

Local Advisory Council (LAC) North

St. Louis County

November 18, 2021 4:30 – 6:00 Via Teams

Present: Melanie Smith, Ann Marie Lubovich, Jennifer Rich, Nicole Stone, Marjorie Holmstrom-Sabo, Michelle Long, Brendqa Shafer- Pellinen, Jeff McNickle, Lacy Podlogar, Nicole Stone.

Absent: Claudia Skalko (resigned), Daniel Triestman (covid/daycare issues), Todd Swenson (conflict with another event)

Guest Speaker: Brandie Webb, Supervisor Children and Family Services with St. Louis County.

- Nicole reads the values of the LAC. Minutes from October 2021 are approved.
- Marjorie asks for volunteers for newly vacated co-chair position. Claudia Skalko resigned the position. Lacy takes the co-chair position.
- Introductions of members to new member Brenda Shafer-Pellinen.
- Marjorie asks about other applicants that we can reach out to and if we should send out a notice for new applicants. Melanie said she would put an invite to applicants on the web site.
- Brenda put on chat, a link for an event happening at Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging focusing on losses, distress, and burnout.
- **Guest speaker, Brandie Webb, started at 5:00**
 - Brandie Webb introduces herself.
 - Ann Marie asks mentions the survey that was sent out, to educators, asking about gaps in services. Brandie talks about a northern support meeting that takes place monthly to discuss student needs. Brandie acknowledges that there are some large gaps. She explains that she understands how people are not happy with all of the things that are missing for children on the range. She explains how clients are being referred to mental health professionals in the community and are having to look outside of the community.
 - Lacy asks about internet help for people that need to communicate with professionals virtually. Brandie explained about grants that the county had during covid. The funds are depleted but the county has some other funds that can fill in.
 - Brandie explains new families first legislation. Federal legislation that passed and required states to change treatment for children in residential tenement facilities. This legislation aims to have children stay in home care/least restrictive options possible. This will be raising the bar for treatment facilities. Facilities will have to have a RN on staff 24/7. Staffing ratios were increased. This will implement many more steps, that county must follow, to place children into these treatment facilities. This will make it harder for children to be placed. Hopefully, there will be more funding for children to get care at home and in our community.

- Marjorie talks about gaps in beds in our community.
- Marjorie asks about mandated reporters making things harder for children. Brandie talks about screaming guidelines. The report must meet the of the language of the law to be screened in. Emotional harm is difficult. Bruises are seen but not with emotional abuse. Some reports will not meet the threshold. PSOP - Parents support outreach program, can help with those that do not reach the threshold. We can reach out to these families and offer voluntary services to help. They see a 65% success rate, for workers placing cold calls to these families. We have Family support Service for many years for families to call and ask for help. Brandie explains they are one of the only counties to have that. It is a great opportunity to help
- Marjorie – “How many people, in a dream world, would you hire to fill the gaps?” Brandie, “at least 30”. We see the need. We have 14 great workers right now. Working toward these goals every day.
- Jennifer – “if parents are against help, is there any way for family members to ask for help?” Brandie – “depends on if it’s the parent of a minor child, with custody. We try to get children to understand the workers that are there for them, in schools, to help them. We can serve grandparents aunts and uncles that are caring for children in some capacity with our programs. The words “social worker” can be trauma inducing for many people. Some people fear this phrase. We contract with RMH for people that don’t want to work with county employees.
- Lacy mentions a home that would be set up in Hibbing for pregnant moms that are homeless. She asked if anyone would like to look into it. Lacy shared a link regarding this project.
- Brandie put together a visual for everyone to see the programs that are available to help families. She will give the information to Melanie to share with the council. Brandie said she sees the Lac as an ally for change. Marjorie asks if she is able to share now. Brandie tried to share on her screen, but the Teams app was not allowing her. Melanie sent out the illustration to the council via email.
- 5:30 Brandie thanks the council for inviting her and leaves the meeting.
- Marge goes over the recommendations that Todd Swenson sent over.
 - # 1 priority - Improve treatment of people, living with mental illness, by law enforcement.
 - Melanie informed the council that our recommendations ,to the county board, will be submitted in June and will serve as our annual report. The timing of the submission coincides with the county budget.
- 5:55 Meeting adjourned.