

**Kent County**  
**Family & Children's**  
**Coordinating Council**



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**KCFCCC Meeting Minutes**

January 9, 2001, 12:00p.m. – 1:30p.m.

Wedgewood Christian Youth and Family Services Chapel  
3300 36<sup>th</sup> Street, SE

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**ATTENDANCE**

**Members/alternates present:** Susan Broman, Reverend Ellen Brubaker, Judge Nanaruth Carpenter, John Cole (for Andrew Zylstra), Mary Dengerink, Richard Gritter (and Dave VanRooy), Lynn Heemstra, Debra Holmes-Garrison, Bonnie Huntley, Ph.D., Wendy Jackson (for Diana Sieger), Douglas Mack, M.D., Linda McDonald, Miles Murphy, Patti Nusbaum, Maria O'Hare, Milt Rohwer

**Members absent (no alternatives present):** Rosemary Allen, Tom Czerwinski, Beverly Drake, William Forsyth, Karl Hascall, Bernice Morehead, George Woons

**Other present:** Bethanie Archbold, Mary Swanson (staff); Barbara Corbin, Steven Dieleman, Janet Dietsch, Jan Shangle, Dan Wiergenga, Linda Webb

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

Richard Gritter called the meeting to order at 12:15p.m. The agenda was amended to move up Dr. Huntley's update on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse RFP, as she had to leave early.

Debra Holmes-Garrison moved to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2000, Council meeting. Ellen Brubaker supported. Motion carried.

Mr. Gritter stated Public Comment would be a regular item on the agenda. Public Comment is allowed at the beginning and end of the meeting to allow individuals to comment on current agenda items. There were no comments.

Mr. Gritter thanked Ms. Lewis for her years of service to the Council, and presented her with a gift on behalf of the Council. Ms. Lewis has served as staff to the Council for the last six years.

**Mental Health and Substance Abuse RFP Update**

Dr. Huntley reported that she has no news on the RFP process. The request for an extension to the waiver and approval of the revised plan for "competitive procurement" of mental health services is awaiting a response from the US Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA).

Dr. Huntley stated that Community Mental Health (CMH) continues to struggle to meet a projected \$1,200,000 budget cut by the Department of Community Health. As a result, CMH is implementing across the board budget cuts in all of its divisions. She stated that demand for

services have continued to rise in the last few years beyond even the capabilities of the current allocation. Therefore, CMH is following administrative procedures to protest the reduction, and will also be looking at creating a community information campaign to make the public aware of the issue. She stated that CMH might ask the Council for its support.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Interagency Response to Children in Need of Out-of-Home Care**

Janet Dietsch presented the Advocacy Committee's report on the Interagency Response to Children in Need of Out-of-Home Care. She stated that the committee had been working on this project for almost two years. The purpose of the program is to assist families seeking out of home care for their children who do not fit the criteria for any one system. She stated that many of these parents end up seeking services through the abuse/neglect process, even though there is no evidence of abuse or neglect.

The new process calls for an Interagency Service Review Committee (ISRC) to accept referrals for children who do not fit the criteria of any one system. Children may be referred by the parent, an advocate, or one of the existing systems. The Committee reviews the case and develops a plan for the family. The situation continues to be reviewed at least every three months until the child is no longer in out of home treatment and the parents and the ISRC determine that it is no longer necessary.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Membership Revision**

Mary Swanson presented the Executive Committee recommendation that the Council revise its membership. The latest revisions of the Council called for five funding organization representatives; however, there are only four funding organizations currently participating. The Executive Committee recommended that one of these positions be transferred to the private agency category, resulting in a total of three private agencies.

Dr. Mack moved that the recommendation be accepted. Judge Carpenter seconded. Motion passed.

### **Membership & Leadership Phasing**

Ms. Swanson presented the Executive Committee's plan for implementing the new membership by phasing out positions as their terms expire.

Mr. Gritter presented the plan for leadership phasing. He stated that the Executive Committee will serve as the nominating committee for 2001. They will discuss nominations at the January 18, 2001 Executive Committee meeting, and bring a slate before the full Council for approval. Mr. Gritter stated that anyone interested in nominating someone to serve on the Executive Committee should contact him prior to January 18, 2001.

### **Strong Families/Safe Children**

Ms. Jackson presented the Executive Committee's recommendation for a change in funding allocation for the Strong Families/Safe Children grant. Ms. Jackson stated that budget has always maintained a line item for administration provided by the Grand Rapids Community Foundation (GRCF). As GRCF will not require these funds, the Executive Committee recommends that the Council reallocate the money to the Family Outreach Center for the Family and Community Compact/Kinship Care program.

Dr. Mack moved that the recommendation be accepted. Reverend Brubaker seconded. Motion passed.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **ASAP-PIE Update**

Steve Dieleman from Kent ISD presented an update on the ASAP-PIE grant. He reported that the grant was submitted by the deadline, and he expressed his thanks to the Council for their support. Mr. Dieleman distributed an information packet to the members, and stated that the full grant is available for review at the Kent ISD offices at 2930 Knapp, NE. Kent ISD will also distribute copies of the full grant to contractors, members of the ASAP-PIE Advisory Committee, and to Council staff.

Mr. Dieleman next addressed the four questions that arose during Kent ISD's presentation of the ASAP-PIE grant proposal to the Executive Committee on November 16, 2000 (see Agenda packet attachment). The following is a brief summary of his remarks:

1. At the time of the presentation before the Executive Committee, Kent ISD did not yet have the final plan or budget for the proposal. They have since completed both. An abstract and budget summary were included in the distributed packet, and the full version of the grant and budget are available for review at the Kent ISD offices.
2. At the time of the presentation before the Executive Committee, the process for parents to access the programs had not yet been clearly identified. The grant application now identifies several ways in which parents can access resources. These include:
  - The current system will be expanded, so that hospitals will refer the names of all families with newborns to the Health Department. The Health Department will contact each family either by telephone or through home visits to inform them of the available services. The level of interaction will depend on the needs of the family. With the parents' permission, the Health Department will forward their names to either the Parents as Teachers or Healthy Start programs.
  - Health screening days will be held in each of the local schools districts, including several in Grand Rapids. Each component of the program will be represented at the screening days to answer questions and recruit involvement.

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- Approximately 49 direct service providers will be hired to conduct outreach and recruit families. These service providers will make contact with families through the Health Department, teachers, counselors, principals, and other sources.
  - Each local district will be responsible for recruiting parents in its district. In addition, Kent ISD will conduct a media campaign to inform parents of the available services. They will also participate in the statewide ASAP-PIE media campaign.
  - The First Call for Help line and the Child and Family Resource Guide will be expanded and will include information specific to families with children ages 0-5.
3. At the time of the presentation before the Executive Committee, the evaluation measures and processes had not yet been identified. Specific evaluation measures and processes have still not yet been identified. However, there are grant funds designated to provide for an outside evaluation. Once the grant has been awarded, one of the first priorities would be the hiring of a contractor to design the evaluation process. Mr. Dieleman stated that the ASAP-PIE Advisory group would be happy to report to the Council on a quarterly basis.
  4. A clear plan for continuing the program beyond the funding cycle had not yet been developed. Mr. Dieleman reported that the ASAP-PIE Advisory Committee would continue to meet to discuss how to proceed with implementing the planned services, whether or not the grant was awarded. That group will also be responsible for addressing sustainability issues. Mr. Dieleman stated that he hoped that all of the agencies would accept responsibility for making sure these services are funded, and would welcome the Council's support in working for continued funding.

A question was raised regarding the qualifications for the newly created positions and the process for hiring them. Mr. Dieleman indicated that job descriptions were available in the full grant, and that all positions would be hired according to the personnel policies of Kent ISD or its subcontractors. Questions were also raised regarding the process for solving conflicts and the accessibility of the services for families whose children attend parochial schools. Mr. Dieleman indicated that those issues had not yet been resolved, and stated that they would welcome input.

### **Safe Home Safe Kids Campaign**

Lynn Heemstra presented information on the Safe Home Safe Kids Campaign, a collaborative effort to educate parents and caregivers on the steps they can take to prevent injuries in the home. Over 40 agencies are partnering to create the yearlong in-home safety campaign. The educational campaign will feature a different room of the home each month. In addition to the larger media campaign, the group will target three neighborhoods: Roosevelt Park, Belknap Commons, and Baxter.

Ms. Heemstra invited Council members to attend the Campaign Kick-Off and Press Conference on Wednesday, January 10, 2001. She stated that additional information about the Safe Home Safe Kids Campaign could be accessed by calling 391-SAFE or by visiting the web site, [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org). She stated that she would also distribute Safe Home Safe Kids information with the Council meeting packets.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dan Wiergenga of Wedgewood invited the members to attend the Racial Reconciliation Rally on November 15, 2001, 7:00p.m. – 8:15p.m., at Hillside Community Church, 1440 68<sup>th</sup> Street, SE.

Council member Linda McDonald asked the Council to address the matter of criteria for selecting foster parents. She referenced the recent article in the Grand Rapids Press about a foster parent who had an arrest record. Dick Gritter, Dave Van Rooy, and John Cole addressed the issue. They stated that the criteria for selecting foster parents are determined by the State. However, they could not comment on the specific case because they were not familiar with it. They stressed that newspaper information can often be incomplete or misleading.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:32p.m. **The next Kent County Family and Children's Coordinating Council meeting will be Tuesday, February 6, 2001, from 12:00p.m. – 1:30p.m. at the Wedgewood Christian Youth and Family Services Chapel, 3300 36<sup>th</sup> Street, SE.**