# Southern St. Louis County LAC

## Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2021

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| Present: | Andrea Rose, Bert Brandt, Carly Hiti, Ina Newton, Jacquelyn Hanson-Hietala, MaKenzie Johnson, Moira Villiard\*, Nathan Glockle, Roger Raymond, Sonja Wildwood\*, Tawna Schilling, Traci Laughlin, Tatiana Bergum (guest), Nishah Dupuis (guest), Mel Alvar (guest)  \*- Facilitator |
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1. Opening, addition of agenda items

* Lynn completed a survey; the results and her feedback are available on the Google Drive under “Reports & Surveys”
* The Clarity Group is seeking feedback from the LAC regarding a project they received funding for; to be discussed at February Meeting

1. Review of Bylaws, feedback:

* Discussion regarding how group would like to run meetings (confidentiality, how we vote, how we share space, are thoughtful, share opinions—guidelines)…the bylaws cover some of these aspects but not all
* Sonja created a document on the Google Drive for members to add aspects of the meetings (or other meetings) that have worked in order to start pulling together ideas- good feedback so far
* Not a lot of feedback from group yet regarding bylaws. Members need more time. Tabling the review for the February Meeting

1. Subcommittee Discussion:

* General consensus that creating sub-committees is a good idea
* Idea to start with having one for adult mental health and one for children’s mental health and break into further sub-groups from there
* Would be nice to have the smaller groups focusing on available resources for specific populations or needs to report back to the larger group to get a better sense of the entire system of resources
* Decision made to start “resource banking” on the Google Drive to put together lists and compilations of resources already available with various organizations (i.e. a resource guide originally made for PAVSA with pages of information regarding housing, medical care, etc.) A folder will be created on the Google Drive for such lists/compilations
* Noted that sub-committees should be fluid in order to adjust to changing needs of the community given the situation with COVID
* Email Sonja and Moira if you want to be more involved in a certain aspect or subcommittee or have more thoughts on subcommittees

1. Nishah Dupuis, SLC Social Worker, ICWA

* Question/s for Nishah: What does your work look like? What services do you provide for kids and families? Is there any aspect of your work that doesn’t feel like enough, is missing, or could be made better?
* Works specifically with Native American families, children enrolled in tribes tailoring case plans for families to meet their specific needs (i.e. if a family needs mental health services, they make the appointment and set up transport for them; helping them with resources to get there instead of just telling them they need to do it)

Noted struggles/barriers:

* Biggest struggle right now is visitation with families- SLC policy is that in-person visits cannot be done with high risk individuals/families that cannot social distance; parents are only seeing kids over video, not in person (a struggle seen nation/worldwide as well)
* Limited resources for funds (i.e. cell phone minutes or meeting basic needs; they call different places to see what is available)
* Specific to families receiving mental health services: trying to explain and help families buy into that process and the services; they also have difficulty getting ARMHS workers for clients since getting a referral is difficult and there are often waitlists for services (noted Accend is really good with ARMHS but has the same waitlist constraints)
* Only White Earth and Fon du Lac Behavioral Health have culturally appropriate mental health services for American Indian families
* Long wait times for CTSS (Children’s Therapeutic Services and Support) workers
* Appointment times, transportation, children’s mental health providers who do not have open communication with parents.

Benefits/Unique Resources:

* Since traditional professional interactions are limited, workers are relying more on family support systems than the traditional professional support systems- they’re pulling in family members now more than any other time in history
* St. Louis County is unique because we have an ICWA court- one of three courts in the nation that is grant funded; there are two days once a month when families appear in front of the same judge each time; there is more of a team effort to talk out issues and figure out what parents need; having the same court date each month for specific tribes also allows for tribal representatives to be present in the discussion
* Mental health services are also often set up for youth as well as parents; when there is an out of home placement, the child will have a mental health screening done by specialist
* Lincoln Park Children and Family Collaborative has been very helpful with family reunification- they help set up childcare

Foster Care & “Aging out”

* If a child is in foster care at the time of their 18th birthday they have the option to continue in foster care/receive services (it is no longer mandated) where they receive monthly living expenses and social workers help them find housing attain goals.
* If there is a youth who has aged out of the system and wants to come back, they should contact the social worker they had when they were still receiving services. Laura Brandt (SLC) works with individuals in extended foster care and teen moms.

**4. Tatiana Bergum, North Homes Safe Harbor Coordinator & Mel Alvar, Safe Harbor Regional Navigator:**

* North Homes is a mental health agency primarily from Grand Rapids but with offices in Bemidji and Duluth as well- offers CTSS
* Tatiana works specifically with youth who have experienced or are at risk for sex trafficking; her clients are able to access mental health services for free through a grant
* Mel is the contact in the Northeast Region of MN for all things trafficking related; coordinates with PAVSA (Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault) advocacy for direct services for youth in very high risk situations

Identified Needs & Barriers:

* Need: Having parents involved with the youth, especially when the youth is on the run or missing- a high risk for trafficking (services at PAVSA are confidential)
* Understanding how to access the system can be overwhelming (example: many individuals need a DA-Diagnostic Assessment, in order to get into a program but many do not know what that Is or how to get one and often do not have insurance
* The waitlist for mental health services is huge; there’s especially a need for services for young, native youth in general
* Building relationships and rapport with youth is essential; they don’t want to talk to a therapist- PAVSA, Safe Harbor, and Life House build relationships over time and do a warm hand-off when connecting them with services
* A lack of trauma-informed care among providers and in the community; any place where youth hang out is a youth-serving agency and managers/staff of those places should have trauma-informed care training (Starbucks did some training) – some providers and agencies claim they are trauma-informed but the kids report otherwise
* Need more opportunities for youth leadership
* There was a group with SLC Public Health looking at doing community training- Trauma Informed Duluth- but when COVID halted the progress.
* Close the gaps in the transition from the juvenile criminal system; there isn’t really a structure for individuals discharging from hospitals, corrections, foster care, long term care facilities, etc.
* Mel has become a contact for many youth with AJC (Arrowhead Regional Corrections) who do not have anyone else to call
* A high percentage of males from the Range is being seen with AJC
* Some providers are using ACES tool in a way that insinuates clients are “too damaged” to be worked with and able to recover
* Underserved populations include young black men and boys, young native men, transgender or gender non-conforming youth
* Gaps in education and awareness of consent, body autonomy, and what healthy relationships look like
* Need more home visiting services- youth are uncomfortable going to a new building to meet unfamiliar person
* Support for families with children who have experienced violent crimes
* Need a youth worker who only works weekends and overnights for crisis response
* Accessing Birch Tree on the Weekends has been a challenge

Resources and Training:

* Youth utilize PAVSA, who has a crisis line and Birch Tree (very successful in Carlton County)
* Youth prefer to call person they know at an agency before calling a Crisis Line; also prefer a text crisis line
* Facebook & Instagram page with trainings with regards to Trafficking Awareness; prevention curriculum (facebook.com/duluthmntraffickingawareness; Instagram: @duluthmntraffickingawareness)—has a whole folder of resources and videos
* There are tablets available at Birch Tree so that clients can meet with PAVSA; staff just needs to call and set up appointment and they can video chat
* Mel’s contact information: [alvar@pavsa.org](mailto:alvar@pavsa.org); #218-302-4877

1. Action Items for Next Meeting:

* Review and revise/comment on bylaws (In Google Doc)
* Create communication agreement with the group in order to honor safe space
* Complete form (to be emailed) regarding who to have as a guest next week- focus on adult mental health services- return to Sonja & Moira
* Potential guests: HDC, CADT, Patty Whelan (SLC social worker imbedded into the Duluth Police Department), ARMHS worker, nursing home and memory care unit staff
* Add information about organizations members work with/have experience with on the Google Drive (Chart available in LAC MEMBERS folder) OR email information to Sonja, Moira, or Rochelle to add to the Google Drive
* Add resource documents to Google Drive (or email to Sonja, Moira, or Rochelle to be added to Google Drive)
* Email Moira and Sonja if there are areas you would like be focus on if you are interested in participating in a sub-committee

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| **Next meeting:** | **February 18, 2021 - 4:30p.m.- 6:00p.m., via Zoom** |