



STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Youth Transitions Advisory Council
May 2, 2019
12:30 pm – 3:30 p.m. Central Time
Youth Villages
3310 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville, TN 37211

MEETING SUMMARY

Participants:

Dave Aguzzi
Jon Berestecky
Jane Fleishman
Carla Garrett
Darci Halfman
Taurean Haynes
Paul Highfill
Kim Peer Holst
Crystal Hutchins
Richard Kennedy
Catherine Kercher

Gina Lynette
Christy Martin
Courtney Matthews
Jody Patterson
Steve Petty
Danielle Rochelle
John Rust
Christina Scott
Toni Shaw
Natasha Smith
Shelley Smith

Garrett Spurlin
Ned Andrew Solomon
Jacqueline Talley
Jerresha Tinker
Heather Tribble
Eric Valinor
Joseph Valinor
Jules Wilson

Welcome, Introductions, Announcements and Acceptance of October 4th Meeting Summaries – Richard Kennedy, Executive Director, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY)

Kennedy welcomed the group at 12:34 p.m. He expressed his appreciation for those attending and asked for introductions and announcements.

Spurgin asked people to visit the System of Care Across Tennessee website (<https://socacrosstn.org/>) and subscribe for ongoing information. This month is Mental Health Month.

IT WAS MOVED (SOLOMON) AND SECONDED (GARRETT) TO ACCEPT THE OCTOBER 4, 2018 MEETING SUMMARY. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Department of Children's Services, Office of Independent Living Update – Courtney Matthews, Director, Dave Aguzzi, Assistant Director and Jerresha Tinker, Youth Engagement Coordinator, Office of Independent Living, Department of Children Services

Matthews shared DCS has undergone many personnel changes. In addition to the new administration with a new Commissioner, Mike Leach left to become a Commissioner of Mental Health in South Carolina. Matthews provided a brief overview of the Office of Independent Living and an update of activities within the agency since the October meeting.

She reported the Independent Living Coordinators and Specialist prepare youth in foster care and young adults who age out of foster care for a successful transition to adulthood to become confident and productive individuals in society. The youth population they service are 14 to 16 custodial youth (Independent Living Plan), 17+ custodial youth (Transition Plan), and 18 to 21 aged-out youth (Extension of Foster Care (EFC)).

Effective February 17, 2019 the EFC case management transitioned from DCS to Youth Villages (YV) evidence-based LifeSet program . Youth Villages were already serving a large portion of EFC young adults through LifeSet under the amended contract using private funding. Making them eligible for the grant helps ensure they are not subjected to waiting lists for services, and Youth Villages can use their private funds to serve other populations. The worker assignments are now assigned based on the youth's placement rather than county of commitment. Worker caseloads are now teen and young adult specific. EFC young adults identified mostly with their YV LifeSet worker and Independent Living (IL) Specialist.

Matthew reported in addition to the transition of EFC to Youth Villages, the eligibility criteria for LifeSet was expanded. With the YV LifeSet expansion, the criteria now allows the age of 16-22, young adults who were in a congregate care placement at age 18, young adults who have been adopted, young adults who are currently or previously placed in a YDC, and young adults who were in state custody and/or had CPS involvement at any point in their lives.

The reason why expansion is possible is because more federal funding was added , which covers the entire EFCS population's case management; approximately half of the EFCS population was previously receiving EFCS with DCS case management and LifeSet at the same time. The contract was re-structured as fee for service, paid as a per diem per youth served. This allows the services to be invoiced by funding source, per youth. The structure of the prior contract did not allow for the population to be differentiated this way, so the eligibility criteria were restricted to those eligible for general Chafee federal funding only.

Prior to the rollout, there were meetings held with Youth Villages, DCS Legal Team, supervisors in each region to make sure everyone was on the same page. There will be follow up meetings now that Youth Villages are a few months into the process.

Aguzzi provided EFCS Episodes data from January 1st to March 31st. He reported on 2019A NYTD data from what was recently submitted. He reported the total Extension of Foster Care Services (EFCS) Episodes was 675 this year, compared to 706 last year. He also said the total young adults served this year was 665 compared to 691 last year and the total active youth in EFCS is was 361 compared to 345 last year.

Aguzzi shared the data last year showed an increase in the Mid-Cumberland region. Now the number has appeared to have decreased, so he will want to research which counties and the reason why. After the fiscal year ends on June 30th, he should have more access to data to pinpoint the reasons for the changes.

Aguzzi reported on the 2019A NYTD File Submission reflecting a period from October 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019. He reported that 899 young people reported with 746 of them served. Out of those numbers, 192 young people were in the NYTD survey cohort and 100 in the sample. He explained young people are surveyed at age 17 and then again at age 19 through 21 using a sample population.

This time 69 young people participated in the survey and 39 young people in the survey sample were also in the served population. The data shows 17 young people in the sample population were receiving Extension of Foster Care Services, and participated in the survey.

2019A NYTD SERVICES		2019A NYTD File Submission	
SERVICE	# SERVED	NYTD Participation Category	# In Population
ACADEMIC SUPPORT	133	Not in Sample	92
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT	9	Participated	69
CAREER PREPARATION	9	Unable to Locate	26
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS OR VOCATIONAL TRAINING	0	Incarcerated	3
BUDGET AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	35	Declined	1
HOUSING EDUCATION AND HOME MANAGEMENT TRAINING	1	Deceased	1
HEALTH EDUCATION AND RISK PREVENTION	0		
FAMILY SUPPORT AND HEALTHY MARRIAGE EDUCATION	0		
MENTORING	0		
SUPERVISED INDEPENDENT LIVING	362		
ROOM AND BOARD FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	317		
EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	370		
OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	180		

2019A Survey Results: Education				2019A NYTD Survey Results						
NYTD Response Category	# Completed	% Completed		SURVEY CATEGORY	YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE	DON'T KNOW	DECLINED	% YES
HIGH SCHOOL OR HiSET	34	49%		CURRENT FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT	16	53				23%
ASSOCIATE	1	1%		CURRENT PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT	12	57				17%
VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATE	2	3%		EMPLOYMENT RELATED SKILLS	12	57				17%
NONE OF THE ABOVE	32	46%		SOCIAL SECURITY	4	65				5%
				EDUCATIONAL AID	16	53				23%
				PUBLIC FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	1	51		17		1%
				PUBLIC FOOD ASSISTANCE	11	41		17		15%
				PUBLIC HOUSING ASSISTANCE	2	50		17		2%
				OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT	6	63				8%
				CURRENT ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE	35	34				50%
				CONNECTION TO ADULT	65	4				94%
				HOMELESSNESS	10	59				14%

Aguzzi said because this is a sample of an already small population, it is probably not representative.

Tinker reported on the Leadership Academy Camps. There is a Leadership Academy Day Camp on May 24th at the “Gratitude Ranch” in Franklin. There is also a “Glam Camp” scheduled for July 30th through 31st at Harmony Family Center at Montvale in Maryville.

Tinker shared pictures from the Statewide Youth Leadership Boards (Y4Y) in Memphis, Knoxville, Nashville and Chattanooga. She also talked briefly about the Young Adult Advisory Accountability Council (YA³C). YA³C implements youth voices and discuss the Child and Family Service Plan (CFSP), participate on panels, focus groups, foster parent conferences, and staff meetings. The annual Jim Casey Convention will convene June 3rd to 6th and there will be representatives from the YA³C who will attend.

Update from Resource Centers

Project NOW! – Christy Martin

Martin highlighted accomplishments since July 1st. She reported there have been 15 new youth in Opportunity Passport with two matches each for education and housing rental and four vehicles. New classes will begin May 21st and 23rd. Martin mentioned they have held 61 workshops and events.

Martin discussed the Youth for Youth program has been reinstated. This is a youth led organization for youth close to or aging out of foster care. There are two outstanding young women will be leading the group and planning volunteer events and celebrations in conjunction with the Project NOW! Coordinator. The next event is scheduled for May 30th.

She reported the Helen Ross McNabb trainers will facilitate a new CPR/First Aid certification class in conjunction with the American Heart Association on June 4th. Other programs are the Manhood 2.0 and Sisters Saving Sisters (SSS) Programs. There has been a great response to the SSS program and the new Manhood 2.0 classes. New modules on the topics of Healthy/Unhealthy relationships, consent, anatomy, and birth control have been added to make the curriculum more well-rounded. The next SSS meeting is June 6th. There will also be a Pink Diamond self-defense class on June 13th.

Martin reported on A Step Ahead, a liaison project with homeless youth. She said the program has provided much needed training in sexual health to the youth and opportunities for youth to attend events both day and night.

On May 15th the Knoxville Police Department (KPD) will host a “Safe Driving for Youth.” highlighted several activities they have like self-defense, weekly cooking classes, character education, human trafficking awareness, Sisters Savings Sisters, Safe Driving for Youth and Opportunity Passport. KPD is also providing its quarterly course on June 4th.

Martin talked about cooking classes through the UT Extension. Participants learn to cook full healthy meals and purchase low cost nutritional food for families living on a budget.

Martin highlighted some of the accomplishments the youth at Project NOW!

Project NOW! is located at 3006 Lake Brook Blvd., Building 2, Knoxville, TN 37809. Martin’s contact information is 865-544-5000 ext. 2667 or (cell) 865-256-5613, christy.martin@mcnabb.org.

Dream Seekers/South Memphis Alliance (SMA) – Taurean Haynes, Outreach/Prevention Specialist

Haynes announced upcoming events. They are having an Art is Love Paint Party on May 4th and Youth Movie Night on May 11th. Since May is National Foster Care Awareness Month, they are hosting an annual SMA Care Awareness and Recruitment Fair (SCARF) on May 18th in the parking lot and inside of the SMA building. Last year, 200 people attended. There will be a karaoke and game night on May 24th and a neighborhood clean-up day on May 29th. The Girls Talk Summit will take place on May 31st and is a free event for foster care youth. They will cover topics such as bullying, building self-confidence, self-esteem, peer pressure, sex, hygiene, birth control, healthy mind and more.

Haynes talked about the job readiness, Sisters Saving Sisters and Brother 2 Brother programs and reported there are currently 100 active youth in the Dream Seekers Program. By the end of June 2019, there will be 40 additional youth enrolled. Out of the 100 youth, 31 are parenting a total of 50 children. South Memphis Alliance has partnered with the Department of Children's Services to head efforts around improving the lives of young people transitioning out of the foster care system.

Partnership – Catherine Kercher

Kercher reported on the River City Youth Collective (RCYC) programs, available to youth and young adults ages 14-24 who are aging out of foster care, have a history of being in or at risk of being placed in state custody, or who have experienced childhood physical/sexual abuse or neglect. She said RCYC is a collaboration and safe space where youth and young adults can find acceptance, support and opportunities to learn and grow from and with one another.

Kercher highlighted a few events they are having in May. They have 30 active youth who attend their programs regularly. She also reported they had 88.8 percent participation in their Opportunity Passport surveys. Kercher said they are in the process of hiring a male case worker to help facilitate the Manhood 2.0 program.

Kercher announced the office is moving and there will be an open house on May 16th for the new building. Matthew said that DCS is in the process of planning a visit to tour the facility. Kercher said the new location is closer to downtown and on the bus line removing barriers for their youth and young adults who do not have transportation.

Youth Villages LifeSet Program Update – Heather Tribble and Christina Scott, Youth Villages LifeSet

Tribble talked more about the transition of Extension of Foster Care case management from DCS. She said one of the benefits has been a 24-hour hotline available to the EFC youth. Tribble reported there is staff specifically assigned to conduct the surveys and track the youth down to complete.

Scott is one of the staffers responsible for tracking down the youth to complete the surveys. She said the information for the youth can change a lot between 17 and 19. She gathers any information from the files and

shared finding relatives such as grandmothers have proven to be very helpful. Scott also checks to see if the youth or young adult has been incarcerated. She also uses Lexis/Nexis, Facebook and other social media platforms. Scott explained there is a vague letter they can also send out. One of the challenges has been the recipients may think the letter is fraud, so in those cases, she refers them to DCS to verify the authenticity of the survey.

Aguzzi said these surveys are very important because the federal government may withhold money if there are not enough youth and young adults completing them.

Tribble shared some data. She said 354 participants are paid through the state, 153 participate in EFC and LifeSet, and 174 participate in EFC only. She also discussed the importance of privacy and confidentiality awareness with youth in schools who may recognize one another from the LifeSet programs. Tribble also highlighted various events like cooking classes, “Stop the Bleed” First Aid class, car maintenance; health department came and did an HIV/AIDS seminar, trade seminar where youth heard about nontraditional employment opportunities outside of attending college.

Tribble reported Youth Villages offers intensive in-home services using Multisystemic Therapy for Emerging Adults (MSTEA). This is a pilot program in Johnson City. MSTEA helps young people age 12 to 17 who display serious antisocial behaviors and are at-risk of placement out of the home due to their behaviors.

Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Update – Jules Wilson, Youth and Young Adult Coordinator, Office of Children, Young Adults and Families, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Wilson provided an update on behalf of Jessica Mullins. She reported on the First Episode Psychosis Initiative (OnTrackTN). Wilson said this program is for youth/young adults ages 15-30 who have experienced a first episode of psychosis within the past two years. They continue to be in seven most northwest counties of Tennessee (Carey Counseling), Davidson (MHC), and Shelby (Alliance) counties.

This fiscal year, the programs expanded into two new counties – Knox and Hamilton (Helen Ross McNabb). They also added a Statewide Youth/Young Adult Best Practices Trainer & Consultant through Vanderbilt Center of Excellence, who is providing support, training, and fidelity checks to the FEPI sites.

Wilson also discussed the Clinical High Risk for Psychosis (CHR-P). In October, TDHMHSAS was awarded a new, 4-year grant through Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) that is focused on youth/young adults ages 12-25 who are at clinical high risk for developing psychosis. This is like a pre-cursor to First Episode Psychosis – when the youth is experiencing prodromal symptoms. Currently, there is one site in Shelby County (CMI Healthcare Services). The goal is to prevent or delay the onset of psychosis. CMI will work closely with Alliance so that if a youth does experience a first episode of psychosis while in services with CHR-P, they will be quickly linked to the OnTrackTN team to delay the duration of untreated psychosis. The services include young adult peer support, family

peer support, supported employment and education, care management, medication management, and therapy.

Wilson said the current Healthy Transitions funding ends September 30th. TDMHSAS was awarded a new, 5-year round of Healthy Transitions funding that began on March 31st. This round of funding is for youth/young adults ages 16-25 who have a Serious Emotional Disturbance/Serious Mental Illness or a co-occurring Intellectual and Developmental Disability. Through this funding, TDMHSAS will be able to sustain their statewide Young Adult Leadership Council.

They will add two new Healthy Transition sites in Nashville – Davidson County (Mental Health Cooperative) and in Greene County (Frontier) that will offer the following services: young adult peer support, supported employment and education, care management, outreach, medication management, and therapy. Through TN Voices for Children, TDMHSAS also added a Young Adult Peer Stabilizer who will work within the crisis system in Davidson County to provide short term peer support to youth/young adults who have contact with the crisis system. Additionally, they will continue the work of our Certified Young Adult Peer Support Specialist (CYAPSS) program, obtaining final approval of the curriculum/training, and hopefully conducting the first training cohort within this calendar year.

Wilson announced there will be a Youth Summit for ages 14-24 on July 26th to 27th in Cool Springs in conjunction with other agencies. Regional academies are also coming in the Fall.

Tennessee Housing and Development Agency (THDA) – Toni Shaw

Shaw provided an update regarding the housing for youth grant. Approximately \$5 million is allocated every year, upon approval by THDA's Board of Directors. These funds come from the Tennessee Housing Trust Fund, which is financed by profits from THDA's mortgage loan program. Funds are awarded based upon a rigorous competitive application and scoring process, with two grant rounds awarded every year: one in the September and one in the spring. The maximum grant award is \$500,000 per grantee, per grant round. There is no minimum. There is a 50 percent match required, but it can be in the form of cash or services.

The purpose of the grant is to develop and/or preserve rental housing for low- and very-low income households, the elderly, and those with special needs like the disabled, ex-offenders, victims of domestic abuse, and youth aging out of foster care.

Shaw also talked about a required HUD analysis to the impediment of fair housing THDA does annually. She said there are barriers youth face when trying to obtain housing, especially for those aging out of the foster care system. Race and disability are common barriers as well. Shaw said the research and planning division is looking for input across the state to discuss youth aging out of foster care and will attend a future meeting to request assistance from the child serving agencies.

Department of Labor and Workforce Development – Carla Garrett, Youth Grants Program Manager, Workforce Services Division, Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Garrett reported the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) affirming the Department of Labor's (DOL) commitment to providing high-quality services for youth beginning with career exploration and guidance; continuing support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries and occupations, and culminating with a good job along a career pathway, enrollment in postsecondary education, or a Registered Apprenticeship.

WIOA Youth serves eligible participants who are 14-24 years of age facing specific barriers to employment or school completion. WIOA places a priority on serving out-of-school youth by providing work-based experience and improving services to youth with disabilities. WIOA promotes career pathways, increased attainment of recognized credentials and post-secondary certificates or degrees. Youth must meet eligibility requirements to participate in the WIOA Title I Youth Program.

Those eligible Youth under WIOA are In-School Youth (ISY) and Out-of-School Youth (OSY). The ISY must be 14-21 years of age, attending secondary or post-secondary school, and low-income. The OSY must be 16-24 years of age and not attending secondary or post-secondary school. The youth also must have one or more of the following: basic skills deficient; an English language learner; an offender (any touch point with the justice system); homeless; an individual in foster care or aged out of foster care; pregnant or parenting; individual with a disability; a school dropout; within age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended for at least the most recent complete school year; or requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure or hold employment.

Garrett highlighted services provided such as:

- Paid and unpaid work experience, which may include the following types of work experiences:
- Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities throughout the year
- Pre-apprenticeship programs
- Internships and job shadowing
- On-the-job training opportunities
- Tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services
- Occupational skill training, which leads to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved.
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive Services (Linkages to community services, transportation assistance, legal aid services, etc.)
- Adult mentoring
- Follow up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling (which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling)
- Financial Literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services

- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.
- Service activities are based on the 14 programs required under WIOA

WIOA is last resort funding behind Tennessee Promise, Opportunity Passport and Reconnect.

Garrett talked about the wraparound services to enable youth to participate in WIOA activities. She also said there are follow up services for 12 months after leaving the program.

To locate a local American Job Center, go to

<https://www.tn.gov/workforce/jobs-and-education/job-search1/find-local-american-job-center.html>

Preliminary Discussion of 2019 YTAC Annual Report – Richard Kennedy

Kennedy said pursuant T.C.A. §37-2-601(B)(v)(2), YTAC shall report no later than October 31 of each year to the legislators. With some of the changes in the legislature, a Children’s and Families Subcommittee has been established, Kennedy said believes there is an opportunity to update the report. Petty shared there is an opportunity to show how the recommendations in previous reports have been put into action.

Small groups discussed ways to improve the report. The group talked about conducting a TOPs evaluation. Volunteers will be needed on the workgroup.

Next Meetings

The next meeting will be June 20, 2019 in conjunction with CCMH. The location will be announced at a later time. Other proposed meeting dates are:

- *August 8, 2019 (date may change)
- October 3, 2019

Other Business/Future Meeting Topics

Meeting Adjourned at 3:39 p.m.