



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

For Wednesday, February 16, 2011

Location: Bradford Memorial Library – El Dorado, KS

Attendees (15 total):

Audra Kenneson, Smart Start; Becky Hadicke, SRS; Darla Carter, Family Life Center Safehouse; Jamie Downs, Butler County Health Department; Janett Jacobs, Tri-County CASA, Inc.; Jill Morrow, Bright Beginnings; Jodi Evans, YMCA; Kris Nicholson, Child Care Aware of Kansas; Leslie Sissel, Parents as Teachers; Luann McFadden, Bright Beginnings; Mark Wirth, Butler Dads & 1st Church of the Nazarene; Sue Barrientos; BCC Early Education; Tamara Bernard, Smart Start; Trisha Smith, South Central Mental Health Counseling Center; Valecia Vogts-Scribner, Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Introductions & Announcements:

- Kris – brought new brochure: “Do you know the questions to ask?” for people who are looking for quality child care. Also: reminder that the name change from KACCRRRA to Child Care Aware of Kansas ®. (Kris, please note Audra learned how to do the registration mark just for you!) Kris was asked if the local R&R sites will be changing their names. Each R&R can determine their name. When asked specifically about Child Start, we were reminded that Child Start has many programs under the name of Child Start and the R&R is one of them. For more information please contact Kris at kris@ks.childcareaware.org.
- Darla – They need someone who can provide child care at the Safehouse while mothers are in a group. Any recommendations? Audra recommended that Darla get in touch with Teresa Thompson at BCC to make the announcement in the Early Childhood classrooms, as the EC students have to volunteer in their community as part of the program. Darla can be reached at safe.house@flc.kscoxmail.com
- Luann – Rainbows United Kids' Point has slots open for quality child care. Luann passed out information about an offer for parents to receive 2 weeks free child care (some restrictions apply). For more information, see handouts section of minutes or contact Kids' Point at 316.260.4673.
- Jamie – On March 12, the women's fair will be at the college's Welcome Center. 9 am to 2 pm.

- Audra – Our next CPR/Pediatric First Aid class for Butler County child care providers will be in Rose Hill on April 9.

Guest Presenters:

Janett Jacobs – Tri-County CASA, Inc.: Tri County CASA, Inc. covers the 13th Judicial District (Butler, Greenwood, and Elk Counties). They are celebrating their 10th anniversary this year. They are a not-for-profit and depend on grants, donations, fundraising, and volunteerism to sustain their program. CASA started in Seattle, WA in 1977. The CASA's focus is "what is the best interest of the child." The CASA volunteer has three main functions: (1) serve as fact finder for the judge; (2) speak for the child in the court room, representing the child's best interest; and (3) continue to act as a watchdog for the child during the life of the case, ensuring that it is brought to a swift, appropriate conclusion (from pamphlet). Most of the cases are children who are in the system because of abuse/neglect. Volunteers must be at least 21 years old and submit written application. A background check (state and national) is conducted and once accepted, the volunteer completes 30 hours of training. Anyone can ask for a CASA to be appointed to a case (Guardian ad Litem, parents' attorney, social worker, family); the CASA is appointed by a Judge to the case. The CASA serves as an extension of the judge. In 2010 they served 84 cases, in 2009 they served 92. Volunteers can come from any walk of life. For more information on CASA, or if you are interested in volunteering, Janett can be reached by phone at 320.0238 or by email at tricitycasa@gmail.com.

Luann McFadden – Rainbows United, Inc. Bright Beginnings: Luann is the Family Service Coordinator at Bright Beginnings. Rainbows is the lead agency of Infant/Toddler services in Sedgwick and Butler Counties. There are 37 networks in Kansas. They are often called "Part C," "tiny-k," and "Infant Toddler Networks." They serve children birth – three who have a delay or a disability of some kind. Some have a diagnosis before receiving services, others do not. They serve, on average, 100 children per year. They serve children in the 9 school districts of Butler County. Referrals come from hospitals, physicians, families, neighbors, foster care agencies, CASA, health department, child care providers, and other agencies. Children are served in their natural environment using a coaching method. One professional is assigned to the child by a team and that professional meets weekly with the team of professionals at Bright Beginnings. An IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) is completed; it is flexible and family-based. Services are to the family, not just the child. When the child turns 3, a transition into the early childhood preschool program is completed; some children (about 25%) do not qualify for those further services. For more information about Bright Beginnings, Luann can be reached by phone at 320.1342 or by email at lmcfadden@rui.org.

Smart Start/ECBG

Applications for scholarships and supplements are coming in and being filled quickly. We had a 9% cut for ECBG and we believe we may have a Smart Start cut in our future; though we do not know for sure. The first Incredible Years class began in January. We had our first CPR/First Aid training for the year and will have our next in Rose Hill in April.

Strategic Plan Work:

Audra handed out an advocacy packet, the first page of it connects us to the advocacy website created by Connecting Point (www.connectingpt.org). Also passed around was a list of 48 active

partners that Audra has begun. Please look the list over the list and help Audra by suggestion other names that we may want to add. Audra will look it over for spelling, make sure all notations are correct and contact each agency to ensure they want included in the partnership advocacy card we will create. We will NOT wait until the card is complete to do our advocacy – we must take action now. Cuts to programs and services are being reported. Kris noted “It is important to ACT.” Write letters, send emails, make phone calls, etc. If you are making a trip to Topeka and would like support from partners (emails, etc) please contact Audra and she will forward your information. We continue to advocate with one voice for the children of Butler County.

2011 Calendar:

The calendar for 2011 has been updated to include many new speakers. If you would like to be added to the calendar, please notify Audra so you can be added. If you know of a program that would like to present to us, please notify Audra. The calendar has been added to the website.

Other

None

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on March 16 at Bradford Memorial Library (611 S. Washington; El Dorado, KS). The presenters will be Kathy Gann of Children’s Mercy Family Health Partners and Anne Maack of Child Start (to speak with us about Advocacy).

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
February 21, 2011