

Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative

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Working Together...

Serving Families

... Improving Lives

Children's Mental Health Local Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

11:30 AM -1PM September 11, 2009

Otter Tail Lake Room, Government Services Center

Attendance: Sarah Kampa (PATH-5); Jodi Wentland and Tammy Friederich (OTC Human Services); Carrie Beithon (Community Representative); Beth Wallman Zimmerman (Children's Crisis Program Coordinator-5); Nate Larsen (Lakeland Mental Health Center-3); Cori Brown (Head Start-3); Debra Anderson (Vocational Rehabilitation-5); and Jane Patrick (Collaborative Coordinator). Guests: State Representative Bud Nornes, Charlie Olson, Theresa Carufel, Jan Buntz, Fonda Knutson and Denise Colburn.

1. The meeting began with introductions. The Children's Mental Health Advisory Council welcomed special guests from the State Mental Health Advisory Committee as well as guests of the Community Transition Interagency Committee to the day's meeting. The LAC invited these special guests to the meeting today to learn more how other LACs operate, and specifically, to try and learn more about recruiting consumers and parents of children with mental health disorders to become involved with our local committee.
2. Cori Brown shared highlights with our guests about the past and present activities of the LAC. Cori explained that the Children's Mental Health LAC of Otter Tail County meets approximately eight times per year. The group continues to meet under the umbrella of the Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative and during the past year focused on their main priorities of:
 - Coordination and Systems Integration of the Children's Mental Health System
 - Education and Awareness of Mental Health
 - Assessment of the local Mental Health System

Cori also explained the Work Plan of the Committee and the fact that the group has developed the following tasks to be addressed during FY10:

- a) Education and promotion – continue the Brown Bag Lunch sessions and written articles
 - b) Recruit consumer and family representation on the Children's LAC
 - c) Participate in the mental health Biennial Plan
 - d) Identify access issues
 - e) Identify an ad hoc group to review and identify solution to mental health policy issues
3. Theresa Carufel shared information about the State Mental Health Committee and their relationship with State initiatives and other LACs throughout the state. Theresa explained that the State wants to hear what the challenges are for our local LAC and shared information about the Consumer Survivor Network. Theresa encouraged the group to contact Pam Bezotte (888.611.0069 or pam.bezotte@mhcsn.org) to share and discuss the challenges the group faces throughout the year. There were questions about the structure of the LAC and the overarching group of the Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative.
 4. State Representative Bud Nornes shared his experiences with the group from his perspective as a State Representative as well as his involvement with the State Mental Health Committee. Rep. Nornes explained that he had been appointed by the Governor to sit on the committee and had learned much about mental health through this position. Representative Nornes highlighted:

- In the State of Minnesota, there were 529 suicides in 2008 which was higher than the number of traffic fatalities! Mental illness is everywhere and most people know someone with a mental illness or have a mental illness themselves.
 - A need to keep our local County Commissioners aware of and involved with the LAC. Rep. Nornes explained that personal stories and regular updates can go a long way in ensuring that proper funding and resources are allocated to mental health priorities.
 - Rep. Nornes encouraged the group to identify and share personal stories of clients and families such as examples of inmates, and mental illness related costs to help local representatives understand the costs associated with mental illness, and need for prevention and education.
5. Charlie Olson shared information with the group about his involvement with the State Mental Health Committee. Charlie is a consumer representative of children's mental health services and coincidentally also lives right here in Otter Tail County! The group discussed the fact that it would be excellent if Charlie were able to be a representative on the Otter Tail County LAC and discussed barriers that may need to be addressed in order to allow for his participation. Charlie also shared ideas for how the group might involve other consumers and their families including:
- Newspaper ads – although it may be not the most ideal method, Charlie explained that it could help to create awareness and may also generate some interest from the community.
 - Information to parents asking them to discuss the opportunity with their children who have mental illnesses.
 - Making contact with places and organizations where other students with mental illnesses may have interactions, including Twin Oaks where there may be students who are interested in participating.
 - The time of day that the group meets may be a challenge for most students and possibly some parents.
6. The group discussed communication methods and tools in order to continue to be informed about what is going on in other parts of the state. The group discussed the need to:
- Continue receiving updates and information as well as sharing the initiatives that we are working on with Bruce Weinstock and the State Mental Health Committee.
 - Learn from and replicate from other initiatives rather than always “reinventing the wheel” with new initiatives.
 - Continue to have and grow the involvement of consumer representatives to ensure that the group is meeting the needs of children and their families.
 - Explore and try to increase the involvement of local faith communities in order to gain the perspective of those working on the front lines with individuals that have mental illnesses.
7. The group discussed ways of putting what they have learned into practice. Jodi Wentland led the group on the development of the CCSA Plan and asked for feedback on what the group sees as local needs. Jodi explained that the CCSA Plan was due by September 30th and that she would submit it to the state on behalf of Otter Tail County.
8. Partner sharing included:
- October - Mental Health Awareness Month and the Adult LAC will be hosting an open house at the Government Service Center in Fergus Falls on October 5th. The Children's LAC may wish to participate and provide information on children's mental health.
 - The Children's LAC will be hosting an After School Snack on the topic of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder at the Fergus Falls High School Cafeteria on September 16th from 3:15 – 4:15
 - There is a workshop presented by BCOW on October 8th in Moorhead.
9. **The next meeting will be held from 11:30 AM - 1 PM on Friday, October 9, 2009, in the Dead Lake Room at the Government Services Center in Fergus Falls.**