

FAMILY POLICY BOARD COMMITTEE

Monday, October 6, 2014

Health & Human Services Building – Basement Auditorium

12:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Erin Balsiger, Todd Bjerke, Vicki Burke, Janet Chaney, Chris Crye, Mike Desmond, Megan DeVore, Gloria Doyle, Sharon Hampson, Heather Hertzelt, Grace Jones, Ann Kappauf, Kim Knutson, Daria Lapp, Jason Larsen, Kathryn Mayer, Mary Meehan-Strub, Majel Olson, Joseph “Nerd” Pigott, Nancy Pohlman, Pat Ruda, Ruthann Schultz, Jodi Widuch, Jason Witt and Mary Kay Wolf

GUESTS: Mandy Bisek, Tammy Bond and Monica Kruse

CALL TO ORDER

Pat Ruda called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. and then asked for a motion to approve the September 8, 2014 meeting minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 09/08/14 MEETING

- **MOTION** by Sharon Hampson/Heather Hertzelt to approve the September 8, 2014 minutes as presented; **Motion carried unanimously.**

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND BOARD UPDATES:

- **HHS Board Update/Family Policy Board Executive Committee: Sharon Hampson**
 - Sharon Hampson reports that the Family Policy Board Executive Committee met on September 22, 2014; and the main topic we heard about was the Juvenile Justice Arrest & Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency Task Force. It was an excellent report with a lot of information we need to follow-up on.
- **HS Director Update: Jason Witt**
 - Jason Witt reports that he has two items to report on:
 - 1) The County Administrator’s 2015 Budget Request includes two Community Social Workers and related supervision to implement the La Crosse Area Family Collaborative (LAFC) neighborhood-based services model. This is a service model similar to the Dane County “Joining Forces for Families” program that several Family Policy Board Members saw during a June site visit to Madison. LAFC will be piloted in two City of La Crosse Neighborhoods (Lower Northside Deport and Powell-Poage-Hamilton) that have been identified as having disproportionate human services needs. There will be much community planning to come in the rollout of this initiative, and additional resources for the effort are being sought.
 - 2) Human Services, in collaboration with other local agencies serving youth, turned in an application for the Brighter Futures Initiative to serve 12-17 year olds at risk for Juvenile Justice Services and Child Protection Services.
- **Family and Children’s Section Update: Nancy Pohlman**
 - Nancy Pohlman reports that she helped write the Brighter Futures grant and she wrote the Post Reunification grant as we are seeing a shift in reunifying kids.

AGENCY PRESENTATION: OPTIONS CLINIC – Heather Hertzelt

- Heather Hertzelt reports that the mission of the Options Clinic is to help create healthier lives.
- Some of the services they provide are health exams, birth control, screenings, STD testing, pregnancy testing, etc.
- They receive payment on a sliding fee scale.
- They provide community education.

- They have increased their service area to Monroe County, Vernon County, Buffalo County, Trempealeau County, etc.
- They provide Testing Tuesdays which is after hours from 5:00-7:30 p.m. and they provide STD testing, etc. and they use the same sliding fee scale.
- They are involved in Partners in Prevention.
- They have updated several of their brochures, i.e., Birth Control Methods and FGS Education, etc.

JUVENILE JUSTICE ARREST & DISPROPORTIONATE MINORITY CONTACT INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE:

- Jason Witt provided a copy of the Executive Summary and reports that there is also a full report that can be accessed at: <http://lacrossecounty.org/docs/News%20and%20Info%20Links/JJA-DMC%20Full%20Report.pdf>.
- In 2008 La Crosse County hired the Carey Group to provide recommendations regarding the Juvenile Justice Unit. Their recommendation was to look at the disproportionate arrest rate among juvenile arrests.
- Monica Kruse reports that people need to be aware of the importance of this issue and if they are interested in being a part of the group that will work to implement the report's recommendations at upcoming meetings to contact Monica Kruse at mkruse@lacrossecounty.org.
- They had several agencies represented on this Task Force.
- They met 6 times as a large group and then met several times in smaller sub groups.
- Mandy Bisek reported the following:
- 7 Conclusions:
 - 1) La Crosse continues to have a higher juvenile arrest rate than both the statewide average and some like – sized counties.
 - 2) Disproportionate minority contact (DMC) factors are present in La Crosse County juvenile justice system.
 - 3) There are likely overlaps between factors contributing to La Crosse County's high juvenile arrest rate and the factors contributing to juvenile DMC issues.
 - 4) Arrest location data reveals that if La Crosse County were to develop a strategy to both reduce juvenile arrests and positively influence DMC, the greatest impact could be achieved by focusing on arrests that occur at public schools.
 - 5) While La Crosse County's juvenile justice system has many strengths, there are six reasons why coordination and practices in the system around arrest and the use of evidence based practices (EBPs) should be improved:
 - a) There may be a misguided practice of using arrest for the purpose of "helping" youth by providing a gateway to the services that exist in the juvenile justice system (a caseworker, therapeutic programming, etc.).
 - b) There is an absence of a defined and coordinated approach across the juvenile system (i.e., schools, law enforcement, juvenile supervision, courts, district attorney) as to what types of behavior in schools warrants a law enforcement referral and arrest as opposed to another type of intervention.
 - c) There is a prominent featuring of law enforcement as an intervention option in public school disciplinary policy as a response to a wide range of behaviors which leaves too much potential for inconsistent arrest practices.
 - d) Some key evidence-based programs that could serve as arrest alternatives are absent from the La Crosse County juvenile justice system.
 - e) There appears to be a misunderstanding of the current role and capacity of County Juvenile Justice Services to assist with youth behavior that does not rise to a moderate or serious anti-social level.
 - f) School Resource Officers (SROs) in La Crosse County public schools are disadvantaged by the lack of a clearly defined role that is understood by the broader juvenile justice system and the benefit of a broader array of intervention options.
 - 6) The aforementioned system weaknesses may be contributing to an overreliance on law enforcement referrals, arrest, and detention that is stigmatizing.
 - 7) Addressing the identified weakness areas could lead to more effective outcomes in addressing youth misbehavior while improving public safety and saving public dollars.

- Seven Recommendations:
 - 1) Create a La Crosse County DMC and Juvenile Justice Best Practices (JJBP) committee that includes key stakeholders and community members as a vehicle to implement the Task Force's recommendations.
 - 2) Create and implement clear guidelines that are shared and supported across key juvenile justice system partners as to when arrest will be used to deal with youth misbehavior within schools. This can take the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and should be implemented by the start of the 2015-2016 school year.
 - 3) Conduct a common, system-wide cultural competency training that focuses on juvenile justice issues and takes place no later than the end of the 2015-2016 school year.
 - 4) Work to increase the use of evidence based practices (EBPs) and programs throughout the juvenile justice system. Specifically, the new JJBP committee will:
 - a) Provide input and system coordination on the following five EBPs which the County Juvenile Justice Unit is currently in process of implementing.
 - i. Risk and needs assessment instrument
 - ii. Sanctions and reward grid
 - iii. Detention risk assessment instrument
 - iv. Cognitive behavioral therapies
 - v. Strength-based case planning and motivational interviewing
 - b) By June 2015, report on the feasibility and planning efforts for EBPs in the following five areas which are currently absent or present at only a minimal level in the local juvenile justice system:
 - i. Alternatives to Arrest (e.g., teen court, community service, mandatory participation in after school or weekend group programming)
 - ii. Detention alternatives (e.g., reporting center, mandatory participation in after school or weekend groups)
 - iii. Family-focused practice approaches that center on support and changes within the youth's family support structure (e.g., family engagement therapy, functional family therapy, greater use of in-home counseling)
 - iv. Targeted programming for "at risk" youth and first-time offenders
 - v. Trauma-informed approaches
 - 5) Use resources available to La Crosse County due to its participation in Wisconsin's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) for technical assistance to the new Juvenile Justice Best Practices (JJBP) Committee.
 - 6) Examine factors driving the high percentage of arrests at facilities operated by the Family and Children's Center by December 2015.
 - 7) Identify specific measures related to project benchmarks, activity, performance and outcomes for partners in the juvenile justice system to share in common. Measures are to be identified by July 2015. A report using these measures would be presented to various oversight committees by January 2016.

ADJOURN

Pat Ruda asked for a motion to adjourn this meeting at 1:05 p.m.

MOTION by Mary Kay Wolf/Jodi Widuch to adjourn this meeting; **Motion carried unanimously.**

NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 3, 2014

Approved: November 3, 2014, Tammy Bond, Recorder