



SOELS Governance Council

May 21, 2024

2:30-4:30 p.m.

Zoom Meeting ID: 910 4266 7714

<https://soesd.zoom.us/j/91042667714>

Attendees: Cynthia Anderson, Jessica Durrant, Mary Hough, Stacy Inman, Laura McKeane, Bridey Mendoza-Moore, Norma Pantoja, Kimberlee Whitney. **Guest:** Nancy Hauth. **Absent:** Scott Beveridge, Katherine Clayton, Sara Hollingworth, Sam Watson, Brittain Zimmerman

Hub Staff: Rene' Brandon, Jordan Rogers, Sydney Wing, Teresa Slater, Molly McLaughlin, Vicki Risner

Call to Order: 2:32 pm

Welcome

Additions or changes to the agenda: None

Approval of minutes from 3-19-2024 – No quorum, moved to next meeting.

The Need for Family Engagement

Rene': Shared Family Complexity Slide with Social complexity indicators.

A really compelling way to start this conversation so we know what's really going on with families in our region. From Jackson Care Connect:

Poverty (34.7-37.5%),

Parental incarceration (21.6%),

Mental health parent/child (41.2-44.8%),

Substance abuse parent (28.4%).

The numbers from AllCare are nearly the same.

Family Preservation Initiative

Kim: Shared a PowerPoint. An Approach to Supporting Families: Together, Stable & Safe (02/2024)

Our Visions for Transformation (Child Welfare)

We believe that children do best growing up in their family and on values related to:

- Honoring and supporting cultural wisdom
- Building community resilience and voice
- Ensuring the self-determination of our communities of color

Our Vision into Action (Self Sufficiency Program)

We believe that everyone in Oregon deserves opportunities to thrive and reach their full potential. Maximizing people's potential helps our communities thrive and benefits our entire state.

Family Preservation is an approach to actualizing the Vision for Transformation and Vision in Action by supporting:

Systems in shifting to prioritize keeping families together and in their communities.

How? Families and communities tell us what they need, when they need it, how they need it and who they need it from, and we deliver.

Current ODHS practice: Families & Youth are our center. Child Welfare, Self Sufficiency, Community Organizations and Tribes with the largest focus on Child Welfare. Our goal is Transformation: Families & Youth in the center, surrounded by a smaller focus on Child Welfare, much larger focus on Self-sufficiency, Community organizations and Tribes. Make Child Welfare more focused on child endangerment actually happening, get in, mitigate, serve and support. Assure that there is a plan in place once Child Welfare involvement ends with either a community-based organization or self-sufficiency partner with a family.

Concrete economic supports are proven to be a key to preventing child abuse and neglect and the single most impactful strategy for lifting families out of poverty.

Most reliable economic predictors of child welfare involvement: income loss, cumulative material hardship, housing hardship and loss of child care.

Strongest predictors of investigated neglect reports: food pantry use, cutting meals, short duration of residence, difficulty paying rent, utility shutoffs, public benefit receipt and or inability to receive medical care for sick family member.

The Connection between concrete economic supports and keeping families together:

Hard News:

- Family income is the greatest predictor of maltreatment & child welfare entry. Families living below the poverty line are over 40x more likely to enter child welfare than median income families.
- 53% of all Black children experience a CPS investigation by age 18.
- For every additional child-care concern reported by families receiving TANF, the risk of supervisory child neglect increased by 20%.
- Less than 1/3 of young children with child welfare supervision who live at home receive Early Childhood Education services.
- Mothers with substance abuse who were unable to secure child care were 82% more likely to self-report child neglect.

Good News:

- A study of family preservation programs cited concrete services as central to achieving positive outcomes.
- In child welfare involved families who faces housing instability, children of families receiving a supportive housing program (housing voucher + case management) experienced fewer removals (9% vs 40% in a control group after 2 years)
- Children who attended Early Head Start had significantly fewer child welfare encounters between ages 5 and 9 than those who didn't attend.
- Children (ages 0-5) who participated in Head Start and were referred to child welfare for suspected maltreatment were 93% less likely to enter foster care than children who did not receive any Early Childhood Education.
- Participation in SNAP or the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), jointly or alone, is associate with a lower risk of abuse and neglect reports.

Difficulty finding child-care was a stronger predictor of maternal neglect than almost any other factor, including mental health, severity of drug use, history of abuse as a child and use of public assistance.

What we are learning: Foundational Elements in Equity and Data:

- Intra-agency Relationship: Self-Sufficiency and Child Welfare
- Community Engagements: Sustainable Partnerships
- Practice: Values-Based Engagement
- Support & Services: Meeting Needs

To transform the foundational elements, demonstration sites will receive capacity building support to:

- Align staff and leadership mindset and values to prioritize anti-racism and keeping

families together and in their communities to prevent foster system entry.

- Shift practice to enable earlier, more proactive collaboration between CW and SSP staff and leadership to equip families with concrete supports and connections
- Strengthen, repair, and develop mutual accountability between CW and SSP, and between local offices and their communities (including community-based organizations)
- Understand, develop, and strengthen local innovations to account for disproportionality, enable sustainability, and build community capacity
- Use quantitative and qualitative data to understand disproportionality and inequities in practice

Self-Sufficiency Programs

- Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Employment Related Day Care (ERDC – Now under DELC, yet eligibility with OEP/SSP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Refugee Program
- Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence Survivors
- Co-Located Advocates
- Survivor Investment Partnership
- Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- Youth Employment Program

Data = Action

- Offer & use evidence-based economic and concrete supports as a first line intervention aka an interaction that is one of generosity. Gas cards, rent, bills, SNAP, WIC, connections to childcare & early childhood education (Head Start, Relief Nursery).
- Eliminate the culture of conditional supports. Families do not have to earn economic support from us – let's give it so they can then focus on change.
- Let's think about how we identify and address poverty related neglect differently than current practice.

Sustainable Community Partnerships

- We believe that communities already have the wisdom and assets to provide safe, stable, and healthy lives for children, adults and families.
- One 2024 goal for implementing the Family Preservation approach is to create a sustainable structure for local agencies and community partners to collectively address the structural, financial, cultural, and capacity barriers to keeping families together, stable, and safe in their communities.

We have more than 600 employees. There are many humans that must navigate and reset the way they think. We used to be focused on compliance. It's a mind shift for our staff to look at these differently.

Family Support & Connections Program

Cynthia: It's a statewide program. Our piece of it covers Jackson and Josephine County. We have 4 family advocates and served 227 families. We work with them on a very personal level: conversations with them, discovering their experiences, what their situation is, what their strengths are, what their challenges are, and developing a family engagement plan around that. It is a self-referral program. We do accept partner referrals who are working directly with a family.

Cynthia presented information from this website:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/children-youth/pages/family-support.aspx>

This site is where families sign up for support from us. We have Program Brochures in English and Spanish. There is information about eligibility, the kinds of help you can get. It takes a lot of creativity to do the job these folks do.

We have 2 positions open (see listing below) so that we can expand our capacity.

Link to Family Intervention Specialist job listing:

<https://www.applitrack.com/soesd/onlineapp/default.aspx?Category=Early+Childhood+Services+-+Classified&AppliTrackJobId=1963&AppliTrackLayoutMode=detail&AppliTrackViewPosting=1>

Josephine Co. System of Care – Agile Funds

Jordan: In October of 2023, we received \$10,000 from the Josephine County System of Care to be spent out by the end of the year. The funds were meant to be as flexible as possible to meet the needs of families to move forward and be successful. We partnered with Rogue Food Unite to get 150 holiday food boxes created that we distributed in Josephine County. Some were picked up by families who signed up and the others were distributed through the Growing Together Center.

We also sent out an interest form to community partners in Josephine County, asking how many families they were serving and what kind of support they need. We received over 30 responses from Preschool Promise programs, OCDC, as well as Maslow Project describing a lot of needs. We contracted with Maslow Project, and they helped four families with addiction prevention. They got families gas cards for transportation needs, propane for their trailers, as well as paying for some car registration, tag and license fees. OCDC did something similar for two families, doing eviction prevention, food assistance and purchasing winter clothes. For the Preschool Promise programs, the Hub matched some of the funds to support families with up to \$500 for eviction prevention, car repairs, and gift cards to pay for gas, food, diapers as well as winter clothes. We also supported one expecting teen parent with purchasing a car seat after achieving her goal

of good grades in school.

Josephine County System of Care reached out afterwards, they still had some funds available. We received an additional \$7,771 that must be spent by June 30th. We already have a contract in place with Maslow Project to serve at least five more families with up to \$500 each. The Women's Crisis Support Team for five families with up to \$500 each. We are working to identify a third and potentially a fourth organization to contract with for the rest of those funds.

Home Visiting Coordination Update

Sydney: Our Home visitors are always incredibly busy and getting on their schedules is hard. Our meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month and I have been working on ways to increase attendance and bring them in. By attending staff meetings and talking with home visitors in person, I am hearing that they are interested in learning more about housing resources for their families, ways to access car seats, strollers, cribs, and pack & plays. Ways to stabilize families with whom they are working.

They expressed interest in trainings for infant massage. We recently were able to have most of the Healthy Families team, as well as Nurse Family Partnership, and Babies First trained in infant massage. We brought a trainer down from Portland for a two-day training. We have a training scheduled for September for working with families who have domestic abuse present. How Home Visitors can best support the families as well as keep themselves safe. They expressed interest in trainings for setting healthy boundaries with families.

I meet regularly with Erin Norton with Jackson County Material Health, as well as Paula Mejia with Healthy Families to determine how we want to work with the funding that we have received from MEICV from the Oregon Health Authority to support the Home Visitors and the families. A resource bank has been requested. To be able to access the resource bank, home visitors will need to attend the Home Visiting Network meetings.

Child Care Expansion Update

Rene: Shared slide from JRHA Progress Report March 14, 2024

Child Care in Rural Communities where none exists: We have raised \$53,000 in increasing rural child care programs. We have 3 people interested. The remaining need is \$33,400.

Subsidize child care slots in Existing Programs: Will be covered by Molly in the next segment.

Build the Early Learning Workforce: We have received \$24,000 from Rogue Workforce

Partnership, \$9,600 from the Providence Community Health Foundation, and \$2,400 from the Hub for paid internships at child care centers. We have exceeded our Year 1 Goal and are supporting 16 adult interns!

Behavioral Health Supports Available in Early Learning Classrooms: We have received \$30,000 from the Josephine County System of Care. There is a \$40,000 donation pending. The remaining need is \$30,000 to get this launched.

That's \$366,400 in new funding; an additional \$700,000 invested directly to 4 Jackson County Centers.

Child Care Slot Expansion Update

Received \$72,000 for Infant/Toddler Slots from the Providence Community Health Foundation. And received \$135,000 for Preschool slots from the Hub. The remaining need is \$23,000.

Molly: CCRN helped us to reach out to child care providers in Jackson County. Focus was on location, capacity, schedules and annual calendars. Received 17 responses. The more in-depth application is now out to them.

Rural Community Center Expansion Update

Rene: A bigger conversation next time. We've heard that we have the award from Josephine County System of Care for that community center, rural expansion. The idea is to copy the Growing Together Center in Grants Pass out to satellite centers in rural communities.

We have an estimated \$35,000 to start to outfit the rural areas with equipment and supplies to get them launched. We expect to receive the funds in June.

Motion to Adjourn:

Adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

Next Meeting: July 16, 2024

2:30 – 4:30 pm