



"Working together to create a better future for children and their families."

Clay County Early Childhood Initiative

Friday, May 15, 2020

Meeting Minutes

Carolyn welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Quarterly Nurse-Family Partnership/Healthy Families America Report: Liz Bjur, Clay County Public Health, presented the quarterly report. Healthy Families America is utilizing telehealth and Video for meeting with clients. Referrals are going through Tele Health. Caseloads for nurses are at 85%. New nurses are in the orientation stage. There is a nurse opening for the agency. Once hiring is completed, it is anticipated that the nurse will be added to the Healthy Families America program. Nurse-Family Partnership has five full-time nurses and one half time position. The team has done a great job of keeping up with the new enrollments and seeing families through video platforms. There has been no discussion on how or when they will go back to in-person client visits. There have been a few essential visits for those babies coming up from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Those visits are typically quick weight visits. Verizon has donated four phones to Public Health to use to connect with families via the internet. The phone is operational for four months. Once that time is up, the family is welcome to keep the phone but must purchase their cell phone plan. The Nurse-Family Partnership Program has had seven graduations during this COVID-19 period.

Agency Updates:

Clay County Public Health: Liz's work is transitioning to assisting with communication during the pandemic period. She will be sending out weekly updates to county employees. The agency is coordinating a phone line for health and resource questions. They will begin doing COVID tracing on those individuals who have tested positive. Nurses are assisting clients under quarantine to obtain critical supplies such as food and medication. Public Health also works to find homes for homeless people who need to be quarantined and serve as a resource to many others in our community.

Clay County Board, as a result of the Governance lifting of the stay at home orders, will be opening up the county buildings to visitors again. The doors will remain locked, and the agency worker will need to come and get the client and escort them out of the building.

Head Start: Kristin reports that they are busy with securing PPE and writing policies for summer programming that will be made available to those students transitioning to Kindergarten or have IEPs. Regular school year programming ends later this month. Early Head Start Home visiting will continue until the end of July. Head Start ended the school year with no drops and all slots full. Next year's registration is going well. Seventy-five clients are registered for Early Head Start, and 100 students have registered for Head Start.

Churches United for the Homeless: Because of COVID-19, the agency is receiving more housing vouchers, which have helped them place one individual/family this week; two next week and three are currently looking for housing. An intern from Concordia college will be coordinating a virtual summer program. The agency is following strict CDC guidelines. To date, there has only been one case of the virus at the shelter.

Child Care Aware has canceled on in-person pieces of training through the end of June. The agency has been working on obtaining needed supplies for child care providers. Bleach and Hand-sanitizer were delivered early this spring to homes in Clay County. Check out their Facebook for children's fun activities.

West Central Initiative: Marsha is working with the emergency child care grants and working with Child Care Aware to provide essential supplies to child care providers. A form to request supplies is located on the Initiative's website under the All Hands MN link. The agency has started a Resiliency Fund. These funds can be accessed by non-profits and units of government who are experiencing financial loss of funds due to COVID 19. A grant of up to \$10,000 is available. Marsha shared information on a mask video that was developed to help children understand the masks and other PPE items. A link to the video will be shared.

Trinity Preschool: Kay reported that the school received a Peacetime Emergency Grant and a West Central Initiative emergency grant. Funds were to be used to help pay child care costs for families. The program has lost 16 children, and so for the first time in a long time, there are openings for summer slots. With less income, people are making child care arrangements other than the Center and home-based to save money. The West Central Directors group continues to meet over Zoom and has been a great support to each other.

YMCA: The Center is operating under CDC guidelines, including wearing masks by staff and parents. They received an ND state grant to help with operating expenses. The Center is currently operating at half capacity. There will be three school-age summer sites in Moorhead. Next week, the YMCA is taking over care of the school's childcare program for children of first responders and medical personnel. The mobile meals program is serving 200 meals per day

The ECI provided a small thank you gift to child care providers as part of child care appreciation week. Carolyn has a lot of supplies in her office that once we can start to meet in person, she will distribute it to our members.

Next meeting: Thursday, June 18, 2020