



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

Clay County Early Childhood Initiative

Friday, September 18 2020

Meeting Minutes

Carolyn welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The 2020 work plan was reviewed. Many of the activities planned for this year were canceled due to COVID-19. Carolyn has quite a few supplies in her office that can be distributed to families, including the parent binders. Please let Carolyn know if you are looking for specific resources around child development, dental, the parent binders, and parent education. There were no ideas on activities we could do now to support families. Keep thinking!!

Agency Updates:

Child Care Licensors: Providers are stressed right now while waiting to find out what schools are going to do this fall for in-person or online attendance options. They are struggling with helping children with their virtual learning while supervising and planning activities for all children in their care. Fingerprinting begins again on October 6th with an emphasis on new applications and those that have not cleared before. Divine House is currently where providers have been going for finger printing however, their office remains closed due to COVID-19. A few new applications for child care licensing have come in. Providers appear to be finding the supplies they need at this time. Providers have the option of completing an order form and requesting supplies from West Central Initiative.

First Children’s Finance has opened up the rural childcare intervention program. Rural towns can apply for assistance to develop a plan of action to address child care shortages in their community. Moorhead participated in this in the past but was unique to the program because it is considered more metro than rural. There will be a series of trainings offered this fall including business boot camp. There will also be a training on setting up your child care business finance separately from the household accounts and developing policies and procedures. Providers who had their finances combined found applying for the grants that were made available through the state challenging,

Churches United for the Homeless has been busy with helping families move into permanent housing. They currently are serving eight families in family rooms and three families in overflow. There are currently three newborns staying at the shelter. All families have housing vouchers, it is a matter of finding appropriate housing and furnishing apartments for the families. Students are being registered for school. All the elementary age students will be attending Robert Asp, with older children following the school hybrid model with some virtual schooling and some in-person. MSUM students from the Education 101 class are volunteering at the shelter and are providing activities for the kids. Next Friday there will be bingo in the Moorhead Center Mall parking lot. It is a support and fund raiser for the shelter. Prizes have been donated by the community.

Lake Agassiz Library system is working on their fall heritage series. Lalo's Lunch Box will be streaming live through the library's Facebook page on November 13th at 10:00 am. They hope that child care providers and centers will tune in that day to catch the show.

Safe Kids is celebrating car seat safety week with activities and information on the need for properly installed car seats. To schedule an appointment at one of their car seat clinics call 701-234-7233. Check out their Facebook for information on car seat checks and parenting classes.

The county still has CARES funding to spend. An adjustment to the application process was made so that it was easier for child care providers to apply for the funds. The next round of funding will also be available for businesses with 20 – 50 employees and they can apply for up to \$10,000 in funding. Check the county website for additional information.

The regional Early Childhood Mental Health Network is offering a series of free webinars for family-based providers. A variety of topics is being covered from making a COVID-19 plan to challenging behaviors. The webinars are made available through a Blue Cross Blue Shield grant received by West Central Initiative.

Coming Up:

Kidsfest April 10, 2021 Moorhead Center Mall

Next meeting: Friday, October 16, 2020

Clay County Early Childhood Initiative 2020 Work Plan

Goal #1: Increase awareness of the importance of quality early childhood experiences

Goal #2: Continue to build a strong early childhood coalition in Clay County.

Goal #3: Meaningful parent outreach that includes skill building in parenting, promoting reading, and support healthy social and emotional development

Goal #4: Support Child Care Providers to retain current providers and recruit new providers.