

**CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 15, 2015
MINUTES**

PRESENT: Wendy Banicki, Sara Barron, Eden Christman, Terri Donini (St. Charles) Kathy Duffek, Jessica Foster, Pamela Groh, Missy Kueht, Sarah Matson, Barbara Medina, Raquel Mehring, Lauren Miller (Parents' Place), Joe Muchka, Ron Pupp, Glynis Underwood, Amber VanDenack, Carl Vitense, Karen Villarreal, Linda Wetzel (LSS, Birth-3), Mary Wittwer

STAFF PRESENT: Esther Jensen, Kathy Mullooly, Lisa Roberts, Peter Slesar, Sarah Vargas

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2015 MEETING

Ron Pupp called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

A motion was made by Karen Villarreal, seconded by Raquel Mehring, to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2015 meeting.

SPECIAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sara Barron and Eden Christman attended the September SSAC meeting. There was a phone conference call from the Waisman Center with Liz Hecht. They talked about the Children's Long Term Service Council. Linda Wetzel, Birth to Three, gave a presentation. Much is happening with the State and the autism waiver. In November they are going to open enrollment for card service providers. All intensive autism services and therapy services are going back to card services. Any family currently open to autism intensive will need to be assessed to see if they have other needs that the waiver could cover, that the card does not. If they don't, they'll be closed – if they do, they can remain open. Those currently on the waiting list will fit into the current waiting list by date of their functional screen. All of that information will be identified in a letter coming out in December. There are changes coming to the Family Support Program. The advisory committee is a product of the FSP grant funding, and there is a regulation for this advisory committee to oversee it. The FSP is going away and is being transitioned to Community Options Programing (COP), which has traditionally been funding for adults in mental health. The state is looking to consolidate different funding areas, and they are rolling FSP into COP as a sub-group. COP already has an advisory committee. What will become of the SSAC will be discussed at the next meeting, after they have more guidance from the State. The discussion will include how they would maintain parent perspective into the programing, which has usually been done through the advisory committee.

PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES (PSSF)

Kathy Mullooly stated that this is the time of year to talk about the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Grant from the State to fund various programs. Last year it changed to a three year format, instead of annual. Also last year the funding was tied into the e-Wisacwis numbers. E-Wisacwis is a child welfare database with many benchmarks that child welfare services need to reach in terms of timeliness, response, interventions, etc. Funding is tied to this as of this year to be sure the agencies are helping us reach our benchmarks. It is ten months into the three year grant. The agencies using the funding presented.

Karen Villarreal, Safe Babies Healthy Families, reported that they work with families prenatally until the children are five years old. The biggest goals are breaking the cycle of abuse and making sure children are kindergarten ready. Outcomes this year are 100% of the children in the program had a medical provider, 98% were current with well visits, and 97% were up to date on immunizations. 95% of the children received the ages and stages at the appropriate time, which is great not only that it's actually done, but the children are getting intervention afterwards. 96% of the families had a goal plan, which is updated every six months, and is on-going. 95% of women were screened for post partum depression. They found that post partum depression wasn't appearing until almost a year post-partum, therefore they screen more often and address that concern with families. Safe Babies Health Families served 350 families last year.

Kathy Duffek, Parents' Place, offers many programs for parents. They used PSSF Finding to begin serving Spanish speaking parents. They provide specific programs at Parents' Place as well as off-site programs, including at Banting, Blaire, La Casa, and the Center for Excellence. In October they began a Spanish Speaking support group. Participants are learning skills and most importantly, getting support. Parents' Place provided interpreters for several of their on-going programs. They served 54 adults and 56 children through the third quarter, a total of 110 and that's unduplicated. Duplicated number is 235, so families are returning for services. It was a total of 469 service hours. Parents' Place also offers parenting for children with multiple challenges, which is a program for parents who struggle with children with anything from cerebral palsy to spina-bifida. Most of the children have ADHD, autism or some behavior issues. It's not limited to a specific challenge. It's been ongoing since 2006, providing programming every first and third Wednesday of the month. Parents attend a group and children attend a separate group. It's been a wonderful connection for the families. They wish they could attend more. For the children, this is their only friendships and they look forward to it. With PSSF funding, Parents' Place offered additional programs on anxiety, bullying, social skills, understanding ADHD for both the children and parents, and dealing with strong willed children. Unduplicated, they provided service to 88 adults, 86 children, for a total of 174. Duplicated, 189 adults and 182 children, a total of 371, and 731.5 service hours. Parents are learning new skills, using them, and getting support. All outcomes are over 95%.

Lauren Miller, is the new Parents' Place Supervised Visitation Program case manager. This program provides parents an opportunity to visit with their children while a permanency plan is being developed, or during domestic violence, custody disputes, or for a variety of other reasons. This promotes optimal family functioning and opportunities for healthy childhood outcomes. With the supervised visitation, they also provide education, positive role models and it can be an opportunity for family enrichment. The population serviced is low income or falls below the poverty level. With the lack of knowledge in parenting, many times that is secondary to other issues like AODA, mental health, or domestic violence. The majority of their referrals come from Waukesha County, but they do service anyone. The cases that don't come through Waukesha County are often managed by private attorneys, other personnel and they are due to custody or divorce. It's an opportunity to maintain a relationship with the parent while everything is being worked out, in a safe, consistent environment. In terms of outcomes, they provided 3,396 hours of supervised visitation to 75 parents and 89 children in 2014. This can often be the only link the parents have with their children. The visitations currently take place in one of three visitation rooms, set up like a living room, with a neutral third party supervised visitation case worker who documents observations during the visit. They also provide

education, positive parenting skills, stress management, self esteem boosters – anything can be incorporated into a family’s visitation plan. With this additional funding they are excited to announce they are adding 20 hours to their contract. Hopefully that provides families additional days to visit and longer visitations.

Linda Wetzel is with Lutheran Social Services, the program manager for the Birth to Three Program. She talked about the Trauma Informed Care System with at risk pre-school children, working with Lisa Roberts. They have developed the program to address the needs of children in Waukesha County who are placed in out of home care, under the age of five. As they have done this work, it was discovered that children who are placed in out of home care and have trauma history, have a lot of developmental, social and emotional needs. What they were finding is that most of those children were not meeting eligibility standards for the systems they already have in place. Children under the age of three are required to be referred to Birth to Three by laws, but they were not meeting eligibility criteria for that system, and then were not being enrolled. Rather than leaving them knowing they have risk factors, they wanted to do something to provide some intervention to the foster parents, so that children could be kept in their placement and could have the developmental skills and education needed for them to grow and thrive. Wetzel shared fliers. With the PSSF funds, they provided services to children in this new program. There isn’t any established funding for the program. A three year grant cycle just ended with the Children’s Trust Fund, so they won’t have that for 2016. The PSSF funds will help over the next two years. They have been able to serve 17 children for six months with the funding received in 2015, and those children continue to be served using tax levy funding from the County. This is the third year of this program using the frame work that they have. They have learned a lot about children’s developmental needs when they have a trauma history and how to work with caregivers and foster parents. They have started to work with the biological parents as well. They have done presentations at conferences. Roberts is doing a lot of work on trauma informed care with policy people. They are holding themselves together until the state agrees to provide this statewide. Question, are they using ages and stages to identify the children? Several assessment tools are used. The children’s developmental skills and self regulation skills are assessed. They also look at how things are going in the home; identifying with parents what’s working and not working. Foster parenting a child with trauma history brings a lot of anxiety. They help identify that, help foster parents learn how to interact with the child. What does attunement look like, how do you read a child and understand what’s happening? If you think about what’s happened to these children, then their behavior is no surprise. Expecting certain behaviors can calm the parents down as well. So, they work on children’s developmental skills, but also how to interact with the people around them, making good decisions.

Roberts talked about the newest area of research, the idea that trauma disrupts natural development, and it is the executive functioning skills that are most disrupted, at a younger age. The children just adapt responses and behaviors as survival skills for themselves, but become very disruptive to their continued functioning when they’re not in danger. Children have to present a 25% delay in development in order to qualify for Birth to Three. The children having trauma histories, that executive functioning doesn’t rise to the level in the battery of tests currently used. Those children don’t have the level of expectations put on them every day; social skills, the need to focus, the need to use executive functions. We don’t start seeing it until they are 6, 7, 8 years old, and they are in school when those expectations start. We know they are on that path because of their trauma histories. Rather than waiting, we’re trying to get them caught

up now – build skills in the areas we know they have deficits. Wetzel stated that a good example is that they have initial assessment data on twenty-five children, 2013 and 2014, and 48% of those children had a delay in expressive speech. Not a 25% delay so that they would meet the criteria for Birth to Three, but they had a delay. It might look as though the child is doing okay to the caregivers because the child can talk, but it is the quality of their skills and lack of descriptive language, which is needed when they get to school, that is not where they need to be. They have been able to show progress in children's developing skill levels, and now they are working on how to help them develop executive functioning. Missy Kueht added that it is true brain re-wiring. When the children only have one response, it gets strengthened, and if we can intervene we can develop other wiring. What's unique about this program, Wetzel explained, is putting it all together - that in addition to teaching developmental skills, it is the caregiver relationship that helps these children grow and thrive.

Coming from the adolescent perspective, Peter Slesar, stated this really mirrors what they're discovering, which has always been there, as far as the high trauma history of children, especially those in the deeper end of the juvenile justice system. What happens to these children when they get into the structured environment, they can easily be labeled as the trouble maker and take on that role. Their life trajectory heads in a different direction, and ultimately they come into the criminal justice system, which is not the place for them, but it's where they end up by default.

Eden Christman asked if this is based on a particular model. Wetzel said it is an eclectic approach, taking all we know from neuroscience and the world of psychology. One of the frameworks they use is the A.R.C. (Attachment, Self Regulation, and Competency, by Margaret Blaustein). They add to it their developmental and neurological knowledge to target what the child needs.

Wendy Banicki stated that these children turn into adolescents and young adults, and they come into their shelter. Hebron House just began trauma informed care training at the shelter level so they can better understand the adults who have been through this trauma history.

Kathy Mullooly commented that this program is a great example of being able to use Promoting Safe and Stable Families funding for programs that we believe in, but there is no other funding source for. She introduced Glynis Underwood from St. Charles Family Services. Underwood stated that for the last twenty-three years Bill Bolden had been the program manager and has now retired from St. Charles. He managed the mentoring crisis stabilization program. Terry Donini came on as their new manager this year. Donini talked about the adolescents who have been on that path; working with them to keep them in families, keep them successful in school, giving them social skills and conflict resolution skills. They spend about fifteen to thirty hours a month with them. Donini talked about the three clients who have been in the program since she came on board in February. St. Charles does a lot of collaboration with the county social workers and mental health service. The mentors do a lot of good work with the youth keeping them successful. Underwood explained two components to the program – the family preservation side and the family reunification. The preservation side is working to keep youth in their homes, and therefore they don't see many youth in the reunification program. In the event a youth would have to be placed outside of the home, the reunification side would work with them until they are put back into their own home. The mentors work specifically in Waukesha County. Is it difficult to find good mentors? Donini answered mentors need to be mobile and

that presents a couple of issues. When they get a referral, there isn't a pool they are drawing from, so they have to figure out who within their system they could use, or they would solicit colleges or turn to web-based resources to get people, screen them and connect them with the youth. Underwood added that they have had mentors who have been with St. Charles for quite some time. Underwood stated that the agency has taken this year as a requirement that all individuals who work for them, including mentors, have a better understanding of what it means to provide trauma informed care. Tools they can utilize are the Laurer Center for activities, they participate with the IFDS (Intensive Family Development Services) team, and the summer rec program. A big part of the program is also to give parents respite. Donini reported that they have the fifteen through seventeen year olds begin to look at employment skills. One of the mentors has background in employment and training, and can help the youth get that first job.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Emily Enockson announced a fundraiser by Charitable Hops to benefit Zachariah's Acres at the Dousman Community Center this Saturday evening, October 17.

Ron Pupp has invited the new County Executive, Paul Farrow to attend the November CAFSAC meeting during which Agency Sharing is on the agenda.

Esther Jensen announced the Hispanic Health Fair on October 28. She will share the flier via email.

Carl Vitense, St. Charles is looking to recruit respite and professional foster parents, especially in Waukesha County in order to help increase crisis capacity. It's something they have been talking to Laurie Kohler about. He shared printed information.

ADJOURNMENT

Pam Groh motioned to adjourn, seconded by Missy Kueht-Becker at 9:15 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2015 in Room 271 of the Health and Human Services Center Building, 514 Riverview Ave.

11-19-15
APPROVED

