

## Advisory Committee for Children's Voluntary Services

### Meeting Minutes

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021

**TIME:** 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** VIRTUAL - Zoom meeting

**PRESENT:** Pam DeLap, Sharon Oberkrieser, Linda Pierron, Tim Gantz, Marci Thiry, Mary Janness, Kristine Grzybowski, Staci Thorkildsen, Stefanie Doszak, Amy Stack, Kathy Schumacher, Deb Fleming

**STAFF PRESENT:** Elizabeth Wagner, Mary Salzer, Cristie Siebenaller

Sharon Oberkrieser called the meeting to order at approximately 12:32 pm.

**1. Approval of Minutes for the December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Meeting:**

Pam De Lap moved for approval of the minutes of the last meeting, seconded by Linda Pierron and carried.

**2. Presentation- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Oshkosh – Mary Janness (Executive Director):**

Mary Janness gave a presentation on behalf of NAMI of Oshkosh. NAMI started in the State of Wisconsin in the 1970s by two women from Madison who both had sons with schizophrenia. The Oshkosh affiliate started soon after with supportive recreation for chronically mentally ill people. NAMI currently offers support groups for peers, family members, and teenagers. An in-person teen support group is offered at the Omro High School. NAMI also offers classes including their family-to-family class which is an eight-week educational series where families learn about topics such as medications, support services, and recipients often form connections to others with family members with mental illness. The peer-to-peer class is for people living with mental illness in which a crisis plan is formulated and financial helps are identified. The NAMI family support group members help one another through their learned wisdom. The teen support group offers a safe place for teens in which they can develop a sense of group and support for each other. NAMI has held advocacy events with the hope that post-COVID in-person events will occur once again. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training was held last week. This was an intensive week-long crisis training provided by various local agencies presented to local law enforcement officers. NAMI helps individuals by making referrals dependent on client needs. NAMI has a book entitled *Navigating the Experience* which contains excellent advice to guide people

living with mental illness and their families. NAMI of Oshkosh owns the building located at 525 N. Main Street, Oshkosh. They are in the process of installing an accessible bathroom. For a small non-profit organization, NAMI's finances are pretty stable and are in the middle of a five-year grant from the Community Foundation, for which they are grateful. Funds are also generated from their 5K for Mental Health and Suicide Awareness which is usually held the first week in May. In 2020, their 5K was held virtually. Mary estimated that the number calls that they have received since the onset of COVID has probably quadrupled. She has a lot of connections in the community including some area mental health units sending their open bed counts to her on a weekly basis. She tries to give callers a sense of hope to let them know that NAMI truly believes that almost all mental health can be successfully treated. NAMI Oshkosh has affiliations with other NAMI locations including NAMI of Fox Valley. The majority of calls received are from loved ones of a mentally ill individual. Mary shared that local suicides are actually down in number and feels that there has been a greater awareness and that people have been more open to talk about mental health issues during the pandemic. Although the local suicide rates are down, the calls received as of late indicate there are a lot more concerns about mental health.

### **3. Introduce new Family Support Team Member: Elizabeth Brown**

Elizabeth Brown is replacing Jody Brown who retired February 1<sup>st</sup>. Elizabeth will be starting tomorrow and therefore was unable to attend this meeting.

### **4. Member Sharing:**

- Deb Fleming and Marci Thiry of the Menasha School District were in attendance. Deb is an Early Childhood Educator and Marci is the Director of Special Services. Marci reported that the early childhood and elementary are back in session full-time. Middle school and high school are still in hybrid programming and the hope is around spring break to change to in-school classes. Due to COVID, no new initiates are occurring at this time. First grade mental health screens were just sent out with the intention to review that data and set up groups shortly. Students are doing well with masking and social distancing requirements.
- Stefanie Doszak with Fox Valley Autism Treatment Program shared that they provide in-home ABA therapy services for a wide age range of children with autism. FVATP has started a new program called Transitions for children ages 16+ providing vocational, independent living, and social skills tailored to individually assessed needs. FVATP has contracted with DVR and will be providing social skills classes and consult-based services. Stefanie also stated that she has been collaborating with Goodwill looking at ways that ABA-based services may be able to assist clients in that sector as well.
- Pam DeLap is the parent of an adult son with Autism. Pam shared that they have worked in the past with a team from FVATP. She stated they are now working with Goodwill in regards to job development, with assistance from FVATP. She expressed her appreciation on hearing of the resources presented in today's meeting.

- Linda Pierron is the Director of Special Education for the Oshkosh Area School District. Linda shared that she is thankful that many of their students have retained in-person classes through COVID. She stated that the Oshkosh School District hopes to be back to 100 percent in-person classes shortly.
- Stacy Thorkildsen is a Family Resource Specialist for Head Start. Head Start is now accepting phone applications for the next school year for children aged three or four years old by September 1st. Contact is Annette at 920-858-7822.
- Amy Stack is a parent of a child with a disability. She is grateful that her child is back in school as she is thriving there. Her daughter's IEP was held last week and Amy is impressed with the collaboration of her team, especially all her therapists, in spite of the challenges faced with COVID. Amy is a nurse and has received her vaccination. Her husband and son are on the waiting list for vaccination as caregivers.
- Kathy Schumacher is the owner of Music Services LLC. Kathy stated that she is now providing about half in-person and half virtual services and is renting office space at the new TRIO building.
- Kristine Grzybowski of the Northeast Regional Center reported that she is still working from home. They are providing all services that they can to families as they were able to before.
- Mary Salzer is the Youth Justice Supervisor for Winnebago County Human Services. She is located at the Oshkosh building. She reported that the majority of the Child Welfare staff have been vaccinated.
- Elizabeth Wagner had several handouts that she will be sharing via email.
  - Elizabeth began by sharing information regarding a new provider in the Appleton area, Richardson School, who offers CLTS-funded time during the summer and they also contract with school districts. Marci Thiry shared that she recently had a student successfully begin at Richardson which has been a very positive experience thus far.
  - Elizabeth provided the link for Community Works LLC out of Fond du Lac. They provide skill-building focused services to CCS and CLTS clients and will attend the next meeting to provide a presentation on their services.
  - Elizabeth shared a tax preparation handout which can be shared with others about VITA tax options.
  - Elizabeth shared a document from the Waisman Center entitled Finding Your Way which is a guide which can be handed out to others.
  - Elizabeth gave an overview of the ADRC website containing a directory of resources available to the community. Child's resources page is newly added and currently is a work in progress. The Youth Transition page has been recently updated through a transition committee that the ADRC, Elizabeth, and the school districts are involved in.
  - Elizabeth shared that Family Voices has an upcoming Advocacy for Change virtual training.

## 5. Children's COP and CLTS Program Updates:

- Service and Program Updates
  - The State is looking at some of the services that have been allowed virtually to continue virtually as a long-term permanent policy through Medicaid. This is dependent that the virtual services option for that client is as appropriate as it would have been in-person.
  - Despite having access to different federal funding, providers are struggling. Innovative Services is not able to support CLTS programming at this time. The hope is that in the next month or two they will be able to re-engage their services.
  - Transportation resources continue to be lacking, as they had before COVID.
- Operations during COVID
  - The State is envisioning that in the coming months counties will see families in person at least twice a year dependent on the age of child and the family's comfort level. As this is a voluntary program, families must be asked if they are interested in this option. Virtual options for contact may continue long term.
  - After March, children over 16 will be able to access the vaccine. At this point, families are being directed to contact their primary doctor or pharmacy. Hopefully public health will be able to share additional ways to access vaccinations. Information has been shared with both caregivers and families that, at this point, both paid and unpaid children's caregivers can sign up for the vaccine waitlist through the Public Health's website. Marci Thiry stated that at the board meeting last night, Public Health updated that there are 700,000 individuals in Wisconsin ages 65+ with only 70,000 vaccines. Public Health only received about half of doses they had ordered thus it is taking longer to get through the waitlist than had been anticipated. The National Guard is coming to Winnebago County soon and will be holding a mass vaccine clinic with plans to vaccinate 5000 in that clinic as well as local pharmacies beginning to administer vaccines.
- Waitlist Updates –
  - The State is now overseeing the CLTS waitlist in 2021. What they are finding has been positive in terms of turnaround time. If an assessment for a child is completed in February, typically the State is allowing that child to enroll as early as the next month. The hope at the statewide level is to have no waitlists by mid-year in Wisconsin for CLTS. There are six youth currently in the process of enrollment from January. The State's expectation is that counties need to enroll children within 30 days of being deemed "enrollable". The referral process is newer in that once a call is received, the county has approximately 10 days to reach out to schedule a visit with the family. There is also a 45-day deadline from referral date to complete the screening tool. In the month of January there were 22 new referrals, which is higher than usual. Elizabeth also reported some adjustments to her team to include three staff from Lutheran Social Services who are now able to complete new enrollments

and screens. To date in February, there have been 6 referrals received. In addition, they are engaging with the Behavioral Health Team as appropriate based on the family's functioning, the child's diagnosis, etc. In some instances, the Behavioral Health staff may serve as the CLTS service coordinator on a case-by-case basis.

## **6. Birth-to-Three:**

- Birth-to-Three is looking for a full-time speech language pathologist.
- Operations during COVID-19 – Operations during COVID are still the same for the most part. Birth-to-Three staff recently presented to the Human Services Board and shared an overview handout of the Birth to Three Early Intervention. Birth-to-Three covers Outagamie and Winnebago Counties and has regions for each of their teams. The Early Intervention Program provides resources, supports, and services to children under the age of three with special needs. Their mission is teaching skills to primary caregivers to support children with special needs on a daily basis. In 2020, there was 920 Birth-to-Three referrals with 416 of those being for Winnebago County. Of those referred, 563 ultimately were served with 252 being from Winnebago County. Contact was made with 927 families, 395 of those being from Winnebago County. Additional data was provided regarding families who were no longer interested in services, many due to COVID. Families are encouraged to engage in services as the first few years of life are so important to begin skill development. Additionally, follow-up with families who had declined services is also done to see if they are interested in engaging. Children who "age out" upon turning three are referred to school districts for supports. During the April-June dip in numbers, Birth-to-Three staff attended more online trainings. The Early Intervention Program is involved in a number of different community initiatives. At the next meeting, there will be a presenter who will share information on the area initiatives.

## **7. CCS/CST Youth Services:**

### Operations during COVID-19-

- Cristie Siebenaller is the Lead Service Facilitator in the CCS Behavioral Health Team. She updated that Jennifer Long has taken over the role vacated by Nancy Koene. The team continues to do sessions virtually and are also getting vaccinated so they can resume in-home services while still adhering to CDC guidelines regarding masking and social distancing. Some workers have been providing hybrid services for families in which they at times meet with clients in-person in a large conference room, through home visits, or via virtual means.
- The new referral process for CLTS in which Behavioral Health is involved has been working out well. This has led to more voluntary CCS referrals. Some of the CCS staff are being trained as service coordinators for families needing long term supports.
- The Coordinated Services Team (CST) provides a team approach of working with families where they are included in decision-making and are provided formal supports. The CST was formed after the county received a grant spear-headed by Nancy Koene. They are looking at how to continue growing the program in Winnebago County. One of the grant requirements is for a parent of a child who had received CST services to join the committee and are thus seeking a parent or two to serve in this capacity. Cristie will continue to bring updates on this to the committee.

**8. 2019 Focus Areas and Committee Role**

- State of the Child Report
  - An update on the State of the Child report will be given at the next meeting.

9. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Advisory Committee for Children's Voluntary Services has been scheduled for **Tuesday May 11th, 2021** from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in **Room 33** of the **Oshkosh Human Services Building**. The committee approved the following meeting dates for 2021: **May 11<sup>th</sup>, September 14<sup>th</sup> and December 14<sup>th</sup>.**

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Elizabeth Wagner, Winnebago County DHS