

Nebraska Children's Commission Young Adult Voluntary Services and Support Committee

Second Meeting
September 03, 2013
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Lincoln Community Foundation building, 5th Floor Conference Room
215 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE

Call to Order

A meeting of the Young Adult Voluntary Services and Supports Advisory Committee (YA Committee) was held on September 03, 2013 at 1:00pm Central Time at the Lincoln, NE Community Foundation Building, 5th Floor Conference Room. A quorum of YA Committee members was present. The meeting was duly convened and Mary Jo Pankoke called the meeting to order at 1:10pm, welcoming everyone to the second YA Committee Meeting. Committee members were then asked to introduce themselves.

Committee Members present: Mary Jo Pankoke, Jodie Austin, Corrie Edwards, Jan Fitts, Brandy Gustoff, Sarah Helvey, Doug Lenz, Mary Fraser Meints, Jill Schubauer, Jennifer Skala, and Lana Verbrigghe.

Acting as Resources to the Committee: Nathan Busch, Judge Douglas F. Johnson, Vicky Weisz, and Amy Williams.

Committee Members absent: Brandy Gustoff, Janteice Holston, Augusta Kamara, Sararose Luichinger, Richard Muzikani, and Amy Peters.

Resource members absent: Senator Kate Bolz

Also present were: Margaret Flynn-Kahn, Consultant, Mainspring Consulting; Shannon Brower, Consultant, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative; Mary Beth Shanahan – Nebraska Children and Families Foundation; and Leesa Sorensen – Nebraska Children's Commission.

Introduction

Mary Jo introduced Margaret Flynn-Kahn and Shannon Brower who then provided an overview of the meeting agenda submitted to all committee members prior to the day of the meeting.

Mary Jo announced that the desired outcomes of the meeting are to share and adopt the initial recommendations drafted by the workgroups and to identify the recommendations in need of further refinement for submission to the YA Committee at a future meeting. Critical and cross-cutting issues not addressed by workgroups will be raised and noted as input on the recommendations.

Margaret Flynn-Kahn, discussion facilitator of the YA Committee meeting, thanked Shannon Brower and the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative for their work and support around the country, noting the quality of the recommendations presented at today's meeting as commendable.

Margaret then highlighted the purpose of the meeting is to determine which recommendations to adopt and which recommendations to refine. Each workgroup will be allocated 25 minutes for discussion, a move to vote and a decision on the consensus. Refinements defined during the discussion will be directed back to the workgroups for revision pursuant to the guiding questions of Eligibility and Transition from current services. The recommendations adopted at the meeting will be presented by the YA Committee on September 17, 2013, to the Nebraska Children's Commission. The recommendations not agreed upon today will be noted and allocated back to the workgroups.

A discussion relevant to the recommendations ensued.

Recommendations

The leaders of the following workgroups presented initial recommendations to the YA Committee with the intent for the committee to discuss, vote and adopt or refine the recommendations:

- I. Policy, Eligibility, and Transition into the Program
- II. Outreach, Marketing and Communications
- III. Case Management, Supportive Services and Housing
- IV. Case Oversight
- V. Evaluation and Data Collection
- VI. Fiscal Issues and Guardianship

I. Policy, Eligibility, and Transition into the Program Recommendations

Action Taken on Recommendations:

1. Initial Communication and Transition into the Program for Young Adults in the Former Ward Program

1A: Accepted. No action taken.

1B: Language Change in italics and underlined:

By December 1, 2013, a representative of the Department (or current Former Ward staff members) will make contact - or attempt to make contact - with all current and past recipient of Former Ward who have not yet turned 21 to *provide additional information verbally and via all available and appropriate channels (e.g. text, Facebook, social media, letter, etc.)* about the program, review differences compared to the Former Ward Program and how young adults can sign up, and to ask the young adult if he/she would like to participate in the extended program.

1C: Language Change in italics and underlined:

Written in-person and communication with all available and appropriate channels (e.g. text, Facebook, social media, phone, letter, etc.) with these young adults about the program will include referral to a YAVSS orientation class.

1D: Accepted. No action taken.

2. Communication and Transition Into the Program for Young Adults in foster care (age 16 – 19)

2 A - C: Accepted. No action taken.

3. Communication to Young Adults ineligible for the program

NOTE:

DHHS in partnership with private agencies should implement a communication plan targeting young adults, case workers, services providers, and media/public/policy makers. DHHS should explore a public-private partnership to implement workshops and orientation.

3A: Accepted. No action taken.

3B: Language Change in italics and underlined:

A representative of the department (or current Former Ward staff member) will make contact - or attempt to make contact - with each of these young adults to verbally provide information about the determination that the young adult is not eligible. The verbal communication should include an explanation of those items bulleted above and include all available and appropriate channels (Facebook/text/email/call/letter)

3C: Accepted. No action taken.

3D: Strike

3E: Strike

NOTE: FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

3 d. Young Adults will receive 30-day check-ins from aftercare worker in Eastern Service Area (such as what NFC provides to Young Adults who age out) to check eligibility (for 12-months) through all available and appropriate channels (Facebook/text/email/call/letter).

3 e. Young Adults will receive 90-day eligibility check-ins after leaving aftercare

Communication for ineligible young adults may need to be revised due to the Case Oversight recommendations of a court hearing:

4. Communication to Young Adults Who Opt Out of the Program

4A: Language Change in italics and underlined:

Young Adults are provided an *information* packet that includes process for re-enrolling if they change their mind, eligibility checklist, resource directory (as per Sec. 7(1)) *and a survey*.

4B: Accepted. No action taken.

5. Communication to Young Adults Who Become Ineligible for the Program After Participating

5 A - D: Accepted. No action taken.

NOTE: FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION:

Need Further Research before Final Recommendation. Need to Consider What Aftercare works like in Service Areas (other than Eastern Service Area)

E. YAVSS Caseworker provides Young Adults with the required ineligibility notification (per Sec. 7(2)) 30 days before services cease. Recommend delivering this communication through all available and appropriate channels (email/call/text/Facebook/letter).

F. In-person exit meeting with YAVSS caseworker 30 days before services cease with exit packet that includes appeal information sheet, eligibility checklist, resource directory and resource directory.

G. Referral to Get Eligible Now Workshop.

H. YAVSS worker makes 90-day eligibility check in (by all available communication channels).

Jodie Austin then made a motion to accept the Policy Workgroup recommendations with the changes noted. The motion was seconded by Sarah Helvey. Voting yes: Mary Jo Pankoke, Jodie Austin, Corrie Edwards, Jan Fitts, Sarah Helvey, Doug Lenz, Mary Fraser Meints, Jill Schubauer, Jennifer Skala, and Lana Verbrigghe. Voting no: None. Brandy Gustoff, Janteice Holston, Augusta Kamara, Sararose Luichinger, Richard Mazikani, and Amy Peters were absent. Motion carried.

II. Outreach, Marketing and Communications Recommendations

1. Program Name Recommendations

1A: "Bridge to Independence" (preferred choice of Young Adults surveyed): Accepted
"LEAP": Strike

2. DHHS in partnership with private agencies should implement a communications plan targeting young adults, case workers, services providers, and media/public/policy makers. Any underlined tactics are materials or experiences that must be newly created. DHHS should explore a public-private partnership to develop these items to help off-set administrative costs to DHHS without compromising the communications experience for critical audience segments. Items with asterisks represent priority recommendations.

Accepted. No action taken.

3. Audience Segments Who Should Be Targeted with Communication and Outreach

3A - D: Accepted. No action taken.

4. Communication Strategies that Should Be Implemented by Segment

4 A-I: Accepted. No action taken.

4 J: Language change in italics and underlined:

“Foster care caseworkers *and supervisors*”

4K: Language change in italics and underlined:

“YAVSS caseworkers *and supervisors*”

4 L, M: Accepted. No action taken.

Jodie Austin then made a motion to accept the Communications Workgroup recommendations with the changes noted. The motion was seconded by Mary Fraser Meints. Voting yes: Mary Jo Pankoke, Jodie Austin, Corrie Edwards, Jan Fitts, Sarah Helvey, Doug Lenz, Mary Fraser Meints, Jennifer Skala, and Lana Verbrigghe. Voting no: None. Brandy Gustoff, Janteice Holston, Augusta Kamara, Sararose Luichinger, Richard Mazikani, Amy Peters, and Jill Schubauer were absent. Motion carried.

III. Case Management, Supportive Services and Housing Recommendations

NOTE: FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION:

Need Further Discussion and Research before final recommendation on the following for case management:

- *Mobility issues*
- *More explicit description of case manager and role of connecting to services*
- *Option for young adult to stay with same worker (an option)*
- *Add bullet specific to safety and wellbeing*
- *Add description connecting to services and to case management models*

- *Review other states and providers address the safety and well-being of the other*

1. Culture Change. DHHS must recognize providing services through the Young Adult Voluntary Services (this program) will be a big culture change, not only for DHHS' Children and Family Services but also the legal system.

1 A-D: Accepted. No action taken.

2. Recruitment, selection, training and support of staff and supervisors.

2A: Accepted. No action taken.

2B: Language change in italics and underlined:

"Independence Coordinators (IC) should be specially trained. They should have specialized caseloads, when feasible. Supervisors should be specialized and trained and may need to work across service areas. Peer support should be provided to the Independence Coordinators."

2C, D: Accepted. No action taken.

3. Coordination and Collaboration

3A: Accepted. No action taken.

4. Training that addresses and helps professionals to understand the developmental needs of young adults.

4A - D: Accepted. No action taken.

5. DHHS Case Management Practice for the YAVSS Program

5A: Accepted. No action taken.

5B: Language change in italics and underlined:

"The terms used by DHHS and others are important. DHHS should refer to housing as housing options rather than placements and should not refer to young adults as being placed."

6. Housing Options

6A, B, C: Accepted. No action taken.

Doug Lenz then made a motion to accept the Case Management Workgroup recommendations with the changes noted. The motion was seconded by Lana Verbrigghe. Voting yes: Mary Jo Pankoke, Jodie Austin, Corrie Edwards, Jan Fitts, Sarah Helvey, Doug Lenz, Mary Fraser Meints, Jill Schubauer, Jennifer Skala, and Lana Verbrigghe. Voting no: None. Brandy Gustoff, Janteice

Holston, Augusta Kamara, Sararose Luichinger, Richard Mazikani, and Amy Peters were absent. Motion carried.

IV. Case Oversight Recommendations

NOTE: FURTHER DISCUSSION:

Is this process young adult friendly? Needs to be young adult driven.

1. Case Reviews

1A: Accepted. No action taken.

1B: Language change in italics and underlined:

“Recommend that the Mediation Centers conduct 6-month reviews in a structure similar to pre-hearing conferences based on recommendations and needs of the young adult. The justification is that the Mediation Centers have an existing process that feeds into court reviews, have statewide infrastructure and trained facilitators that are uniquely qualified to give people voice and could be very young adults-directed. The young adult would be invited and encouraged but not required to attend the six month review. If the young adult does not attend the review, young adult input can be gathered in writing.”

1C: Accepted. No action taken.

2. Permanency Hearings

2 A, B: Accepted. No action taken.

2C: Language change in italics and underlined:

“Recommend that the Nebraska Supreme Court promulgate a rule on hearing officers in juvenile courts pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 24-230 The case oversight subcommittee of Young Adult Support and Services will draft the rule.”

3. Meaningful Participation of Young Adults

3A - C: Accepted. No action taken.

4. Training

NOTE: FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION:

Is this process young adult friendly; young adult driven?

4A: Accepted. No action taken.

Lana Verbrigghe then made a motion to accept the Case Management Workgroup recommendations with the changes noted. The motion was seconded by Doug Lenz. Voting yes: Mary Jo Pankoke, Corrie Edwards, Jan Fitts, Brandy Gustoff, Sarah Helvey, Doug Lenz, Jennifer Skala, and Lana Verbrigghe. Voting no: Jodie Austin, Mary Fraser Meints, and Jill Schubauer. Janteice Holston, Augusta Kamara, Sararose Luichinger, Richard Mazikani, and Amy Peters were absent. Motion carried.

V. Evaluation and Data Collection Recommendations

1. Evaluation Tool

1A: Language change in italics and underlined:

“...Surveys may be collected from young adults *not* in the extended program at 19 and 21, per federal guidelines. *DHHS should explore possibility of case workers can enlist support of providers in completing surveys.* If possible, we recommend that random ID numbers be assigned to maintain confidentiality.”

1B, C: Accepted. No action taken.

2. Fiscal Accountability

2A, B: Accepted. No action taken.

3. Tracking Supportive Services

3A, B: Accepted. No action taken.

3C: Language change in italics and underlined:

“*An independent agency should* review a sampling of case files for young adults in the extended program to track service provision.”

4. Tracking Supportive Services

4A - C: Accepted. No action taken.

5. Public/Private Partnership

5A: Accepted. No action taken.

Mary Fraser Meints then made a motion to accept the Case Management Workgroup recommendations with the changes noted. The motion was seconded by Jodie Austin. Voting

yes: Mary Jo Pankoke, Jodie Austin, Corrie Edwards, Jan Fitts, Brandy Gustoff, Sarah Helvey, Doug Lenz, Mary Fraser Meints, Jennifer Skala, and Lana Verbrigghe. Voting no: None. Janteice Holston, Augusta Kamara, Sararose Luichinger, Richard Mazikani, Amy Peters, and Jill Schubauer were absent. Motion carried.

VI. Fiscal Monitoring Issues and State - Funded Guardianship

NOTE: FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION:

- *A statutory change should occur to the present adult guardianship statute, which would enable a temporary extension of guardianship services for all former foster young adults who elect to enter a Voluntary Supportive Services Agreement with DHHS.*
- *Review numbers of State funded adoptions and determine eligibility for Title IV-E funds and determine recommendations for state funds and/or private/public partnership.*
- *Contact Judge Susie Basis, Douglas County Judge, and Judge Tom Harman on adult guardianships.*

1. DHHS will need to remove barriers to licensure (including educating potential guardians of the benefits of licensure and providing a list of long term care options, educating case workers, non-safety waivers) to ensure that more young adults can be served by the Federal Guardianship Assistance Program.

Accepted. No action taken.

2. Information regarding extended services should be continuously provided to all relevant court stakeholders (judges, hearing officers, attorneys) to ensure that orders and petitions are IV-E compliant.

Accepted. No action taken.

3. DHHS should provide an easy-to-understand document (script?) to all case workers, judges, appointed attorneys, applicable young adults, providers, potential guardians and foster parents detailing the eligibility requirements for the Voluntary Young Adult Supportive Services program

Accepted. No action taken.

4. DHHS will provide financial support for extended guardianships to the extent possible with the \$400,000 appropriation, after which the young adult should be transferred to NCFE (or other entity) for money distribution and education/work eligibility. DHHS should continue to maintain NFOCUS records and provide Medicaid.

Accepted. No action taken.

5: Language change: in italics and underlined:

“If the state general funds appropriation (\$400,000) can be matched with private funds, an Income Maintenance Foster Care (IMFC) worker should review the financial needs and behavioral risks of the young adult prior to the age of 19 to determine the amount of subsidy to be provided by the state subsidized guardianship.”

NOTE: FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION:

Nebraska’s new guardianship laws will be reviewed during the next phase of recommendation discussions (legal issues of payouts, state funded adoptions, etc.). Douglas County Judges, Honorable Susan Bazis and Honorable Thomas Harmon, are experts under the new guardianship law.

6. If the state general fund allocation of \$400,000 is the only funding source permitted to support the State Subsidized Extended Guardianship program, the following recommendations have been made (listed in priority order) to determine eligibility:

6A: Accepted. No action taken.

6B, C: Strike.

NOTE:

7. No formal case management services will be provided under the state subsidized guardianship. Instead, an IMFC worker should conduct the initial eligibility assessment, with the young adult meeting with the IMFC once every 6 months to verify continued eligibility.

Accepted. No action taken.

8: Language change: in italics and underlined:

“Financial assistance should be paid directly to the young adult receiving supportive services. However, other staggering support system should be in place to learn how to budget appropriately rather than 1 lump sum or phased in as deemed developmentally appropriate.”

“for the State Funded Extended Guardianships (from state and private funds). The Federal IV –E funds for guardianship assistance must go to the guardian. All funding available should have a phased in plan for the transition from payment to guardian to now go to young adult. A partnership agreement between the guardian and young adult should be considered and other staggering support system should be in place to learn how to budget appropriately.”

9. For any young adult whose guardian fails or is unable to distribute the supportive payment to the young adult, DHHS should set forth a grievance procedure.

Accepted. No action taken.

Motion was made, seconded and carried for the following recommendations:

- #5: Language Change
- #6: Strike a, b, c
- #8: Language Change

Jodie Austin then made a motion to accept the Financial (Fiscal & Guardianship) Workgroup recommendations with the changes noted. The motion was seconded by Mary Fraser Meints. Voting yes: Mary Jo Pankoke, Jodie Austin, Corrie Edwards, Jan Fitts, Brandy Gustoff, Sarah Helvey, Doug Lenz, Mary Fraser Meints, Jill Schubauer, Jennifer Skala, and Lana Verbrigghe. Voting no: None. Janteice Holston, Augusta Kamara, Sararose Luichinger, Richard Mazikani, and Amy Peters were absent. Motion carried.

Next Steps and Timeline

After the initial recommendations presented by the six workgroups were officially voted upon, the Advisory Committee and other meeting participants concluded there is no further business for discussion.

Mary Jo announced subsequent meeting dates as follows:

- **September 17, 2013 (9am – 12pm):**
Nebraska Children’s Commission meeting. This meeting will include the presentation of the report that must be submitted by October 1, 2013.
- **October 1, 2013:**
Nebraska Children’s Commission Report provided to the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature and the Governor.
- **October 16, 2013:**
Nebraska Children’s Commission meeting.
- **November 19, 2013:**
Nebraska Children’s Commission meeting. This meeting will include the presentation of the report that must be submitted by December 15, 2013.
- **December 15, 2013:**
- Final Recommendations Report due

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Advisory Committee, Mary Fraser Meints made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Doug Lenz.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm.