

Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative

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Early Childhood Work Group/IEIC Meeting

9-11 AM October 1, 2009

Dead Lake Room- Government Service Center, Fergus Falls

Attendance: Beth Achter (LCSC – 3); Marion Kershner (OTC Public Health); LuAnn Harris (Child Care Resource & Referral- 4); Stacy Haugen-McAllister (Fergus Falls Area Special Education Cooperative- 5); Jan Herseth & Patty Deery (OTWCAC-115); Donna Atherton (The ARC); Angie Bush (Parent Support Specialist); Brad Vold (OTC Human Services); Karen Hanan (FF ECFE – 2); Heather Rundquist (Parent Representative); and Jane Patrick (Collaborative Coordinator).

1. Brad Vold welcomed the group, including the West Otter Tail County IEIC members. Introductions were made. Angie Bush is the new Parent support Specialist hired by the Arc to serve families. Brad shared a brief overview of the early childhood work group and their history. Stacy shared a brief overview of the IEIC goals and history. The group again discussed meeting time options and determined they would continue to meet on the first Thursday of each month at 9AM.
2. The group discussed options for chairing the meeting. Stacy agreed to serve as chair for both the Early Childhood and IEIC discussions.
3. Training updates:
 - As a result of the Denise Meyer sign language training which was hosted in December, the FFASEC has set up weekly training for staff that will support the work of this initial training. Stacy indicated that all Caring Connections Home Visitors would be welcome to attend this on-going training.
 - Fathers and Family Network Grant – Ottertail-Wadena Community Action Council (OTWCAC) applied for the grant, as did the Fergus Falls Early Childhood Initiative. The agencies agreed to work together on the initiative if either/both were selected.
 - 1-Day Envoy training regarding non-verbal communication was discussed as an option. Since it is coming up in October, the group decided it was too soon to require this as Caring Connections training.
 - The group discussed the potential to have Julie Baslington, a local audiologist, conduct training on early hearing screening processes and strategies for early detection.
4. Updates where provided:
 - Marion gave a brief overview of the Follow Along and Nurse Family Partnership programs which are offered through Public Health.
 - Jan shared that the grant application by OTWCAC to add 40 new early head start slots was not funded.
 - Brad provided an update on the Parent Support Outreach Program. There are currently six home visitors providing support to families under stress throughout Otter Tail County. There are 18 families currently enrolled.
5. Early Childhood Work Group work plan discussions:
 - Task #1 – Jan will check to see if any of the Early Head Start families were consumers of Caring Connections to see if we might be able to gather feedback and information from them about the program. The group also discussed how to use the existing Head Start Policy

Council and/or the Nurse Family Partnership families to provide feedback. Marion and Jan agreed to explore options and report back to the group.

- Task #3 - Early Head Start has a waiting list, and ECFE generally has openings. However, ECFE needs funding to provide service to children and families. It is anticipated that other families would also like early childhood and preschool-aged services, but are just above the income guidelines to qualify for Head Start. Stacy, Karen and Patty will set up a time to visit with Jerry Ness about how the school district can help provide services to children that want to be involved in programs, but don't qualify for Head Start and can't afford preschool programs.

6. IEIC business –

- IRT discussion to be added to the standing agenda
- Stacy will remain the chair for the IEIC business and will assume the responsibility for chairing the discussions on other early childhood business
- Stacy shared an overview of the IEIC budget. The IEIC and ECWG budgets will remain separate. Stacy will prepare and provide the IEIC budget handouts for each meeting, and Jane will continue to prepare and provide the ECWG budgets.
- Stacy requested that Public Health submit a bill for additional funds from the IEIC Family-Centered Services line item for FY10 based on carry over to the ARC from FY09 for the Family Support Model which wasn't used.
- The IEIC regionalization model was discussed. Stacy recently attended a meeting at West Central Initiative to learn more about this process. Stacy indicated it may require additional IEIC meetings at the regional level. The local people attending did not necessarily feel there was local benefit to be gained from the proposed model.
- Stacy gave an update on the Interagency Review Team (IRT). They met on September 28th and discussed several children and families in need of services. The group finds value in continuing to meet and identify missing links, services and referrals for children.

7. Early Childhood Work Group business:

- **MOTION:** Approval of the minutes of the August 20th meeting (by consensus)
- **MOTION:** To approve the bills/expenses of the program as submitted by Jane for September 2009 (S. McAllister/B. Vold/Carried)
- Jane shared a copy of the budget for the group through 9/21/09. There were no questions or comments raised. Jane also reported that one additional grant application was submitted on behalf of Child Care Resource and Referral to the Team Foundation for funding to support the Child Care Provider Visits.
- The group discussed updates for home visits to families in the Frazee-Vergas and Rothsay school districts. Stacy and Jane will be meeting with the superintendent from Rothsay about the potential for their preschool teacher to do Caring Connections visits. Connie Lindberg will take over visits for the Frazee-Vergas families and Laura Smith from Henning will do visits for the Wadena-Deer Creek families.
- Early childhood Kitchen Table Discussion – postponed until November meeting.

8. Partner Sharing:

- Parent Power Work Shops will be held October 19th in Fergus and October 26th in New York Mills
- Children's Services has funding available to support medically necessary items for children when no other funding is available. Contact Public Health or any of the local school nurses.
- Donna Atherton shared that The Arc has a new website up and running. Donna will share the link with the group so it can be added to partner websites.
- The Child Care Consultation Training will be hosted by West Central Initiative on Thursday, November 5th from 9AM – 2PM.

9. The meeting was adjourned by consensus. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 5 from 2:30 – 4PM in the Dead Lake Room at the Government Service Center in Fergus Falls.