respite and adaptive aide providers/etc.

Steinhafels typically does not allow their room to be reserved more than 2 months in advance. However, they were willing to waive that restriction in our situation, with the understanding that there was a slight possibility that we could be "bumped" if some internal function arose that demanded access to the room. (Steinhafels thought that was unlikely.) The plan allows for a couple of county tables (for FSP /B-3/CLTS). Don and Heidi are working to create a (FSP-CLTS-UCP) power point presentation that could be used at this fair, as well.

Early March was chosen, based on the room's availability as well as our desire to provide families with information in time to help their summer planning. The group focused two Saturday, - March 6th or March 13th, from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Heidi will check on room availability for those specific dates so that a decision can be made in hopes of providing families with as much advance notice as possible.

Cheri suggested that we include a few stations for kids to play games and do stuff with volunteers, so that parents could bring their children along. Day care will not be provided.

The group suggested that Heidi develop a step-by-step resource fair development guide for future reference. If we have a template, the process would be easier to replicate in the future.

Agenda Item #6: Future meetings

After discussion, the committee agreed to maintain the current plan of four meetings per year. They also decided to continue to meet on the third Thursday of the months in which meetings occurred. This would allow for Julie to report what she learns at the State's Long Term Care meetings, which are held the 2nd week of the month. Meeting time was adjusted to accommodate parents' need to be home when their children return from school.

The 2010 meetings will be held from 12:00 – 1:30 on:

February 18

May 20

September 16

November 18

Miscellaneous – not on the agenda:

Don reported that, as of July 1 2009 we have funds enough to waiver an additional 53 new kids. (We have 226 children on the waiver presently.) Jesse was able to budget for two new staff positions approved to assist with the workload implications. The county is presently in process of receiving applications and intends to fill these positions as soon as possible.

Julie asked if that could be an item for the next meeting. She wants info on the different types of waiver funding.

Don asked for a Motion for adjournment. Julie motioned to close the meeting. Pam seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Trisha Nepper, CSW
Children with Special Needs Unit