



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, June 15, 2011

Location: Bradford Memorial Library – El Dorado, KS

Attendees (20 total):

Amanda Dorey, SCMHC Social Stars; Audra Kenneson, Smart Start; Becky Hadicke, SRS; Emily Thome, SRS; Jackie Tanner, Child Start; Jamie Downs, Butler County Health Department; Jill Morrow, Bright Beginnings; Kandi Miller, United Way of the Plains; Kathy Gann, Children's Mercy Family Health Partners; Kathy Van Zelfden, Smart Start; Kelly Price, Community Member; Kris Nicholson, Child Care Aware of Kansas; Luann McFadden, Bright Beginnings; Marla Canfield; ECAAP Dept of Commerce; Susan Harsh, Bright Beginnings; Suzi Thien, SCARF; Tamara Bernard, Smart Start; Teresa Thompson, BCC Early Childhood; Traci Pohlenz, UniCare; Sandra Zeh, KHPA.

Introductions & Announcements:

- Kathy G. – Brought “Text for Baby” posters for anyone to take. Also handed out flyers for information about the website, podcasts, etc (see handouts). They will be hosting a FREE WEEK at the Y for members of Children's Mercy Family Health Partners. That week will be August 7 – 13; families who are members will receive post cards to invite them to the Y. Kathy had a question about Count Your Kid In, and asked how they might be in touch with them so they could help connect families to services. We recommended she contact the number on the County Your Kid In page and ask to speak with Greg Buster, Director of the Butler County Special Education Coop.
- Amanda – Spoke to a family who had positive things to say about the help they received from Luann McFadden, of Bright Beginnings, as they transitioned into the Early Childhood Program.

Guest Presenter:

Suzi Thien – Executive Director, Sunlight Children's Advocacy and Rights Foundation (SCARF); SCARF serves the 13th Judicial District (Butler, Greenwood, and Elk Counties). In their Mission (To provide resources and facilities that support and protect abused and neglected children and their families.), when they use the word “Family” they mean “Non-offending family members.” They began with the Sunlight Child Advocacy Center, where children are

interviewed by someone who has been forensically trained in “Finding Words.” In 2007 they conducted 63 interviews; in 2008, 119; in 2009, 132; in 2010, 125. Every family is referred to counseling. They also help fill out Crime Victim Compensation papers and provide transcription service for law enforcement and SRS. They have no fees for service. In 2008 a task force was formed to begin working on the Sunshine Children’s Home which will provide temporary emergency shelter for children who have been taken out of their homes. Their hope is to also provide respite care for families. Hope Community Church in Andover recently donated 3 acres of land near the turnpike exit at Andover for the children’s home. Their next step is to raise funds and then construction can begin. SCARF receives funding from it’s annual fundraiser (the Buckaroo Ball), grants, local municipalities, businesses, and donations from the private sector. For more information about SCARF, you can reach Suzi at 316.3313.4107 or suzi.thien@sunlight.kscoxmail.com.

Butler Dads

Dad & Me events are being held through the month of June throughout the county. June 4 was in Augusta (4 children; 4 dads; 1 mom) and Whitewater (1 child; 1 dad). June 11 was in El Dorado (12 children; 5 dads). Events will be held on June 18 in Andover and June 25 in Rose Hill.

Other

Tomorrow the Children’s Cabinet will meet in Topeka. Kandi will attend. The Cabinet has let us know that the Smart Start and Early Childhood Block Grant (which funds many of the early childhood initiatives in Butler County) will be kept in two different grants for 2012, though we do not yet know how that will look. The RFP will be released in the fall.

The monthly newsletter, recommended by this task force to keep families and early childhood educators informed about activities that are offered throughout the county, has been created and sent out in May and June. If anyone wishes to include information, please get it to Audra before the last day of the month prior to the newsletter going out. Also, we will accept recommendations for the name of the newsletter in July. The Smart Start Advisory Committee will name the newsletter based on the recommendations in July. The August newsletter will display the new name.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on July 20 at Bradford Memorial Library (611 S. Washington; El Dorado, KS) at 11 am. The presenters scheduled for that day are: Jennifer Hecker, KQRIS, Child Care Aware of Kansas ® and Trisha Smith/Amanda Dorey of South Central Mental Health Counseling Center & Social Stars Preschool.

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
June 16, 2011