

Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative

Working Together...

Serving Families

...Improving Lives

Collaborative Coordinator's Report

Prepared by Jane Patrick, Collaborative Coordinator

January 30, 2012

Partnership Matters

New Partners

Since the time of our last regular meeting in October, **Maureen Kenney** has left her position as director for Northern Connections and has been replaced by Interim Director **Paul Sweere**. In addition, **Jeanne Jacobs** has resigned as director of Someplace Safe and **Sheila Korby** has also been hired to serve as interim director. Please give a warm welcome to both Paul and Sheila at our Collaborative table.

Professional Association of Treatment Homes (PATH) Minnesota has changed their name and is now known as **Kindred Family Services**. While their name has changed, their core belief continues to align perfectly with the Collaborative and that is that "*Children are best served in families.*" Kindred Family Services continues to provide support that allows children to stay with their families or transition to a new permanent family. They also continue to maintain an office in Fergus Falls but at this time do not have a local supervisor who can be assigned to attend Collaborative meetings.

2012 Annual Meeting

The 2012 Annual Collaborative meeting has been set for **Wednesday, May 2, 2012 from 6 – 8 p.m. at the New York Mills School**. The Executive Committee decided to move the meeting up by one month this year to try and avoid mass conflicts with busy summer schedules and vacations. I sincerely hope that each of you will put this informative and fun event on your calendar and plan on attending. In addition, please check with your board's Governance Representative to make sure they are available to attend as well. If you aren't sure who your Governance Board Representative is, please go to the partner page on the Collaborative website (www.otfsc.org) and check it out.

Website Updates

Many new updates and resources have been added to the Collaborative website in the past couple of months. If you are looking for resources, contact information, etc., please feel free to check it out any time at www.otfsc.org. Also, if you have suggestions or additions for the site, contact one of the Planning and Evaluation members or myself and let us know.

Coordination Evaluation

The Planning and Evaluation Work Group is currently conducting the biennial Collaborative coordination contract evaluation. A Survey Monkey link was sent out to 185 Collaborative partners and staff. If you have not yet done so, please take a few minutes to provide them with your important feedback. The Planning and Evaluation Work Group will be compiling and reviewing the results at their February meeting and providing a summary and recommendations to the CEO Group at their meeting in March.

FY13 Planning Schedule

February meetings for the seven collaborative work groups will focus largely on developing workplans and budgets for the next fiscal year (July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013). Likewise, the March and April CEO and Executive Council meetings will focus largely on reviewing and approving these workplans as well as work group and administrative budgets. Because important activity and funding decisions will be made at these meetings, partners are strongly encouraged to attend scheduled work group and CEO meetings if at all possible.

New Collaborative Coordinator Contact Phone Number

I have relocated my office to Fergus Falls and therefore have discontinued the primary home/office telephone number I used in the past. I have opted to combine my mobile and office contact number and anyone wishing to reach me by phone can do so at **(218) 731-4163**. I have updated the website and newly printed materials which displayed the former number (218-736-3458) and the voice message on the former line also communicates this new number to anyone calling. My email and mailing addresses for collaborative business have not changed.

Local Collaborative Time Study (LCTS) Updates

As noted below, our Quarter 3 LCTS revenue was significantly lower than projected. While the 3rd Quarter (summer) is usually lower, this year's payment was 70% lower than the same quarter last year and obviously this was very alarming. Leon Anderson our fiscal manager communicated with the state about our concern, and this was the response he received from Danna Reese at DHS:

"As stated at the recent Regional-State Collaborative meeting, effective April 1, 2011, the Title IV-E feds required Minnesota to clarify the activity for LCTS activity code B (Service Coordination). LCTS participants are now required to specify whether they are doing the service coordination on behalf of a child who currently is in foster care versus a child who is identified as a foster care candidate. This was accomplished by separating activity code B into two parts--B-1 (Service Coordination – Child is in Foster Care Placement) and B-2 (Service Coordination – Child is a Foster Care Candidate). Since implementing the change, the IV-E reimbursement has declined. We are not yet certain if this trend will continue since the change was made close to the end of the school year. The change could be due to either the summer months impacting the earnings, or there was previous misunderstanding among LCTS participants of when to choose activity code B and it was corrected through the use of the new activity codes. The decrease in IV-E reimbursement offsets the recent increases the state experienced due to the implementation of web-based sampling. Counties have the choice of whether or not to identify foster care candidates for the collaborative versus simply reporting the children who currently are in foster care. Counties who identify foster care candidates have a greater chance of increasing IV-E reimbursement.

All of these components, combined with lower cost pool amounts, will impact your county's earnings for the collaborative. Quarters 4 and 1 will provide more information in analyzing any trend patterns as they are more stable than Quarter 3. Thanks!"

Otter Tail County revenue for July 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011

Quarter 3 2010 MA \$23,797 IV-E \$18,386

Quarter 4 2010 MA \$39,909 IV-E \$36,491

Quarter 1 2011 MA \$27,322 IV-E \$44,706

Quarter 2 2011 MA \$36,481 IV-E \$36,183

Quarter 3 2011 MA \$15,246 IV-E \$5,316

Opportunities for Collaboration

- **Backpack program updates** – The Truancy Work Group has done an outstanding job of coordinating and expanding this unique program. In addition to expanding to high school age students, they have also started work to expand to children enrolled in early childhood programs. Below are current numbers being served across the county:

District	preschool	elem	middle/hs	total
Ashby	0	15	0	15
Battle Lake		6	1	7
Fergus Falls	5	15	21	41
Henning		4	1	5
New York Mills		34	0	34

Parkers Prairie		34	4	38
Pelican Rapids	6	26	4	36
Perham	23	46	28	97
Underwood	0	20	0	20
Totals:	34	200	59	293

- **Youth Health Day** is coming up on March 6th in Fergus Falls. Several of our collaborative work groups are coordinating efforts to host this event including the Service Coordination/CTIC, the Chemical Health Work Group and the Safe Communities Coalition. Due to their overwhelming popularity last year, the Backstrom Family will be a keynote speaker again this year delivering a powerful message on distracted and drinking and driving. A new community component is being added this year which is outlined in the Chemical Health update below. I hope that all schools in our county will send their 9th grade student body to this important and impactful event.
- **Traffic safety partnerships and initiatives available to all!** See details below under "Safe Communities Coalition."

Children's Mental Health Local Advisory Council (LAC)

The LAC has been very busy working on education, awareness and last but not least bullying. They have coordinated and held two "After School Snack" sessions pertaining to suicide within the last month, with several more on this same topic scheduled in the coming months. On February 1, they will host another session in Fergus Falls on "Adoption-Identity" disorders. Here is a quote from Jeff Drake at Battle Lake after hosting the suicide event in mid-January:

"I wanted to thank the Collaborative for sponsoring Maria's presentation on mental illness and suicide. We had a very strong showing from our faculty and staff and a few community members were able to attend as well. The evaluations turned in indicate that attendees felt it was a very valuable experience. I appreciate Maria's willingness to share her own personal tragedy and her dedication to providing schools with the resources and knowledge to hopefully prevent suicide in the future."

In addition to educational opportunities, the LAC has been working hard on their assigned task of developing a county-wide bullying plan. A focus group session was held on January 17th with 25 individuals from 18 different programs/agencies attending. Feedback has been very positive on the collective discussions and planning, and I am confident that an attainable plan will be forthcoming. I am, however, requesting additional input from the CEO Group today on the community component of the plan. **Specifically, how do community partners OUTSIDE of the school, see themselves contributing to a county-wide bullying plan?**

Service Coordination/CTIC

One "Transition Tool Box" event was held in November at the Underwood School with 15 students and parents attending. A second one is being planned for Fergus Falls on February 13th at the Kennedy Secondary School. These sessions are FREE and open to anyone that is interested in learning more about transitioning from high school to adult living for individuals with special needs. The group is hoping to host at least one more sessions this year outside of Fergus Falls. If your community or school is interested in hosting this event, please contact Jane.

Chemical Health Work Group

"Hidden In Plain Sight" is the title and theme for a community presentation being held on March 6th at the Fergus Falls Kennedy Secondary School in partnership with Youth Health Day. One of the primary goals of this work group is to prevent youth from using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. **Hidden In Plain Sight** is an opportunity for parents and community members that are interested in helping to prevent this type of activity, and to identify potential at risk scenarios which may be developing in their own homes. This unique event will take place in the Otter Community Room at Kennedy School and it will be set up to look like a typical teenager's bedroom. *Looks can and will be deceiving in this creative setting!* There will be several contraband items hidden inside the room. Participants will be able to

explore the room and see if they will be able to find ways that youth could hide illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Members of the Chemical Health Work Group as well as law enforcement and other community agencies will be participating in this event. Watch for promotional materials to be out shortly!

Truancy Work Group

Otter Tail County Connects for Youth Summary of Activity as of: January 26, 2012					
School	# of students whose parent(s) received letters from Co. Attorney	# of meetings held at the courthouse for student & family	# of parents attending meetings w/their child	Initial contact letters	# of repeat referrals
Ashby	0	0	0	0	0
Battle Lake	0	0	0	0	0
Fergus Falls Elem	1	0	0	0	1
Kennedy Secondary	5	0	0	29	1
Fergus Falls ALC	15	4	4	2	5
Henning	5	0	0	0	0
New York Mills HS	1	0	0	0	0
Parkers Prairie HS	5	3	3	5	2
Pelican Rapids Elem.	0	0	0	0	0
Pelican Rapids HS	7	2	3	19	1
Perham Elem	1	0	0	1	1
Perham MS	3	1	1	0	1
Perham HS	7	2	3	0	3
Perham ALC	0	0	0	0	0
Underwood	8	3	1	0	5
Outside Districts	11	2	2	0	3
Totals	69	17	17	56	23
					33%

Safe Communities Coalition

Last fall, the Underwood and Battle Lake Schools both hosted “**Mock Crash**” events as part of their fall Homecoming activities. New York Mills, Fergus Falls and Pelican Rapids will also be hosting similar events this spring. These events are organized under the Safe Communities Coalition and are used to help warn students of the dangers of drinking and driving, distracted driving, and/or inexperienced teen driving scenarios in general.

The coalition will also be offering a **Seatbelt Poster Contest** in March/April to bring more awareness to the importance of always buckling up – each and every time – anyone gets into a vehicle. Sadly, of the first 10 traffic deaths in the state in 2012, eight of them were not buckled up. At least one death occurred in Otter Tail County in January, and like the state trend, this individual was not wearing a seatbelt at the time of the crash.

Finally, the coalition is also looking for an employer in the region to partner with them on **Employer/ Employment related traffic safety activities**. This could come in the form of education, awareness, policy development or change, etc. The possibilities are truly endless. Big or small, if your organization is interested in working together with the coalition on traffic safety, please contact Jane at 218-731-4163.

For questions, comments or more information about this report, please contact: Jane Patrick, Collaborative/LCTS Coordinator, 530 W. Fir, Fergus Falls, MN 56537 Voice: 218-731-4163 Email: patrick@prtel.com or on the web at: www.otfsc.org