



COUNTY OF HUNTERDON NEW JERSEY

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION MENTAL HEALTH BOARD



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REFERENCE:

- ☐ Council
- ☐ Mental Health
- ☒ Youth
- ☐ Disabled
- ☐ Substance Abuse
- ☐ Transportation

Approved on September 7, 2022

YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, July 6, 2022 12:30 p.m.
Via Webex

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

L. Gonski	S. Becker
F. Brown	L. Zimmermann
L. Gudino	M. O'Reilly
K. Conyers*	L. Zielinski*
L. Ranieri	L. Zellar
S. Medina*	C. Douglas*
K. Haris	G. Kaufman*
J. Kuhl	E. Cohen

EX-OFFICIO

K. Williams

STAFF

D. Childers

GUESTS

L. Brooks
D. Carbone
M. LaRoche*

*Designees

- I. "This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21. Notice of this meeting has been provided in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier News. A public notice announcing this meeting has also been placed in the lobbies of the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services, the first floor of the Main Street County Complex, 71 Main Street Building #1, Flemington, NJ; the first floor of the Route 12 County Complex, Building #3, 314 State Route 12, Flemington, NJ and County Clerk's Office."

PURPOSE: The Commission shall serve as an advisory committee to the Human Services Advisory Council and to the Board of County Commissioners to maximize provision of assistance to youth and their families, and to promote prevention programs that enhance the building of competencies and positive development of children and youth and reduce the likelihood of juvenile delinquency and other socially unacceptable behaviors.

F. Brown opened the meeting and introductions were made among the participants.

- II. **MINUTES:** G. Kaufman made a motion to approve the minutes from May 4, 2022. All were in favor. The motion passed.

III. REPORTS:

A. Children's Interagency Coordinating Council (CIACC): It had been recapped that CIACC partnering with Hunterdon Central High School to release a three-part film to deal with anxiety, rage and bullying. More details will follow.

B. Department of Children and Families – Children's System of Care (CSOC):

i. Tri-County Care Management Organization (CMO): L. Zimmermann reported out of the three counties: Hunterdon, Somerset and Warren, as of July 6, 2022, the agency's total enrollment is comprised of 788 youth.

For Hunterdon, out of the 142 youth (18%), 17 youth have achieved developmental disability eligibility.

Medicaid status for Hunterdon: Currently, 53 youth are eligible for Medicaid and 80 are eligible for given the 3560 CSOC designation status.

In terms of the community status, most youth remain home-schooled and in the community. 137 of those 142 youth. The remaining 5 youth are at various out-of-home treatment facilities.

The five top diagnoses continue to be adjustment disorder, ADHC, anxiety, depression and ODD conduct disorder.

Referral sources remain to be Children's Mobile Response Stabilization Services as the primary, families, community providers, Children's Crisis Intervention Services, CMO transfers, self, Department of Child Protection and Permanency, the courts and CSA PerformCare.

The youth and their family's primary reside in Flemington, Glen Gardner, High Bridge, Annandale and Hampton.

From the Strength & Needs Assessments (SNA): As of July 6, 2022, 14 youth were scored as follows: Scored "1" =8 youth (suggests treatment may be needed); Scored "2" = 6 youth (suggests treatment is needed as substance use impacts youth's life functioning). Scored "3" =0 youth (suggests treatment is imminent).

Substance Use Diagnosis: As of July 6, 2022, Hunterdon County accounts for 5 youth with a SU diagnosis and SNA score. All five (5) youth had cannabis related diagnoses with (1) one overlapping alcohol diagnosis.

L. Zimmermann indicated that regardless of insurance providers, the Children's System of Care has the availability contingent on their respective needs. She provided a deeper readout regarding the challenges and demands for the services from the various agencies serving the community. L. Gonski and S. Medina added their comments about being creative in providing treatment for those in need. Discussion ensued.

ii. Tri-County Family Support Organization (FSO): S. Medina reported for the month of May, the FSO served the siblings of their youth partners and their family partners by taking them to the Bridgewater Mall at Color Me Mine to do clay paintings. An event for their youth partners had the youth make Mother's Day gifts and planted flowers and attended the Warren Hills

High School where a health and wellness day had been held. On May 19, a Staff Appreciation Day was held at Forrest Lodge celebrating with the providers and CMO.

The support groups are suffering a bit because the parents' schedules are not allowing for the 6:00 – 7:30 pm time slot. Additionally, she is interested in obtaining more guest speakers if possible.

For the month of June, the YP regular support groups, the creation of Father's Day birdhouses and taking the youth bowling and did an end-of-year barbeque for appreciation.

Applications are still being taken for the upcoming Girl Empowerment Motivation & Mentoring (GEMMS) and Gentlemen Elevating through Noble Teachable Strategies (GENTS) program.

S. Medina conveyed she'd like to see the youth go and enjoy a day at Dorney Park.

Warmlines are coming in and more people are looking for rental assistance. A landlord contacted her looking for resources because he does not want to evict his tenant.

- iii. **Tri-County Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS)**: L. Zellar reported that for June 2022, MRSS had 27 dispatches in Hunterdon County out of the tri-county total of 118. This is an increase from 18 dispatches in May. Referral sources have remained consistent with community providers, schools, DCP&P, and screening centers being the most common. She noted a lot of warmline calls from parents about re-authorizing services following end of Intensive in community (IIC) services (up to 12 weeks) due to long outpatient waitlists. She is receiving a lot of youth and families returning back to MRSS.

C. **N.J. Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P)**: No report at this time.

D. **N.J. Juvenile Justice Commission (NJJC)**: K. Williams reported the first semester for their Middlesex College cohort had 20 participants that started and 16 that finished and passed. The others returned home and chose not to finish. Summer semester had begun. The JJC is actively working on their family webpage. Each parent or guardian will have direct access to what is going on with their juvenile when with the JJC. There is still one young male from Hunterdon County at the training school for boys and will not be eligible for parole for a while. Lastly, K. Williams reported the JJC site monitoring began and welcomes anyone who is interested in attending to contact D. Childers.

E. **School-Based Youth Services**: L. Gonski reported School-Based has been doing well. The summer program is underway with 33 younger youth in recreation and 22 high schoolers are participating in the health and wellness programs. Referencing their quarterly report, she is very pleased to report, according to the measure they use, the children and youth resiliency measure, 81% of the youth showed improvement in well-being.

F. **Family Crisis Intervention Unit (FCIU)**: No report at this time.

G. **Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI)**: D. Childers reported that a number of meetings has been scheduled and there is nothing new to report at this time.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Emerging Service Needs:** D. Childers began by stating there has been a shift in needs throughout the community and invited members to join in a general conversation relating to any emergent needs being experienced within each of their organizations/agencies. She stated she has received several calls from concerned parents about trying to access mental health services for their children. This has been the number one concern she has been hearing and seeing. D. Childers is seeking feedback, as well as discussing other concerns that have been experienced from the past couple months or past year – all topics simple or complex are welcome.

Cindy Douglas conveyed she is the new coordinator for YES; assuming responsibilities formerly managed by S. Rozycki. She had the opportunity to shadow S. Rozycki before she moved on and found it quite devastating. When youth were on lockdown constantly in front of computer during COVID. For those who were not as academically inclined or has a learning deficiency found themselves spiraling downward. Also, youth were witnessing parents in distress, loss, uncertainty, etc., along with their own feelings, and did not know what to do. Some youth are far beyond to continue schooling and want to drop out of school – it is very upsetting. She sees the real importance of how to support these kids. What to do differently either in the school or through the YES program which is moving them into obtaining their GED or getting them into a program to help them figure out what is best suited for them in their future.

L. Gonski added that School Based Youth Services has received a lot of referrals for anxiety. There had been a lot of anxiety pre-COVID but, now the issue is when they go out to refer, there are a lack of people in the field causing a lag in services. Parents get discouraged and do not want to remain on a wait list. It is frustrating on both ends. S. Medina offered her experiences and opinions on the subject with the families and agencies she's involved with.

A professional development member from Blueprint Mental Health located in Somerville provided a very power presentation at Hunterdon Polytech several months ago. He is providing additional services to students needing help without full licensure. Discussion ensued.

North Hunterdon and Voorhees High Schools are doing separate wellness programs for incoming freshmen. It is in a school setting, entering high school questions and concerns. They will meet every Thursday for two hours running for six weeks. These high schools have grant monies to pay for their programs and using their grade-level counselors to run the programs and are utilizing School Based Youth Services personnel for assistance when necessary. L. Gonski shared her personal thoughts of promoting support and services for mental health. Discussion ensued.

L. Gudino shared CIACC received a grant several months back which is being used for overall CIACC purposes as well as to expand the youth and family voice. They are currently in the works to partner with Hunterdon Central High School to present a three-part film series throughout the school year that would manage rage, anxiety, bullying, etc. that would not just be informational, it would be educational as well. An idea is to bring this to other high school districts as well. By showcasing some of these theories, combined with having some community partners present to connect and share what resources are available would provide some real connections to youth and families. More information will be provided at the next CIACC meeting scheduled the following Monday.

Discussion ensued regarding to formulize a program to utilize 2nd year graduate students who may be looking for experience - this may be a great idea. Additionally, it may be advantageous to have people provide therapeutic measures to other that may relate appropriately. Someone who had possibly similar experiences and can talk to them with understanding.

If anyone has additional thoughts or comments after this meeting is over, please email them to Denise Childers.

VI. AGENCY NEWS:

Prevention Resources, Inc. – Currently, Prevention Resources, Inc. Law Enforcement Adolescent Program (LEAP) and the Early Intervention Program has 10 open cases. Eight are LEAP; one is a school referral, and one is a parent referral. The types of offenses are theft (4), simple assault/assault (1), cyber-harassment (1), criminal mischief and trespassing (3) and anxiety (1). Six youth are males and four are females. The website has been updated to keep law enforcement up to date on the procedures. There may be an issue on how the programs are being explained and A. Kovacs and K. Widico would like law enforcement to take another look and refresh on the protocols and procedures.

VII. ADJOURN:

The meeting of July 6, 2022 was adjourned by G. Kaufman. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at 12:30 pm via Webex.