



STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Youth Transitions Advisory Council

August 12, 2015

12:30 pm – 3:30 pm Central Time
Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee

MEETING SUMMARY

Participants:

Estavon Carter	Briana Johnson	Jack Parks
Tameka Daniel-Greer	Nyasha Justice	Steve Petty
Jane Fleishman	Richard Kennedy	Keisha Shervington
Joseph Goldsmith	Michael Leach	Natasha Smith
Ashley Harrington	Kisha Ledlow	Shawn Smith
Ginger Harris	Pam Madison	Sherry Smith
Brandon Honey	Chelsey McDaniel	Ned Solomon
Kimberly Jeffries	Teresa Moore	Wendy Spence
Joan Jenkins	Linda O'Neal	April Tanguay

Welcome/Introductions/Announcements (O'Neal)

- O'Neal welcomed the group, expressed her appreciation for those attending, and asked for introductions and announcements.
- O'Neal announced registration is now open for the System of Care 3rd Annual Conference on August 28-29, 2015 at the Embassy Suites Nashville-South/Cool Springs in Franklin, Tennessee. It is a free conference, but registration is required. She also mentioned the Cultural and Linguistic Competency Training Summit will be held September 16, 2015 in the Nashville area.

Acceptance of May and June 2015 Meeting Summaries (O'Neal)

- O'Neal asked members to review the May and June Meeting summaries and asked for revisions or edits.
- **IT WAS MOVED (HARRINGTON) AND SECONDED (PARKS) TO ACCEPT THE MAY 2015 MEETING SUMMARY. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- **IT WAS MOVED (HARRINGTON) AND SECONDED (GOLDSMITH) TO ACCEPT THE JUNE 2015 MEETING SUMMARY. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Department of Children's Services, Office of Independent Living Update (Michael Leach)

- Leach provided a summary update for the Office of Independent Living (IL).
- He specifically focused on the DCS policies and procedures 16.3 and 16.8 for foster parents and congregate care setting staff that promote reasonable and prudent parenting and will put a priority on normalcy. Leach said DCS will have to train caregivers, foster parents, staff, etc. DCS anticipates implementation of the prudent parenting standard by September 29, 2015.
- Liability protections have been added essentially making DCS foster parents state employees for purposes of the Claims Commission.
- IL conducted a survey of older youth in foster care focusing on home care (shopping, cleaning and cooking); finance; getting around (transportation); housing; jobs; post-secondary education; and opportunities that the young person had to participate in extracurricular activities, to make friends and socialize, to develop and pursue a hobby or special interest, or attend life skills classes. The survey results have been shared with DCS leadership, staff, partners, and providers, and statewide Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) efforts have taken place and are ongoing to respond to opportunities for improvement identified by the survey.
- The state youth advisory board contributed to a few of the improvements to the policies and procedures. They will meet again in September.
- Leach said he will be happy to send out the policy to everyone. O'Neal said Steve Petty will send it out.
- Leach reported IL recently started credit checks for their youth and found five who have had their identities stolen to obtain credit and thousands of dollars in goods.

Update from Resource Centers

- **Youth Connections at Monroe Harding (Pam Madison)**
 - Madison reported there were 14 new enrollees from June through July. A new life skills coach who is very energetic and enthusiastic has started working with the youth.
 - She reported several youth made enough match money this summer through Opportunity Passport to assist them in their education and purchasing transportation.
 - A small grant from Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) for housing was received, but they have had problems finding something affordable. Some of the youth do not meet the job requirement for renting an apartment since they have not worked for two years. However, two weeks ago, they were successful in finding an apartment for one young woman. They will continue to assist her with her rent and utilities through the end of this year.
 - Madison reported they are continuing with their Stepping Stones Employment Assistance Program in partnership with local businesses.
 - HiSET enrollment was down this summer, but there are openings for new enrollees. There are a couple of spots for those youth who have not been in foster care. Monroe Harding can provide bus passes to help with transportation. As an incentive, a donor will contribute \$650 to each youth who receives his or her HiSET.
 - Madison shared there are several youth who have started Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Mortuary Science College and other colleges.

- She specifically shared an update on the young man who received a scholarship from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. She said they had to transport the youth six hours to school. They took him shopping for school clothes and essentials since he is playing football. She said it was an eye-opener to the challenges these youth go through because he had never had a brand new pair of football cleats or tried on clothes at a store before then.
- Madison also highlighted the Sexual Health Education (S.H.E.) program for sexually active young ladies age 16-21.
- **Helen Ross McNabb – Project NOW! (Keisha Shervington)**
 - Shervington reported since 2011, there have been 159 enrollees, 110 participants and 68 percent retainment. She said 13 are inactive, 36 youth exited the program and there have been 109 referrals since January.
 - She said they have partnered with Mentors 4 Youth for training and life skill classes. Their motto is “Make Your Next Move a Move UP!”
 - Chick-Fil-A continues to support their initiatives by providing food contributions for enrollment classes and other events.
 - She praised Genesis Hardin who has recently participated in the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Youth Summit and represented Tennessee at the Jim Casey Youth Leadership Institute in St. Louis, Missouri.
 - She said they have 20 youth interested in their August class.
 - Shervington introduced Estavon Carter, a young man who spoke about the life skills he has received from the program.

Update from Treatment and Recovery for Youth Grant (April Tanguay and Ashley Harrington)

- Tanguay provided an update on the three-year plan. She stated year two will end August 29th. They are a few days away from meeting their goal of 100 enrollees before the end of year two.
- She reported over the summer they focused on Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (ACRA) training, System of Care (SOC) one-on-one training, Wrap around service training and Cultural Competency training.
- Tanguay reported the goal for year three is to have 120 enrollees and another ACRA training in March.
- Harrington reported that Centerstone is one person away from meeting their goal for enrollees before the end of year two.
- She said they too focused on training and helping youth find jobs and enroll in college.
- Harrington stated 16 providers are on track to be certified for ACRA so they can go back and train other staff. It costs about \$5,000 per person to be certified and takes about one year. Some people were certified within six months. Tanguay added Chestnut Health System provides ACRA certification.

Update from Resource Centers (continued)

- **Dream Seekers/South Memphis Alliance (Tameka Daniel-Greer)**
 - Daniel-Greer stated they were preparing for graduation. Five of the six eligible youth graduated by August and two will attend Community Colleges while the other three will attend a University. They currently have two college graduates.
 - She said they have 13 currently enrolled in the Opportunity Passports program. Some of the youth have already maxed out of the program and two matched funds to purchase vehicles.
 - Daniel-Greer said they have two Sisters Saving Sisters classes scheduled.
 - The center conducted surveys of youth who have been active in the program. Staff has already made contact with 80 percent of the youth involved as they have recently participated in events or used the center.
 - She said they received a \$1 million grant from the city and are looking to move into a new facility.
 - They will have a community service event August 20th and currently have 38 youth going out to the Food Bank. She said the youth decided to focus their energy on housing and food disparity.
- **I.A.M. READY Center, Chattanooga/Hamilton/Southeast (Jack Parks)**
 - Parks reported the I.A.M. Ready Center just celebrated its one-year anniversary in June.
 - It is a Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative operated by the Partnership for Families, Children and Adults to prepare youth aging out of foster care for the realities of the real world.
 - The Center serves young people between the ages of 14-26 who have spent at least one day in foster care after the age of 14, living in or around the Hamilton County area.
 - Parks shared lessons learned and advised every service provider in the room to conduct focus groups with the youth they serve.
 - He reported they have 44 participants with seven enrollees between July and August.
 - Services available include literacy, financial education, tutoring, a baby university for youth with children (infant-four years old), career development training, leadership programs like My Brother's Keeper Initiative and legal assistance to address subpoenas and social services issues.
 - Parks said they also have a Sisters Saving Sisters program and recently held a Dancing with the Stars Fundraiser netting \$20,000 in funding.
 - He said they have revised the program brochure to get the word out and are on the radio every Monday to provide updates to the public about their events.

Update from Youth Villages LifeSet Program (Joseph Goldsmith)

- Goldsmith reported they had 1455 young adults enrolled across Tennessee this year.
- He said 78 percent either graduated or were enrolled in school; 72 percent seeking employment or employed; and 92 percent were living either with family or independently.
- He said 673 youth across Tennessee are served each day.

- In June, Governor Haslam held a press conference at Youth Villages to highlight results released from clinical trial.

Overview of Wyman’s Teen Outreach Program at the Oasis Center (Jane Fleishman)

- Fleishman gave a brief overview of the services Oasis provides to youth.
- In early 2012, the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services, the University of Tennessee Center of Excellence for Children in State Custody and Oasis Center launched the Youth Development Learning Collaborative to disseminate Wyman’s Teen Outreach Program (TOP®) to Level II and III congregate care facilities in Tennessee.
- TOP® is an evidence-based youth development approach designed to help adolescents develop life skills, healthy behaviors and a sense of purpose. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recognizes it as a model “best practices list” program.
- There are 17 sites now and they will add more sites in Youth Development Centers (YDCs) this year. Wyman owns the model and their role is to train staff on the model and provide technical support.
- Youth are encouraged to talk 80 percent of the time and facilitators to talk 20 percent of the time to allow youth to advocate on their behalf. This is a youth driven program teaching them about values, decision-making, sexual health and planning for the future, etc.
- Through community service, the youth also learn the impact of self-efficacy.
- Celebration is the last part of the program allowing the youth to enjoy their achievements.
- Oasis is currently working with training DCS staff to work on models for their Juvenile Justice staff.
- Fleishman said there is Quarterly e-newsletter they send out. Anyone can sign up on the website <https://www.oasiscenter.org>.

Preparation for 2015 Annual Report due October 31, 2015

- O’Neal went through the recommendations from last year one by one and participants provided suggestions.
- Shervington from Helen Ross McNabb left some suggestions before she had to leave.
- O’Neal said Petty will send the recommendations out for review.

Other Business

- O’Neal asked Kisha Ledlow, Project Director, Tennessee Healthy Transitions Initiative to provide an update.
- Ledlow said they are still in the beginning stages and announced there will be a conference, *First Episode Psychosis: Developing New Directions in Tennessee* on September 3-4, 2015 at the Embassy Suites Nashville-South/Cool Springs in Franklin, Tennessee. It is a free event and registration is open.

Future Meeting Topics/Next Meetings

- Briana Johnson, Labor and Workforce Development reminded the group of the Career Centers as a job resource. She also offered to give a presentation at a future meeting.
- The next meeting will be November 5, 2015.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:44 p.m.