

Kent County
Family & Children's
Coordinating Council



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DRAFT KCFCCC Meeting Minutes

January 4, 2004, 12:00pm – 1:30pm

Kent County Health Department

700 Fuller Avenue, NE

Members/alternates present: Nanaruth Carpenter, Paul Cartwright, Laura Clifton (for William Forsyth), Candace Cowling, Sandra Davis (for Tom Czerwinski), Beverly Drake, Paul Ippel, Sharon Loughridge (for Patti Nussbaum), Marvin McKenzie (and Donna Abbott), Carol Paine-McGovern, Cathy Raevsky, Diana Sieger, Mike Weiler, Mary Alice Williams, Andrew Zylstra

Members absent (with no alternate present): Susan Broman, Lynne Ferrell, Debra Holmes-Garrison

Others present: Bethanie Archbold and Mary Swanson (staff); Judy DeBruyn, Jim Madole, Kathy Humphrey, Sue Toman

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Diana Sieger opened the meeting and asked the participants to introduce themselves. Bev Drake moved to approve the minutes from the previous Council meeting. Cathy Raevsky supported. Motion carried. There were no changes to the agenda.

II. 2004 Strong Families/Safe Children and Child Protection/Community Partners Reallocations

Ms. Sieger reported that \$54,000 has been reinstated to Kent County's SF/SC and CP/CP allocations. She stated that last year, both funding sources had been reduced by 25%. Voluntary funding shifts by FIA prevented reductions to the Perspective 21! Early Impact and Kinship programs, and lessened reductions on Healthy Start. Ms. Sieger stated that the options were to reinstate funding to the 85% level for all services, allowing FIA to shift some of their funds back to other family reunification services, or provide funding for a new proposal for foster care recruitment focusing on recruiting foster parents for older, minority children. Ms. Sieger stated that this proposal was consistent with the recommendations outlined in the Children's Hour. She stated that the Executive Committee is presenting a blended proposal, which would reinstate funding to restore Healthy Start Assessments and Adoptive Family Support Services to the 85% funding level, and allow FIA to use the remainder for the foster care proposal, rather than shift it back to cover other family reunification services. All three options are attached.

Mary Alice Williams stated that it was difficult to understand all of the shifting of funds that was being proposed. Sue Toman responded that they were confusing primarily because FIA manages many funding streams, each with different requirements and restrictions. She stated that FIA was asking to fund the foster care recruitment proposal out of SF/SC funds because it is not eligible under family reunification funds, whereas SF/SC-funded services like Perspective 21!

Early Impact and Kinship were. She stated that this was a one-time request to deal with the crisis situation at KidsFirst, as FIA and foster care agencies explore long-term solutions.

Carol Paine McGovern moved to approve the Executive Committee's request. Ms. Drake supported. Motion carried, one opposed.

III. Committee Items

A. Early Childhood

Mary Alice Williams reported that a forum on early childhood governance was scheduled in concert with the Van Andel Institute for later in the week. The committee will report back on the outcome of that meeting.

Candace Cowling reported that planning continued under the Connections for Children project to develop a community-wide plan for an early childhood system. She stated that grant funding official expired in February, but that project staff had received unofficial word that their request for a three month extension would be approved.

B. Elementary School Years

Bethanie Archbold reported that the Elementary School Years Committee had met with the Emergency Needs Task Force Food Subcommittee to discuss transferring the Family Food for Thought (FFFT) project and discussion to the ENTF. As the subcommittee is currently in the process of strategic planning, and the topics raised during the FFFT project are in line with the subcommittee's vision, they were excited about continuing the discussion. While they could not commit to continuing the project next year, they did commit to incorporating the lessons learned about the style of programming into their strategic planning process.

C. Middle & High School Years

Jim Madole reported that the committee is focusing on recruiting additional members, particularly from mentoring organizations. He stated that the committee would be focusing on looking at ways to develop a network to help mentoring organizations share information. The committee is also attempting to quantify the need for additional capacity.

D. Ongoing Family Support

Sandra Davis reported that the evaluations from the substance abuse training for Perspective 21! Early Impact, CPS, foster care, Kinship, and other caseworkers were once again very positive. She stated that the committee is now taking the next step, looking at increasing community awareness about the impact of substance abuse on families. She stated that the committee will be putting together a workgroup to identify a target message and audience.

IV. Kent County Prevention Initiative Update

A. Primary Prevention Family Support

Diana Sieger reported that Healthy Start and Bright Beginnings had submitted a plan for coordination, in fulfillment of the Council's request and the prevention contract. The Grand Rapids Community Foundation had provided the services of a professional facilitator, who met with representatives of Healthy Start, and Kent ISD to begin the negotiations process. A workgroup was developed from that initial meeting to put together a plan for coordination.

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Ms. Cowling reported that Healthy Start is itself a complex partnership between multiple agencies, and all the partners agencies – Child and Family Resource Council, the Health Department, Arbor Circle, and Catholic Social Services worked together with Kent ISD to develop the plan for coordination.

Ms. Archbold stated that the County would request the two agencies to put together outcome measures for coordination, and report on them, as well as progress on the plan, quarterly. The plan and outcome measures will be included in the agenda packet for discussion at the next meeting.

B. Perspective 21! Early Impact

Ms. Archbold reported that the County is working with FIA to develop its plan for program management, as requested by the Council and required by the contract.

C. Substance Abuse

Ms. Archbold reported that the review committee had met to review CMHSA's initial proposal, and requested that CMHSA provide additional information and redevelop the proposal to focus on family-centered services designed to break the cycle of substance abuse. The committee would be reconvened in January to review the responses, and a recommendation will be developed for the Council's action in February.

D. Evaluation

Ms. Raevsky reported that the Health Department has had its second meeting with CMHSA, and will next sit down with all of the contractors to put together a matrix of what types of data to gather. She stated that the Health Department will be working with MERC and MSU to fit the data together. She will present additional information at the April meeting.

V. Council Updates and Information

Updates were provided in the agenda packet.

VI. Other Community Updates & Information

Ms. Drake distributed a flyer regarding the Kent ISD special education millage election on February 24. Anyone interested in receiving flyers should contact Kent ISD.

Mike Weiler reported that the Grand Rapids Press article on the subject was not accurate, and that all special education funding goes to the districts and charter schools. He stated that in the last 16 years, the special education population has increased 70%, and funding has not kept pace.

VII. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:15pm. **The next Kent County Family and Children's Coordinating Council meeting will be February 3, 2004, from 12:00pm – 1:30pm at the Kent County Health Department, 700 Fuller, N.E.**