



**Butler County Child & Family Development
Task Force
September 16, 2009**

VISION STATEMENT

The Butler County Child and Family Development Task Force, with community support, ensure quality, available, and affordable childcare, early childhood education, children's health services and family support for all children in Butler County.

Meeting Minutes

Attendees (20 total):

Audra Kenneson, Smart Start; Barb Roths, Butler County Extension; Brandi Smith, SCMHCC Preschool; Brooke Thomas-Fekken, Smart Start; Darla Carter, Family Life Center Safehouse; Jamie Downs, Butler County Health Department; Jamie Jellison, EduCare; Jill Morrow, Bright Beginnings; Kathlene Maness, Mid-CAP/Head Start; Kathy Van Zelfden, Smart Start; Ken Grochowsky, SRS; Leslie Sissel, Parents-As-Teachers; Luann McFadden, Bright Beginnings; Marcy Cone, Child Start; Mark Wirth, First Church of the Nazarene; Marla Canfield, ECAAP; Susan Harsh, Bright Beginnings; Suzi Thien, SCARF; Teresa Leonard, Bradford Memorial Library; Teresa Thompson, BCC Early Childhood.

Introductions & Announcements:

Audra welcomed the group and everyone introduced themselves.

- Audra – There will be an Incredible Years class very soon. We waited to schedule until we had the go-ahead to do so. We will need to start class very soon in order to get it all in before the end of the year. We ask your help to distribute information as soon as it is released and please be recommending people contact Audra if they need a parenting class. Audra can be reached at akenneson@rui.org.
- Jamie – Health Department is getting ready for Flu Shots. Supply has not yet come in. For more information contact the Butler County Health Department at 321.3400.
- Teresa T. – Walnut River Festival is on Saturday, September 26 from 10 – 3. The BCC Early Childhood folks will do activities for kids. (Suzie says that SCARF will also have an area at the festival).
- Mark – Butler Dads has adopted a class as part of the Vision 2020 program. Four of the men (Mark Wirth, Dan Jones, Tony Hays, and David Wirth) are assigned to Mrs. Oltman's class at Skelly. They go on Tuesdays from 2 – 3 and read, go to recess, do crafts, etc. Recently, the four of them went to the assembly and acted out a song. (Suzie says that SCARF has signed up to mentor a class as well – they are assigned to Grandview).
- Marcy – Child Start brochures were passed out. Marcy's granddaughter, Ella, is the cover girl.

- Jamie and Barb – They are working on a project through the Health Institute to assist a researcher by hosting a discussion group of home child care providers and the topic is Media Literacy. Barb will fill us in when she speaks in November.

Guest Presenters:

- Darla Carter – Family Life Center Safehouse: Domestic Violence is a learned process that is not bound by class. We hear more about DV in low income situations because people with more resources have the ability to hide it or get help by other means. On average, a victim leaves the abuser 7 times before she leaves for good. Darla has been with the Safehouse since June 2006. They provide safety plans for clients. Darla explained the wheel of control and discussed how DV impacts children. The Safehouse has a court advocate and also a Police Response Advocate. When someone is charged and goes to court for DV, the 1st offense is a Misdemeanor A, the 2nd offense is a Misdemeanor B, and the 3rd offense is a Felony. The numbers served by the Safehouse has climbed steadily each year. Women (and children) can stay for 30 days; that length can be extended if the client is actively working on improving her situation (obtaining GED, working, etc). They have a support group every Tuesday and on the 4th Tuesday, they have financial support group. They are funded by grants from the AG’s office, the Governor’s office, and the state. If anyone would like to donate items, they could always use the type of items we get when we go to Wal-Mart and Target: cleaning supplies, paper goods, personal hygiene items, etc. For more information, contact Darla at 321.7104 or safe.house@flc.kscoxmail.com.
- Brooke Thomas-Fekken and Kathy Van Zelfden – Smart Start of Butler County Mental Health Specialists:
 - Brooke is paid for out of the Smart Start Grant. Her job is working on short term interventions (around 6 months) with young children. Issues for which she sees children include: sleep, excessive crying, biting, toilet training, screaming, prolonged tantrums, severe separation anxiety, sharing, aggression, dangerous behavior, etc. Referrals come from families, child care providers, and other professionals. Intervention involves consultation with the family or child care provider and offering suggestions for working with the child. Often when working with a family another child may benefit from services. If child needs long term, they are referred to SCMHCC, private therapist, physicians, etc. Brooke attends Count Your Kid in screenings as well.
 - Kathy is paid for out of the Early Childhood Block Grant. Her job is to assess entire classrooms and work with children identified through the process (same types of issues with children as Brooke identified above). She meets with the teacher and gets to know the kids. If the assessment shows a child is in need, she focuses on the needs of that child and also works with the family to identify how to help with issues the child has at home. She also works with the teacher to find ways where changes can be made in the classroom to improve the protective factors for all children. Assessments are strengths-based and the process encourages parents and providers to be on the same page. They look at protective factors to increase a child’s resiliency and has a greater ability to “bounce back.” To refer children to a Smart Start Mental Health Specialist contact Audra at 320.1342 or akenneson@rui.org.

Smart Start Grant Information:

We will be writing for both grants soon. Audra shared the following update information.

2009 Smart Start Grant

Activity	Goal	Status
KQRS	31 classrooms	30
WAGES	19 participants	18
Incredible Years Classes	2	1
Infant Care Supplement	4	4
Start-Up Grants	5	2 (4)
Grants to Existing Providers	5	3 (5)
Scholarships for BCC Early Childhood Classes	25 classes	19 classes
Fatherhood Initiative	2 events	2

Other items included in this grant:

1.5 Mental Health Specialists

Smart Start Library – average books checked out per month = 60

ButlerKids.org website – Hits in January = 3504

– Hits at first of September = 6100

2009 Early Childhood Block Grant

Activity	Goal	Status
Infant Care Supplements (at risk)	3	1 (2)
Special Needs Supplements	3	3
Child Care Scholarships	20	16 (19)
Mental Health in Early Childhood	5 classrooms	5

* Items in parentheses indicate that a change is anticipated after today's Smart Start Advisory Committee meeting.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 21 from 11 am – 1 pm Bradford Memorial Library in El Dorado. Please bring your own lunch. Guest presenters will be Darla Carter, Family Life Center Safehouse, and Brooke Thomas-Fekken and Kathy Van Jodi Evans (YMCA), Suzi Thien (SCARF) and Paula Fritschen (Alliance to Recognize and End Abuse).

Note: If you or someone you know would like to be added to the mailing list for the Butler County Child & Family Development Task Force, please email Audra Kenneson at akenneson@rui.org

Minutes written by Audra Kenneson, LMSW
September 17, 2009