

Minutes

McKean County Collaborative Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 3, 2008, 1:00-3:00

McKean County 911 Center, Route 6 (next to Children and Youth Services), Smethport, PA

Attendance:

Andy Penird—McKean County Big Brothers Big Sisters Program, Casey Schillinger—McKean County Strengthening Families Program, Greta Billings—Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, Lisa Kray—Parent to Parent, Michele Kern—CJJT&R, Cheryl Nasto—Port Allegany School district, Debbie Olson and Vickie Skvarka—PA Department of Health, Jill Alane Moore—YWCA Victim's Resource Center, Carrie Bowman—PSU Cooperative Extension, Kelly Okerlund—Intermediate Unit 9, Paticia Demjan and Kathy Rodgers—TRIO Program at Pitt-Bradford, Troy Johnson—North Central Regional Development Commission, Duane Wolfe—McKean County Department of Human Services, Joncine Willis—Intermediate Unit 9, Annie Skraba—Northwest PA Area Health Education Center, Lynne Grimm—Child Care Information Services, Jim Keltz—McKean County Assistance Office, Lisa Defranco—Northwest AIDS Alliance, Tina Martin—CARE for Children, Lee Sizemore--The Guidance Center, Joe DeMott—McKean County Commissioner.

Presentation:

Autism Spectrum: What it is, resources to help, and resources that are missing. Joncine Willis, IU9 Autistic Support Team.

- Autism is a developmental disability that affects verbal and nonverbal communication, social interaction, engagement in repetitive activities and stereotypic movements.
- It is usually evident before age three. Other Autism Spectrum Disorders include Pervasive Developmental Disorder and Asperger's Syndrome. Rett's Disorder and Childhood Disintegrative Disorders are on the spectrum but they may get their own DSM category in the future since they are unique diagnoses.
- It is more important to understand the severity of autism versus the specific diagnosis on the spectrum. Severity determines the kind of treatment needed. Treatment focuses on social behaviors, language and communication skills and repetitive activities to reinforce routine and learning.
- The cause is unknown. Mercury has been removed from immunizations and immunizations do not cause it. There can be a genetic link.
- 1 in 150 children are diagnosed with autism. Ten years ago it was 1 in 50. There may be environmental reasons for this, or it could be that diagnosis was not as thorough in the past.
- Children with autism need friends, help with parameters, social skills, structure, and supportive classrooms and home environments.
- The IU9 provides autistic support services to schools through two coaches, Joncine and Judy Zetts. McKean County also has a few autistic support classrooms—one in the Kane Middle School and one at the Port Allegany High School were mentioned.
- The group discussed several gaps in services for children with autism:
 - Transition to adulthood services
 - College-level academic supports
 - Behavioral supports
 - Peer Support Groups
 - Family Support

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- Local diagnostic services—many families have to access diagnostic services far away through regional hospitals in Pittsburgh or Buffalo.
- Professional development—there is a need for all professionals to be trained in how to work with children with autism

Discussion:

- **Responding to child abuse: The Case of Danieal Kelly and how do we prevent it from happening here?** training will be held Friday, October 24, 9:00-11:30 at the First Presbyterian Church in Bradford. The Family Centers are hosting the training.
- **McKean County Resource Directory.** Entries for the Fourth Edition are due September 12.
- **McKean County Strengthening Families Program**—Fall workshops were announced
 - Bradford, Fretz Middle School, Thursdays, 10-9 to 11-20-08
 - Bradford, St. Bernard's School, Wednesdays, 10-8 to 10-19-08
 - Kane Middle School, Tuesdays, 10-7 to 11-18-08
 - Smethport Elementary School, Tuesdays, 10-7 to 11-18-08
 - Port Allegany High School, Wednesdays, 10-8 to 10-19-08
 - Otto-Eldred Elementary School, Thursdays, 10-9 to 11-20-08

Registration deadline is September 22
- **Community Level Outcome Indicators—PA Integrated Children's Services Plan.** Data indicators that the Pennsylvania Office of Children, Youth and Families are tracking were shared. McKean County was rated low in these areas: Substantiated Child Abuse, Children Reunified with Parents or Primary Caregivers Who Returned to Care Within 1 Year, and Residential Treatment Facility Use.
- **Ready PA: Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness for PA's Special Populations.** Penn State Cooperative Extension donated disaster preparedness educational kits to board members that would in turn educate special populations that they work with. Kits were passed out.
- **Update from Michele Kearns, Regional Consultant for Communities That Care.** Michele shared that Communities That Care is a statewide model whereby coalitions pool efforts to focus on better outcomes for youth through the implementation of evidence-based programs. She passed out several resources, one of which is the 2008 PA Return on Investment of Research Based Programs, a study where the McKean County Strengthening Families Program's return-on-investment is featured. Go to http://www.prevention.psu.edu/pubs/docs/PCCD_Report2.pdf to view the report.
- **McKean County Criminal Justice Advisory Board.** Joe DeMott gave an update on the work of this coalition in reducing overcrowding at the McKean County prison. Alternative sentencing, such as home monitoring, is currently being explored.
- **Family Center—Fall/Winter Program Guide** was passed out.
- **Rural Health Care Services Outreach Grant Program.** The Guidance Center is applying for federal funds for tele-med options to child psychiatry, to start a support

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group for parents of autistic children, and professional development opportunities around autism.

- **Lead Abatement Training** through the Safe Kids Coalition and CARE for Children on September 30, 11:00-1:00 at the Bradford Library was announced.
- **Sensory Play and Learning**, training sponsored by CARE for Children will be held on Monday October 13, 9:00-4:00 at Pitt-Bradford.
- **Ad Hoc Committee sign up.** Members were asked to volunteer for an ad hoc committee focused on web site renovation and public release of the 2007 Pennsylvania Youth Survey information. Update: the committee met on October 30, 2008.
- **Steering Committee:** Next meeting is October 1, 3:00 at the State Health Center, 84 Boylston Street, Bradford.
- **Adult Education Classes** will start up on September 8 at the IU9. Call the Family Literacy Program to enroll.
- The **Parent to Parent Program**, a regional support that links families with disabilities together, announced that they have a new statewide phone number—1-877-727-2706.

Next Collaborative Board Meeting:

Nov 5, 2008, 9:00 -1:00 p.m., Penn Hills Club,
Annual Meeting with complementary lunch

2009 Meetings

- January 7, 2009, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., 911 Center
- March 4, 2009, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., 911 Center
- May 6, 2009, 1:00-3:00 p.m., 911 Center
- July 8, 2009, 12:00-2:00, Hamlin Lake Pavilion (summer picnic meeting)—bring a dish to pass
- Sept 2, 2009, 1:00-3:00, 911 Center
- Nov 4, 2009, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Penn Hills Club, Annual Meeting with complementary lunch

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