

# Early Childhood Planning Team

Meeting Minutes- December 3, 2008

## MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Nancy Bischofs, DCF  
Iris Bicksler, DST  
Rose Wilde, DHS  
Serafina Clarke, DCF/CCF  
Karen Roth, FFLC  
Megan Turner, Pearl Buck Center  
Kevin Maloney, CCF  
Heather Murphy, FRN

Karen Hamilton, Head Start, CCF  
Cheryl Henderson, EC CARES  
Sandy Moses, LC HHS  
Terra Ralph, DHS  
Sharri da Silva, RN  
Anita Huffman, BT3  
Melissa Smith, VISTA/DCF

## DEBRIEF OF JOINT MTG. W/ LC CCF

**Debrief** Consensus was that the meeting went very well. Appreciation and positive feedback was expressed to those who gave presentations. All agreed that our intended message of partnership came across loud and clear. It was a successful meeting in that Committee members expressed interest and were educated on issues previously unfamiliar to them. Budget cuts were discussed in the context of partnerships and community need.

**Suggestion** Facilitate bringing Susan Stearns to LC CCF to talk about 100% Access. Focus on impact of program and how it represents what LC is doing to increase access to health care and dental care.

**Suggestions for BCC** Carry some successful aspects of ECPT's presentation to CCF forward by incorporating them into CCF's annual presentation to the BCC. Emphasize issues that may impact budget decisions. Focus on how creative partnerships save resources. Ask BCC to send that message to Salem.

While heading into the next legislative session: Build on current tidal wave of energy around reducing children going into foster care. Discussion around how to inject a prevention focus into this movement and demonstrate that reduced kids to foster care saves \$ for other early childhood programs, and prevents future juvenile justice and adult corrections expenses. Prevention funding is not mutually exclusive with funding jails or juvenile justice: They are integrative.

**Request** Can group create an updated handout showing statistics on \$ saved in prevention: re: foster care, juvenile justice, etc.?

**Discussion** Other suggestions for BCC joint meeting included connecting investments in early childhood services to our community's economic capacity. I.e. Reliable childcare means parents can maintain stable employment. Include a home visiting focus, reducing child abuse and neglect, infant mortality as a social index. Include focus on our strengths. Reframe these issues to show they're not just the nice thing to do, but the *smart* thing to do. Highlight to BCC what is happening for families in Lane County. Ask them what they would like from CCF.

Iris Bicksler cited a study detailing how nonprofits are a protective factor to communities during rough economic times. Thus supporting nonprofits supports the economic strength of the entire community. Iris can locate the study upon request.

Sandy Moses reminds the group of the ACE study, a good source of empirical data that supports prevention. Discussion around value of having reputable data to present.

The group discussed the current push to re-evaluate and re-design the way funding and programming is structured, especially in the current economic climate. Prevention and early childhood need a strong voice during these discussions in the state and the county.

Karen Roth reminds the group that Fight Crime, Invest in Kids group has a ton of information and stats. Don't reinvent the wheel... they have it all that we could use. Discussion around inviting them and other early childhood groups to show a strong message at the meeting and take advantage of public comment time, which sets the tone for the meeting.

## **INTROS & SHARING**

**Terra Ralph**

We are having cuts. May positions are either frozen or in a hiring delay. There is currently a \$ 7 million deficit statewide just in jobs. We're reducing 7 ½ positions with local contactors. There is an increased burden on case managers. We lost our Womenspace advocate that helped our clients with DV issues. Rose helped create an increased referral system for that. We're trying to address these cuts without reducing client services. The overall need is increasing. There were 500 new food stamp applicants in October alone. TANF applicants also increased in record numbers. There is a proposal to increase OHP coverage.

**Rose Wilde**

Childcare subsidy rates went up. The 09-11 Governor's budget was released this week. It will be in effect in July 09 – June 11 after going through the Legislature. It proposed a reduction in post-TANF stipends and to limit access to employment-related daycare assistance (ERDC) to new applicants who are leaving TANF. This would severely restrict who could get the childcare benefit.

Currently non-parent caregivers of a child are eligible for TANF support to help them to take care of the child. Right now we don't look at their income. There is a proposal to change this to require them to have less than 185% of the poverty level to be eligible.

Serafina Clarke commented that this is a concern because it would go against the idea of preventing kids from going into the foster care system by decreasing people's financial ability to take on the responsibility of caring for these children.

**Sandy Moses**

Our program is mainly funded out of state A & D funds which are currently insecure, as is the county's budget. Cannot yet comment on how budget cuts may affect us.

Group discussed the proposed beer tax and how it may or may not impact prevention, treatment, and mental health funding in the state.

**Cheryl Henderson**

Our budget is largely affected by # of eligible children and could potentially be cut across the board proportionate to how many children we serve.

**Karen Hamilton**

HS fared well as being part of the ODE "hold harmless" approach in the Governor's budget. I'm not really expecting the increase; I think we'll be flat funded. It includes a set aside for an early HS program in this community. There is a need for that. On the fed level, HS representatives are in WA talking to Obama's team about early childhood issues and prevention, so we're very hopeful. All of our facilities are ready for an additional 180 kids.

**Anita Huffman**

Make Parenting a Pleasure program will be offered at BT3. I don't know about the impacts on our budget.

**Heather Murphy**

Re: budget cuts, we're planning for them based on preliminary numbers & the Governor's budget. The Commission system is deeply impacted by the State. We're trying to be proactive about cuts that could come at the end of this biennium. We always work to protect core services. Our numbers are going up and the

need is very high. We're going to be creative and see what we can do. As a lot of nonprofits we have private grants, etc. Though we have a lot of community support and great donors, they're shrinking and giving in smaller amounts. Our focus is to keep programs intact.

**Kevin Maloney**

I am a member of CCF. The joint meeting worked! It jerked my heartstrings and prompted me to come to this meeting.

**Megan Turner**

We just moved into a new building which was an incredible community effort. It enabled the expansion of the preschool program. We would like to increase and continue our community partnerships. My concern with the budget cuts is how they might affect adults with developmental disabilities. It looks like we could be facing some severe cuts to that area of our programming. We're potentially going to lose some contracts but are working to maintain programs.

Expressed interest in working with others to build collaborative efforts around parenting programs, especially those with a home visiting focus. Would like to see a home visiting program association.

**Karen Roth**

Hunger in OR has increased; we are now #3 in the nation. We were # 1 in 2004. We dropped to #18, but now we're back to #3. Our biggest food drive of the year, the postal drive, is Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>. Put canned foods into your mailbox.

**Save the date: Mar. 17. Chef's Night Out.**

We are feeling a lot of community support. The Canned Food Festival almost doubled from last year. We have 100+ food drives happening right now.

**Serafina Clarke**

The Public Service Building (PSB) is holding a # of holiday drives. We are partnering with Assessment & Taxation to do a food drive. Every aspect of the work that we do @ DCF is experiencing impact from the budget cuts. At the moment we're looking at 2 ½ % cuts for the remainder of the biennium, which is a lot. The Governor's budget is asking that we take a 6.4% cut. Passed around some talking points on investing economic stimulus dollars in human services nonprofit agencies.

Heather Murphy commented that at least 2 Senators have said that they think the cuts into Human Services are too deep.

**Karen Hamilton**

There is a disconnect in the thinking on the [Governor's] focus on education and children that doesn't provide resources for the whole

family. You can't neglect the basic needs of families and expect that children are going to be ok. Would like to see that included in our presentation.

**Rose Wilde**

Would like to add that there's a \$33 million deficit in DHS budget for 07-09 biennium. There is a possibility of Legislative action prior to the session to address this.

Rose noted that in the absence of LFC representation today, she would like to mention that they have posted 2 positions for their Douglas County expansion and are hoping to hire by February.

**Save the Date: Mar. 14. Ophelia's Place Girls Rule Fair.**

This is a free event for girls aged 10-14 & a caring adult.

**Iris Bicksler**

DST is not funded by state, so the budget is based more on general economy, but we were funded this year through casino-based foundation grants that have seen a decline in revenue and are not giving out as much. '09 is looking bleak. Other foundations with stock market investments also don't have as much to give. In total 3 foundations who were previously on board for 09 who are seeing that they cannot give again. We are having to shift focus to individual donors. Had successful fundraiser on 19<sup>th</sup>. Being creative, long term strategic goal is to be paid through OHP as 3<sup>rd</sup> party reimbursement. 2 research projects starting next year to identify how much \$ we save the state through reducing c-sections, and other outcomes. Working with Heidi Haskall at HPRN to do a 2 year study with LIPA. Hoping to keep head above water in short term until studies done. Served 30 last year, 50 this year, budgeting for 60 next year.

**Nancy Bischofs**

We had to take a 2.3% to this biennium's budget. Luckily, we don't have to cut staff during this biennium. Working on next biennium re: the 20% cut to Healthy Start. HS took a \$4 million cut 4 years ago in Commission funding. Last year \$3 million of that was restored, but to take another \$4.1 million cut will be substantial. We're currently looking at our options on how to take the cuts.

HS is starting more prenatal visits and increasing referrals through DHS.

**Terra Ralph**

Announced that she forwards job announcements from the ECPT minutes to DHS Job Specialists.

**AmeriCorps Update** (via Rose Wilde) Working on Youth Peer Support Specialist position for youth in the transition age (15-24) who are

experiencing social-emotional-cognitive-mental health issues, diagnosed or not. Developing a training with youth leadership board. Moving toward collaborating with Healthy Start program to do outreach to teens. May be able to refer through DHS lists.

## **WORK GROUP UPDATES**

### **Childcare**

Next meeting is December 10 @ 3-4:30. Location TBA.

Will be pushing for more survey response to include more childcare providers. Next meeting: Will develop a logic model to identify goals and how to measure success. Group feels productive. Group supports the work of the Infant/Toddler Network.

Renee Stacy, a N. Eugene High School student, developed an idea to start a BT3 program in the school. If we can support her to show that it can work in a high school environment we could increase community slots for childcare.

Karen Hamilton requests to receive minutes from childcare meetings for use in her presentation to BCC on Dec. 10. Serafina will send.

### **Home Visiting**

Survey if finished and data is being evaluated. Original work plan said focus was to get the data and see what the research says in terms of best practice. We want to remember that our focus is in reducing child maltreatment and neglect. We talked about all the programs in Lane County that will address this: Circle of Security work, FEAT project, Doulas, etc.. all these services that incorporate that focus.

In January group will meet to analyze the data and identify next steps, re: home visitors association. We don't have to be tied to this work plan but it was our first step. Some people want to look at best practices about utilizing volunteers and paraprofessionals. Next Meeting: TBA.

### **History**

Sharri da Silva summarized ECPT's workgroup history for the benefit of several new members present.

Some years ago we decided to split into work groups to really bring change to our communities. They are open. Please come and see what's going on and whether it's a good fit for you. You are welcome. There is no commitment to attend every time. Contact Nancy Bischofs for the Home Visiting group. Contact Serafina Clarke for the Childcare group. To be added to the ECPT listserv, contact Serafina Clarke.

Sandy Moses added that Health Babies Healthy Communities (HBHC) is also interested in home visiting. Their goal, to increase the health of babies, is related to reducing child maltreatment, but is not its sole

focus. HBHC is interested in looking at models and increasing community capacity to reach more families, but also looking at making the most of those moments of contact. I.e. Educating existing programs (like Library reading program) on infant safety and related issues in order to use each moment of contact with a family as an opportunity.

## **NEXT MEETING + AGENDA**

Wednesday January 7<sup>th</sup> from 9-11 am.  
Lane County Mental Health (LCMH) - Meeting room.

### **Agenda Ideas**

- Debrief next joint meeting.
- Do we want to think about keeping our energy the same?
- Upcoming community breakfast?
- What else for the beginning of the year?

Please email Sharri or Nancy with your ideas for January agenda items.