

Commission on Children & Families
May 20, 2008
5:30 p.m.—Douglas ESD
Minutes

Members Present: Lois Allen, Les Esparza, Bruce Justis, Barbara Matthews, Steve Schenewerk, Sandi Smick, and Jeremy Gegenhuber.

Members Absent: Dan Forbess, Bonnie Ford, Dave Lee, Shirley Petterson

Others Present: John Ayer, Harry Mullins, Victoria Rodriguez, Denise Galusha, Jerry Waybrant, Phil Bowser, Carolyn Dawson, Suzy McAmis, Shane Adamson, Debby Burkholder, Anna Brown, Lupe Salazar, Kendra Wilson, Janikka Merrill, Anna Mae Reingch, Danile Bailey, Doug Freeman, Milo Davidson

Staff Present: Gillian Wesenberg, Debbie Wheeler, and Dawn Smith

Lois called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and introductions where made

Minutes: Steve Schenewerk motioned that the April 15, 2008, minutes be approved; Sandi Smick seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Chair's Report: Lois Allen reported that the Executive Committee met on May 13, 2008, and learned that the Healthy Start program is facing budgetary reductions, as are other programs throughout the county. At this meeting, the Executive Committee requested staff to convene a meeting of the Healthy Start Advisory Board on May 16, 2008, to discuss possible funding options.

Steve Schenewerk reported that on May 19, 2008, the Executive Committee met again to discuss the status of Healthy Start and the long-term vision for Healthy Start. He said the Executive Committee also discussed the recommendation from the Healthy Start Advisory Board to begin a collaborative planning process with the goal of reaching a strategy for long-term sustainability.

MOTION: Steve Schenewerk motioned that the Commission begin a collaborative planning process for the Healthy Start program. Sandi Smick seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Gillian explained the collaborative planning process. She said that the first collaborative planning meeting has been scheduled for May 30, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. in room 310 of the Douglas County Courthouse. Marilyn Miller of the State Commission on Children & Families agreed to facilitate this meeting.

Director's Report: Gillian shared that the Social Services Consortium will be meeting again on May 16, 2008. Lisa Saldana of the Center for Research to Practice will be attending this meeting as the COPS Meth Grant evaluator. She asked Victoria Rodriguez of UCAN's Confidence Clinic and Jerry Waybrant of the Department of Human Services to share their impressions of the Consortium and the evaluation process.

Homeless Youth Drop-In Center: Harry Mullins shared that the Douglas County Homeless Youth Drop-in Center will be open on Monday, June 16 at the Boys & Girls Club. The hours of operation will be 7:00 a.m. to noon, with free breakfast and lunch. Harry said that if a youth has a Boys & Girls Club membership they will be able to stay all day.

Additionally, Harry said that they will be hiring 2 youth to act as interim outreach coordinators. The salary will be \$8 per hour, for 10 hours a week for 4-6 weeks.

Youth Advisory Board Update: Jeremy Gegenhuber reported that the Keystone Club participated in the Truth, Lies and Videotape premier as "dead celebrities" – celebrities who died from drug use. Also, the Keystone state conference was held in Roseburg on April 25th and 26th.

Build Our Kids – Panel Discussion: Phil Bowser, retired school psychologist, provided an overview of the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets and led a panel discussion with youth. Phil said that a youth needs at least 30 assets to do well in life. In Douglas County, our youth have between 16-17 assets, with the lowest asset being "caring school climate." Tonight's discussion focused on our youth's responses to some of the 40 Developmental Assets. Youth participating in the discussion were: Jeremy Gegenhuber (DCCF youth member), Lupe Mendoza (Douglas County Homeless Youth Drop-In Center Advisory Board member), Janikka Merrill (Boys & Girls Club – Keystone Club), Anna Mae Reingch (Boys & Girls Club – Keystone Club), Kendra Wilson (Boys & Girls Club – Keystone Advisory), and Daniel Bailey (Boys & Girls Club – Keystone Advisor).

Phil had the youth randomly pick a 40 Developmental Asset for discussion. Their responses follow.

- Youth experiencing caring neighbors:
 - Neighbors that don't do drugs
 - She lives on Pine Street and sees kids that are not taken care of by parents. The parents always yell at their children.
 - Lots of teens on her street drink a lot
 - He has a good neighborhood
 - Afraid to talk to neighbors

Possible ways to improve their neighborhoods:

- Adults saying "hello" to youth
 - Building relationships with neighbors – taking the time to take the first step.
- Youth are given useful ways to participate in community:
 - Saving Grace Animal Shelter – need chaperons if you are under 18
 - Adults don't trust youth
 - Youth have bad reputation
 - Youth may not value themselves

- Adults demonstrate positive responsible behavior
(*Phil noted that according to the Healthy Teens Study, 30% of Douglas County youth had gotten in a vehicle with an impaired driver.*)
 - Meth use, smoking pot, driving drunk
 - Car crashes and drinking – saw parents drinking, etc.
 - Hard to tell parents “no” you won’t go with them if they are drinking
 - Parents just don’t care what I do – youth say
 - Parents working and not there (i.e., to cook, help with homework, etc.)

- Young people seek to settle disagreements non-violently – *Phil asked the youth “what are the roadblocks that keep people from acting differently?”*
 - Raised around alcoholics or abuse – hard to change
 - Friends, environment they are in
 - What youth see in media and video games – parents not there to instill values
 - See people at school acting this way
 - Part of a culture with teens
 - Learned behavior with teens

- Community values youth
(*Phil noted that according to the Healthy Teens Study, 30% of Douglas County youth 8, 9, and 11th grades had shoplifted within the last 30 days..*)
 - Court custody case – judge won’t talk to youth because she has no attorney
 - Low trust
 - Nothing for kids to do, so they get into trouble
 - Bragging rights with other youth (“Hey, I got 30 days!”)
 - Kids doing bade makes it harder for others

Kendra said that you don’t value something until you know what it is worth. Phil asked the youth what they would like to do.

- Have a club to go swimming
 - Transportation – needed to get to activities.
- Reading for pleasure – what keeps Douglas County youth from reading for fun?
 - People want things fast – lots of TV, videos, etc.
 - Hard to picture it when you don’t read
 - Better selection of books
 - Many alternative ways of entertaining – shorter attention span – not wanting to focus due to drug use
 - Reading for pleasure doesn’t have to mean reading a book
 - Teens read a lot in school – don’t understand reading for pleasure
 - Teens don’t have time because they do so much at school
 - Not good place to read – have lots of siblings

Phil thanked the youth for their participation. He added that the 40 Developmental Assets are really about people having time for each other and caring about each other.

Adjournment: Lois adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Wheeler