

## **Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative**

*Working Together...Serving Families...Improving Lives*

### **Collaborative Coordinator's Report**

**Prepared by Jane Patrick, Collaborative Coordinator**

**November 2, 2009**

#### **Partnership Matters**

##### **Membership Changes**

Today we welcome Bridget Leonard the newest member to the CEO Group team. Bridget was hired in September as the new director for Permanent Family Resource Center and is replacing Maryjane Westra who left her position in June. Bridget is excited to learn more about the work of the Collaborative and its many unique initiatives.

#### **Local Collaborative Time Study (LCTS) Updates**

The Statewide Collaborative and LCTS Coordinator's meeting was held in St. Cloud on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Several items were discussed concerning our Local Collaborative Time Study program. Among them was a discussion regarding the fact that the Quarter 3, 2009, claims are currently being processed, and we should receive word soon about our allocations. While we anticipate our income to remain consistent compared to the same time frame in previous years, you may also recall that recently the State reverted back to a "statewide claiming pool." With this change, some collaboratives have experienced significant increases or losses in their revenue, while the majority have remained relatively stable. In Otter Tail County, we did experience a slight decrease compared to previous years. Thankfully the decrease was not substantial, but it was disappointing nonetheless that we couldn't have experienced a slight increase instead!

It was also noted that there is a web-based electronic method of Random Moment delivery in the developmental stage at the state level. Hopefully the process will be ready for testing by mid-2010. Depending on how this new system works, it has the potential to decrease the need for local records to deliver and follow-up on random moment responses. This would likely be a welcome change for our local recorders, but would require additional training for participants in order to implement a new system.

#### **School-based Mental Health**

Individual school meetings continue to take place routinely within the five districts that host school-based mental health staff. Jane is working with Jodi Wentland from Otter Tail County Human Services to collect and compile valuable data which will continue to demonstrate the need for this programming within our schools. Jane also continues to discuss ideas and opportunities for the three remaining school partners that do not currently have school-based mental health services in place to try and identify options that will meet their needs.

#### **Truancy Prevention Work Group**

Following the discussions at the last CEO Group and Executive Committee meetings, a grant proposal was developed and submitted on behalf of the Collaborative through United Way of Otter Tail County. The purpose of this proposal is to pursue the development of a Family Engagement Planning process. Three schools including New York Mills, Perham and Parkers Prairie chose to participate in the grant development which if funded as proposed, will allow \$50,000 in funding for these schools to develop a Family Engagement process. It is anticipated that if this planning grant is awarded, there may be additional implementation funding available to complete the planning

cycle. Mary Phillipe of United Way is spearheading the project and hopes to hear by the first part of November on whether or not the proposal is funded.

In addition to the grant activities, the County Attorney's Office continues to offer support to our local school districts through the Otter Tail County Connects for Youth Program. As noted below, a fair number of the early referrals received for truancy related problems, appear to be from students and families that have had attendance issues in the past. It is hopeful that more schools will choose to participate in the program as attendance becomes an issue.

<b>Otter Tail County Connects for Youth Summary of Activity as of: October 26, 2009</b>				
<b>School</b>	<b># of students whose parent(s) received letters from Co. Attorney</b>	<b># of meetings held at the courthouse for student &amp; family</b>	<b># of parents attending meetings w/their child</b>	<b># of repeat referrals</b>
Battle Lake	0	0	0	0
Fergus Falls Elem	1	0	0	0
Fergus Falls MS	0	0	0	0
Fergus Falls HS	3	0	0	1
Fergus Falls ALC	1	1	2	0
Henning	0	0	0	0
New York Mills HS	0	0	0	0
Parkers Prairie HS	1	0	0	1
Pelican Rapids Elem.	0	0	0	0
Pelican Rapids HS	0	0	0	0
Perham/Dent Elem	0	0	0	0
Perham MS	1	0	0	0
Perham HS	3	0	0	2
Perham ALC	0	0	0	0
Underwood	0	0	0	0
Outside Districts	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
				<b>40%</b>

### **Children's Mental Health Local Advisory Council (LAC)**

The LAC met with members from the State Mental Health Advisory Committee in September to learn more about enhanced consumer involvement strategies. The state guideline suggests that the committee should be made up of approximately 60% consumers, including adolescents involved in the mental health system. As a result of the September meeting and their subsequent work to accomplish the task of recruiting more consumers to sit on the committee, the group decided to adjust their meeting date and time to later in the day in order to accommodate consumer schedules and hopefully allow them to attend meetings. As a result of their work, to date the group has identified at least three additional community members that are interested in serving on the advisory council.

The group will also be hosting their sixth Brown Bag Luncheon with the topic of bipolar disorder and a presenter from Lakeland Mental Health Center. The group would like to host this session in one of the east side schools in November, and is looking for a school that would be interested in partnering with them to host this session.

## **Service Coordination/Community Interagency Transition Committee (CTIC)**

The CTIC is hosting their fifth annual Transition Tool Box workshops this fall. This session is designed for transition age students with an IEP and their parents who are interested in learning more about how to successfully plan for life after high school. Resources and tips are shared with participants on transitioning from high school to a post-high school vocational plan, career exploration, mentorships, housing, requesting accommodations, self-advocacy and more! Three dates and locations are planned including Tuesday, October 27 from 5:30 – 7:30 PM at the Fergus Falls High School; Tuesday, November 10 from 5:30 – 7:30 PM at the Underwood School, and Tuesday, November 17 from 6-8 PM at the Breckenridge High School Auditorium. There is no cost to the participants but registration is required by contacting Jane at 218-736-3458 or by email at [patrick@prtcl.com](mailto:patrick@prtcl.com)

## **Chemical Health Work Group**

On October 12<sup>th</sup>, the work group hosted a luncheon with Jay Jaffee from the Minnesota Department of Health and heard a presentation about prescription drug abuse. The group has decided to focus their media campaign this year on the topic of prescription drug abuse by youth, because it is an area of concern which they feel is not being addressed by any other organization within the county at this time. The group intends to pursue a three tier approach by first educating professionals within the region, then developing posters and other print materials to be displayed in the community. Finally, they hope to host community and parent presentations to help create awareness about the issue. The group will be seeking out schools and other partners within the community to partner with them in hosting these sessions later in the year.

## **Safe Communities Coalition**

The Coalition began its fifth year of funding from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety on October 1. A grant award in the amount of \$20,534 was secured through by Public Health to support the efforts of the coalition in moving Otter Tail County Towards Zero Deaths on our local highways. Sadly, so far in 2009 Otter Tail County is experiencing a frightening trend with a spike in fatal crashes despite the Coalition's increase in awareness and activities. There were a total of five fatal crashes for the entire year in 2008. However, we have already experienced 12 fatal crashes this year, including five which occurred in the month of September. The Coalition looks at each fatal crash that occurs to try and determine what steps might help to curtail this deadly trend.

On a more positive note, however, child passenger safety seat training was conducted through the work of the Coalition on September 30. The Coalition worked with Early Childhood Family Education and Lutheran Social Services, both programs within the Pelican Rapids Community, to promote this session within low income, immigrant and refugee populations. 19 adults attended this training and received free child passenger seats which were obtained as the result of a second grant secured by Public Health. The Coalition was also able to generate donations to secure a certified safety seat instructor and a Somali interpreter for this session. As a result of this training, 42 infant and booster car seats were distributed to families, as well as to special education and Head Start programs that were in need of safety seats.

## **Opportunities for Collaboration**

- Someplace Safe if offering free community presentations on violence prevention and awareness. For more information contact Diane Kittelson at 218-739-3359.
- The Children's Mental Health Local Advisory Council is interested in hosting Brown Bag Lunch sessions throughout the year to raise awareness for children's mental health. If your agency is interesting in working with the LAC to host a session, please contact Jane Patrick at 218-736-3458 or by email at [patrick@prtel.com](mailto:patrick@prtel.com)
- The LAC is also interested in securing additional consumer representatives to sit on the advisory council. Persons interested in becoming involved in the LAC should contact Jane.
- The Chemical Health Work Group is developing and planning community presentations and other awareness activities surrounding the topic of prescription drug abuse. If your organization is interested in working on this initiative and/or hosting a community presentation about this topic, please contact Jane Patrick at 218-736-3458 or by email at [patrick@prtel.com](mailto:patrick@prtel.com)
- Full Service Schools - contact Deb Wanek at 218-863-5910
- Children's Services funding is available for children with medical necessities. For more information contact Public Health or Shannon Erickson at 218-998-0935
- State Health Improvement Plan - contact Diane Thorson at 218-998-8320
- H1N1 Updates - contact Diane Thorson at 218-998-8320
- See other opportunities on the web at: <http://otfsc.org/>