

**Nebraska Children's Commission**  
**Young Adult Voluntary Services and Support Committee**  
**Minutes November 5, 2013**  
**1:30 PM – 4:30 PM**  
**Lincoln Community Foundation building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**  
**215 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE**

**Call to Order**

Mary Jo Pankoke called the meeting to order at 1:37pm due to technical set up.

**Introductions**

Mary Jo Pankoke welcomed everyone including Shannon Brower (Jim Casey of Opportunity), and Margaret Flynn-Khan (Mainstream Consulting) to the third meeting of the Young Adult Voluntary Services and Support committee (YA Committee). Mary Jo thanked the group for their attendance and continuous work then informed the group that they were operating under the Open Meetings Act (which was posted on the wall), stating that public comments were welcomed and allowed at the end of the meeting. The meeting was then turned over to Margaret as she facilitated the review of recommendations.

**Members Present:** Mary Jo Pankoke, Sarah Helvey, Doug Lenz, Mary Fraser Meints, Amy Peters, Jennifer Skala, Nathan Busch, Vicky Weisz, Amy Williams, Elisabeth Hurst, James Bowers, Leesa Sorensen, Mary Kate Gulick, Amy West, and Jennifer Potterf.

**Members Adobe Connect:** Corrie Edwards, Brandy Gustoff, Jill Schubauer, Jan Fitts.

**Members Absent:** Jodie Austin, Janteice Holston, Sararose Luichinger, Richard Mazikani, Lana Verbrigghe, Judge Douglas Johnson, Augusta Kamara, Senator Kate Bolz, and Ronda Newman.

**Meeting Purpose:** To review the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of recommendations from the six work groups so they would be ready to present at the November 19<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting.

**Meeting Approvals:**

- 1) November 5, 2013 Agenda: Mary moved, Sarah seconded, all in favor, 0 oppose.
- 2) July 31, 2013 Minutes: Mary moved, Sarah seconded, roll call vote, motion carried.
- 3) September 3, 2013 Minutes: Jan moved, Doug seconded, roll call vote, motion carried.

**Review Timeline/Next Steps**

- 1) November 19, 2013 - present 2<sup>nd</sup> recommendations to the Children's Commission.
- 2) December 15, 2013 - submit 2<sup>nd</sup> recommendations to Healthy Human Services Committee of the legislature, the governor, and DHHS.
- 3) December 2014 – Advisory Committee required to submit next report.
  - a) From planning to implementation, Statue requires Advisory Committee to continue and meet bi-annually.
  - b) Mary Jo suggests the Advisory Committee meet more frequently during 1<sup>st</sup> year of implementation.
  - c) Meeting will be held with Co-Leads to determine the role of the workgroups during implementation.

### Meeting Handouts

- 1) 2<sup>nd</sup> Round 1<sup>st</sup> Draft Recommendations
  - a) Additions to the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the 2<sup>nd</sup> recommendations are highlighted.
  - b) Deletions to the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the 2<sup>nd</sup> recommendations are red strike lines.
- 2) Bridge to Independence Cross-Cutting Issue
- 3) ? (from Amy West)

### POLICY, ELIGIBILITY, AND TRANSITION WORKGROUP

Presenters: Nathan Busch, Amy Williams

#### Section I Former Ward and Juvenile Probation

- No changes have been made to the first round of recommendations.
- Section I, items A – D are all new recommendations.
- The Department has made decisions that are in conflict with some of the recommendations. Presenters asked the group to review, then offer feedback on whether to modify the recommendations to better reflect Health and Human Services decisions on the Former Ward Program or to keep the recommendations as they are.
- Under the Statue, funding for Former Ward shifts to Bridges to Independence on January 1, 2014.
- Implementation of Bridges 60 days after notice is received of the approval of the 4E Amendment could happen anytime within the next 2 months.
  - 1) Example: Notice received January 1<sup>st</sup>, implementation begins March 1<sup>st</sup> for Bridge to Independence.
  - 2) If the young adult is a 3A and Former Ward as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, the young adult will continue to receive Former Ward benefits until implementation of Bridges, March 1<sup>st</sup>. When implementation begins, the young adult will be grandfathered into the Bridges program.
  - 3) If the young adult is a 3B or OJS, and not eligible for the Bridge program yet receiving benefits from the Former Ward program, on December 31<sup>st</sup> the young adult will continue receiving Former Ward benefits until no longer eligible, i.e. age out.
- Issue: If the Former Ward program ends in December, and Bridge to Independence begins in March. That leaves a potential “Gap” of no program to support approximately 17 young adults who may age out during the “Gap” time period. Options for funding to help support these young adults are to work with private partners and alternative programs to help ensure that the young adults who age out will continue to receive support until they are able to enter into the Bridge program.
- It was mentioned that the Case Oversight Workgroup was also concerned about “the gap” thus added Section VI-A to their recommendations.
- After further discussion, Jenny moved, Sarah seconded, roll call vote, motion carried to approve section I:A-D under Policy, Eligibility, and Transition 2<sup>nd</sup> round 1<sup>st</sup> draft recommendations and remove recommendation VI-A from the Case Oversight 2<sup>nd</sup> round 1<sup>st</sup> draft recommendations to section I –E under Policy, Eligibility, and Transition into the Program and add the following language so that recommendation E read as follows: *If the department does not maintain the Former Ward program to address the gap for young adults who age out after January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 but prior to when the Bridge Program begins, funding (either former ward, LB 216 or other general child welfare funding) should be used to give young adults who age out in this period access to Former Ward benefits.*

## **Section II Initial Communication and Transition for Former Ward YA**

Presenter: Mary Gulick

- No drastic changes made. Paragraph D was deleted.

## **Section III Communication and Transition for Foster Care (16-19)**

- During the yearly family team meetings for young adults 16-19 years of age, foster care caseworkers have been requested to discuss the Bridge to Independence Program.
- A planning team meeting with the foster care worker, young adult with an invited adult, and the Independence Coordinator will act as the official transition from foster care to Bridge to Independence.
- For the young adults that are ineligible to enter the program upon aging out of foster care will receive notifications required by the bill. Also, Bridge to Independence will be discussed in the meeting they have scheduled with their caseworker 90 days prior to their court hearing.

## **Section VI Communication to YA Who Become Ineligible for the program after participating**

- Previously the young adults who become ineligible for the program after participating were asked to take part in a re-enrollment workshop. Instead of having a separate workshop, the young adult will meet with their caseworker/independence coordinator to determine next steps to make re-eligible.
- After further discussion, the group decided to modify VI-B: *In addition to a court hearing, see Case Oversight section. There should be an in person exit meeting.*, and add VI-D: *Young adults should have the opportunity to request an extension of the 30 day grace period between becoming ineligible and end of services.*
- Margaret asked for a move to vote on policy recommendations II through VI. Sarah moved, Jennifer seconded, roll call vote, motion carried.

## **CASE MANAGEMENT, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND HOUSING**

Presenters: Mary Meints, Jennifer Potterf

### **Section II Recruitment, Selection, Training and Support of Staff and Supervisors**

- IC will be identified 3-6 months prior to the transition to allow a time for relationships between the young adult and supporters get established.
- Would like to allow the young adult to have the option to ask that the foster care worker stay involved.
- The independence coordinator should not have to change if the young adult moves to a different territory. Current technology can be used to stay connected.
- The private provider roles have not been discussed at this time, but do require further discussion.

### **Section V Addressing Safety Issues in Developmentally Appropriate Manner**

- In regards to overall safety for the young adults, the IC will use a skills assessment to determine areas of needs or successes.
- Quality training should be provided for the IC so they can better understand the thought process and choices of young adults and be better equipped to work through the pros and cons of the young adult's decisions.
- IC will be mandatory reporters to the hotline if there are safety issues with the children of the young adults in the program. The IC should not have to implement the structured decision making safety assessment with the young adults as this may damage the IC and young adult relationship.
- 24 hour on call support from and IC should be available to the young adult in time of crisis.

- The IC will discuss job related safety concerns with the young adult, but will not report those concerns to law enforcement.
- Correction to VB2. Change the first sentence to read: *If an IC is alerted to an unsafe or unethical working condition, the role of the IC is to educate, support and plan, and leave the decision making to the young adult.*
- VB1 bullet 3 should be changed to a stand- alone recommendation VB4 to read: *IC should only involve law enforcement if there is imminent risk.*

#### **Section VI DHHS Case Management Practice for the YAVSS Program**

- There should be a team instead of a family team that's directed by the young adult and titled Independence Plan Team that would gather together with the young adult to decide who would be on that Independence Plan team to guide the young adult with specific issues.
- After further discussion, the group decided to modify the 4<sup>th</sup> sentence in VI-A to read: *The purpose of these meetings is to get everyone of the same page, bring together all existing plans and access where the young adult is on the goals.* The rest of the paragraph stand as is.
- The group was asked to give more detail on an evidence base model that is developmentally appropriate. The group submitted the Transition to Independence (TIP) model that is specifically geared towards young adults. Trauma-Informed Care and well as Harm Reduction could be incorporated.
- Model identification, curriculum development, and implementation steps should be conducted 2014. Full model implementation should occur Jan. 2015.
- An interim training curriculum for IC should be available until an evidence based model is selected and implemented.
- DHHS should explore using System of Care grant funds for the cost of training.
- VI-D add... *the service list is attached at the end of these recommendations* ...so no one has to search for the previously submitted ones.

#### **Section VII Housing Options**

- VII –B sentence 3, change beginning of sentence to read: *If unsafe housing*, instead of if inappropriate. The rest of the paragraph stands as is.
- Doug motioned, Jenny seconded, roll call vote, motion carried.

#### **CASE OVERSIGHT**

Presenter: Sarah Helvey

Please refer to recommendations as Sarah read through the recommendations. There was no group discussion or comments to add.

#### **Section I Case Reviews**

- If a young adult opts not to attend a 6 month review, they can share their information by using the modified version of the youth questionnaire.

#### **Section II Permanency Hearings**

- Added section D and E to the recommendations.

#### **Section III Notifying Young Adults of Right to Request Attorney and Hearing**

- A & B of this section are new recommendations and should be highlighted yellow.

#### **Section IV Meaningful Participation of Young Adults**

- Added sections C, D, E and deleted Section F.
- Mary motioned, Doug seconded, roll call vote, motion carried.

## **FISCAL MONITORING ISSUES AND STATE FUNDED GUARDIANSHIP**

Presenter: Jennifer Skala, Shannon Jo Hamilton

- Jennifer stated to the group that she will review the highlighted additions only as they are recommendations that are built upon the previously approved recommendations.
- Jennifer read recommendations A, E, I, J, K, L, and M1.
- To fully fund all the state extended guardianships over 1 million dollars are needed. To date, \$4,000.00 is appropriated. Hence the reason for seeking more public/private partnerships.
- The average subsidy for guardianship is \$530.
- Mary motioned, Doug seconded, roll call vote, motion carried.

## **EVALUATION AND DATA COLLECTION**

Presenter: Amy West

### **Section I Evaluation Tool**

- Prior to finalization of the survey, the group recommends it be piloted with Project Everlast.
- The group recommends that public/private partnerships be explored to allow a contract with an independent external evaluator to be responsible for the following:
  - 1) outreach and collection of surveys
  - 2) initial analysis of collected data
  - 3) assist the Advisory Committee in meeting reporting requirements
  - 4) provide the Advisory Committee with a more comprehensive evaluation report by Dec. 2015.
  - 5) collect exit surveys
- **I-D** add as the last sentence in this section to read: *If necessary comply with any regulations to protect information for research participation.*

### **Section II Fiscal Accountability**

- DHHS track all expenditures and provide quarterly reports detailing itemized program costs including training, travel, materials.

### **Section III Tracking Supportive Services**

- III-C should read: *We recommend that the Foster Care Review Office (FCRO) review files for young adults in the extended program to track service provision as they are mandated to do for children and youth in foster care. The rationale for this is that the FCRO already has that capacity and the necessary information systems in place, re-training would not be necessary, and this would be consistent with their current practice.*

### **Section IV Young Adult Satisfaction**

- The independent external agency should collect exit surveys from the young adults. Offer \$10 gift card incentive. If survey not returned in 3 weeks, follow up with the young adult via phone, mail, or internet.

### **Section V Public/Private Partnership**

- Estimated cost for the independent external evaluator is approximately \$42,000.00 for two years of implementation: \$32,000.00 for survey collection and \$10,000.00 for evaluator and analysis costs.

## **OUTREACH, MARKETING, AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Presenter: Mary Gulick

- Mary summarized all the recommendations of this section.
- The group decided to make a change in Section V-O #3 to read:  
*60-minute program launch trainings in all service areas providing detailed, program specific information and materials to service providers, including human services, organizations, and community partners. Content for these trainings...etc...for a total of 8 trainings.*
- Mary motioned to approve, Sarah Helvey seconded, roll call vote, motion carried.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

- Mary motioned, Doug seconded – meeting adjourned at 4:33pm.