



STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Youth Transitions Advisory Council

November 21, 2013

12:30 pm – 3:30 pm Central Time

Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee

Meeting Summary

Participants:

Julia Barlor	Dustin Keller	Jackie Parker
Gayle Feltner	Sumita Keller	Steve Petty
Karin Freyer	Richard Kennedy	Clayton Ramsey
Joe Goldsmith	Kristy Leach	Ned Solomon
Ashley Harrington	Mike Leach	Erica Spencer
Ginger Harris	Mary Lee	Sukey Steckel
Joan Jenkins	Melissa McGee	Millie Sweeney
Brianna Johnson	Nneka Norman-Gordon	April Tanguay
Sue Karber	Linda O'Neal	Alysia Williams

Welcome/Introductions/Acceptance of September Meeting Summary (Linda O'Neal)

- O'Neal welcomed the group, thanked them for attending to do great work for youth in transitions, and asked for introductions.
- She also noted several additions to the agenda including the TRY grant update and an update from Youth Villages about their Transitional Living program.
- She thanked Dustin for completing the meeting summary and Steve for his work on the report to the legislature and meeting coordination. She also thanked others for their work in helping prepare and compile the recent report submitted to the legislature. O'Neal also encouraged participants to sign one of the attendance sheets in order to be counted in the meeting summary.

Acceptance of September Meeting Summary (O'Neal)

- O'Neal asked members to review the September Meeting summary and asked for revisions or edits.
- **IT WAS MOVED (LEE) AND SECONDED (S. KELLER) TO ACCEPT THE SEPTEMBER 2013 MEETING SUMMARY. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Department of Children's Services and Office of Independent and Transitional Living Update (Mike Leach)

Refer to the survey handout sent to members after the meeting.

- Leach introduced the newest member of his staff, Ginger Harris, who will work to evaluate why youth do not accept extension of foster care services and other duties.
- Staff has interviewed 49 youth across the state to get feedback about the program and others working in their life including their Guardian ad Litem. Additional statistics are included on the handout.
- Several lessons were learned from the survey about how to work with transition youth. Youth stated they prefer staff don't think of the youth as their friends and don't share their own personal information. Simply, support and encourage the youth.
- Report also includes some research-based information for caseworkers.
- On December 1, the Office of Independent Living is having their first meeting/webinar involving youth to provide input and give feedback to the system.
- This survey will continue to be used with youth to provide ongoing input to the department.
- A Youth for Youth Board meeting was held on Tuesday with 20 youth attending. The survey results were discussed at the meeting.
- Leach is developing some outreach materials to send to targeted youth. Petty will send drafts of these materials out for the groups' input.
- Based on a prior report recommendation, the department will start conducting credit checks on all DCS youth 16 and over this spring. Their credit reports will continue to be monitored. Training will also be provided to help educate youth, and staff will work to clear their report if needed. DCS has agreements in place with all three credit agencies.
- Feltner stated she had attended a workshop and heard participants talk about the challenges with filing FAFSA and issues related to delinquent credit from when they were prior to 18.
- IL is working through a contract with Partnership for Children and Families and the City of Chattanooga to start a resource center in Chattanooga. The center is projected to start on January 29, 2014.
- Staff will start cold calling youth to make sure they are aware of extension services and how to reenroll if needed.
- Staff is also working on providing information about TennCare changes and how youth can stay enrolled.
- Leach referenced a report recommendation for essential document storage similar to DropBox. He stated Hawaii has an independent website where youth can retrieve these documents. The department will consider reviewing options to meet this need.
- Harris stated she is new to this position. She will serve as the youth engagement lead and focus on promoting youth to have a voice and talk about their needs.
- Leach discussed how she has great ideas and has been getting things accomplished.
- Tennessee had two youth selected as foster club outstanding 100 leaders in America.
- O'Neal expressed her appreciation to Leach and his staff for sharing this information and for activities completed by DCS.

Update from Resource Centers

- Center staff were unable to be present – so Leach provided updates from two of the centers.
- Helen Ross McNabb – report has been emailed to the group:
 - Staff was present at the birth of a young person's child to provide support.
 - The center's Youth for Youth (Y4Y) board has seen marked growth and youth engagement. The group has great diversity.
 - The center continues to hold debit reduction and credit building classes
 - The center also reports former youth are coming back to the program to help provide support to youth currently in the program.
- South Memphis Alliance:
 - The center provided training to youth in congregate care settings and expects to have an additional class in the spring.
 - Housing has been identified as a need for youth, so the center is working with agencies to provide some housing options.
 - Recent Y4Y board meetings have been the highest attended.
- Monroe Harding:
 - Center reported that a youth was able to purchase a house with her matching funds.
- O'Neal thanked Leach for updates from the resource centers.

Supported Employment (Sue Karber)

Refer to the handout sent to members after the meeting

- Karber is with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) and coordinates the supported employment initiative for the department.
- Employment of young people is a major need for youth in our state and there are several initiatives working to get youth employed.
- The initiative has created a collaboration of departments and agencies to create a system for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities and behavioral challenges to get gainful employment. The most recent meeting of the collaborative was yesterday, and Petty and Leach attended.
- Helen Ross McNabb, Frontier and Ridgeview are partnering with the department and have an Individual and Placement Support (IPS) program using funding diverted from the Lakeshore closure. These programs started October 1, 2013 and are at different stages of implementation. The programs use a rapid impact and integrated treatment team approach to get youth ready and available for employment.
- Handout provides an overview of IPS and the eight guiding principles. Approach is evidence-based with 19 control trials completed and demonstrating that 58 percent get meaningful employment through this model. Tennessee does not have this type of data as the program just started and Karber agreed to share results with the group when more information is available.
- To be involved with the program, a person must be 18 and older with a mental health or co-occurring disorder and need employment or training.
- Jenkins stated the best treatment plan is to have a job. She plans to do something similar in West Tennessee.

- Pathways has an employment program and Karber hopes to collaborate with their project. The current collaborative is a pilot project and will need data to expand.
- Participants have access to a benefits counselor to work through issues and see impact of employment on benefits.
- O'Neal stated it is exciting to hear about these opportunities for youth in transition and thanked Karber for presenting.

2013 Report to the General Assembly submitted October 31, 2013

- O'Neal thanked the group for their great work on the report and wanted participant feedback.
- Leach stated one of the recommendations will be a legislative proposal in the governor's package for the upcoming legislative session.
- O'Neal mentioned she has been asked by a senator about legislation and if we were looking for sponsors related to YTAC recommendations. She asked if there were other issues we need to propose for legislation.
- Parker stated we need to identify highly mobile youth to ensure they do not continue to fall short of credit required to graduate.
- Sweeney talked about a new group forming to work on youth with SED and challenges they face. Credits may be an issue this new group can also discuss.
- Answering a question from Solomon about how potential legislation might be structured, O'Neal stated the proposal was to allow foster care youth who meet the minimum state requirements but maybe not the LEA's more stringent requirements to graduate with a regular diploma.
- Feltner stated Paul Rainwater who is over diplomas may be a contact to provide additional information including school systems with more stringent requirements.
- Leach updated the group about his attempts to provide State IDs for foster youth. A system has been created to fill out all the paperwork and create a check from DCS fiscal. There are several issues continuing to surround this process. Commissioner Henry has talked with Commissioner Gibbons to work on a new process that involves journal vouchers to make this process simpler.
- Leach asked about certifications or licenses and how youth could get these more cost effectively.
- Karber stated there are programs for youth with SSDI or other services to get funding assistance for IDs, licenses, etc. Participants discussed various options for getting children state IDs.
- TennCare Select Behavioral Health Advisory Committee is creating a statewide webinar and could include this issue in the webinar.
- Leach talked about needing help getting some of these recommendations accomplished.
- Labor has worked with Tennessee Department of Correction and vital records to get a state id for inmates. This type of system could work for DCS.

Next Meeting

- O'Neal stated the next meeting for YTAC would be on May 1, 2014.

Other Business

Youth Villages Transitional Living Contract (Mary Lee):

- Lee gave an update about the grant from the Day foundation and matching dollars provided by DCS. The contract is structured to serve 800 youth, but Youth Villages (YV) plans to serve additional youth as needed. YV will do National Youth in Transitions Database surveys on this population as part of this grant. Lee stated they hope to survey 2,000 people over the next year. The process currently has a 99 percent return rate of the surveys with 88 completed so far.
- On October 30, YV had a peer-to-peer activity about job development with about 60 young people in attendance. Lee thanked all who attended. Commissioner Henry and Governor Haslam came to meet with young people and announced the grant to serve all young adults aging out of care.
- O'Neal stated she and Petty were able to attend the event and talked about the impact of watching the youth involved.

TRY Grant (Ashley Harrington):

- Harrington is the program manager for the TRY grant at Centerstone. TRY works with 18-24 year old youth with co-occurring disorders in Madison County and Maury County. Centerstone and Pathways are the agencies involved.
- April Tanguay has been hired as statewide coordinator for TRY grant.
- O'Neal stated the existence of this group (YTAC) was beneficial to the state receiving this grant. We are pleased to be part of the governance structure for the grant.
- Harrington discussed how the local agencies will develop councils or groups in their areas as well.
- O'Neal encouraged staff to bring youth to these meetings as they provide insight and meaningful feedback to the group.

Supportive Employment (additional information – Julia Barlor)

- Barlor stated she is excited about their partnership with vocational rehabilitation (VR). She said the program is designed to work on the goals of the client, not the goals professionals think they need.
- This program will help fast track youth through VR and into employment opportunities. She stated there is a need to move quickly in getting youth involved or they will lose engagement.
- Karber praised VR for their willingness to make necessary changes and adjustments to make this program work statewide. She also acknowledged Park Center for working with everyone for job placement without regard to payer source.
- VR used LEAN to streamline their application and intake process. The prior process took six months to move from beginning to employment. Staff made a goal to trim the process down to 90 days. During August through October, 500 cases were opened. Staff accomplished the 90-day goal in 86 percent of the cases. This is an improvement over 24 percent previously.
- Petty attended the collaborative meeting yesterday and discussed how VR will stop paying for services and start paying for outcomes.

Announcements

- Solomon discussed a youth leadership forum offering one-day trainings. He is willing to share the curriculum with this group and to work on training youth in transition and determine if other populations would benefit. This curriculum was initially designed for the DIDD population.
- O'Neal discussed TCCY's Children's Advocacy Days to be held on March 11 and 12, 2014 at War Memorial Auditorium.
- Williams announced the TAMHO conference on December 3 and 4, 2013. The main topic is about the integration of primary and behavioral health and co-occurring disorders. Petty will forward information to the group.
- Jenkins invited participants to become involved with the TennCare Select Behavioral Health Advisory Council. Their next meeting is scheduled for December 5, 2013 at the AIM Center in Chattanooga and will include a presentation by Tawny Spinelli about the Children's Cabinet and kidcentraltn.
- O'Neal stated Genesis Hardin who has been involved with YTAC and KTOWN has been appointed as a youth member of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.
- Norman-Gordon mentioned a Comptroller's Conference on December 12, 2013 at One Century Place. Petty will send out additional information.

Next meeting agenda

- Participants recommended updates from the TRY grant, Youth Villages, DCS and Resource Centers and an overview of legislation and the session. Additional possible topics include a panel about housing, information on Specialized Foster Care Review Boards, and the Children's Cabinet and kidcentraltn.
- Petty stated the TCCY website has a YTAC page that will have meeting summaries, handouts, and other YTAC relevant material. (www.tn.gov/tccy/ytac.shtml)
- O'Neal encouraged members to sign up for the legislative report on TCCY's website (www.tn.gov/tccy)
- O'Neal shared her appreciation for everyone attending and working to improve services and supports for youth in transition.

Adjourned at 3:34 p.m.