

Richland County Youth and Family Council Meeting
December 5, 2024
1:30 p.m.
Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center/Microsoft TEAMS

The following members were:

Present: Hannah Crouch, Sherry Branham-Fonner, Joe Devany, Lori Bedson, Kevin Kimmel, Nikki Harless, Dan Varn

Absent: Lisa Benson, Michele Giess, Stan Jefferson, Jodie Perry, Tiffany Ellenberger, Meghan Wheeler, Darrell Banks, Kevin Vanmeter

Administrative Staff Present: Michelle Miller

Administrative Staff Absent: Toby Borders

Present via Microsoft TEAMS: Ashley Leadingham, Lydia Dennin, Bobby Rhea, Jenette Smith, Travis Porter, Jessica Caughlan, Jacqueline Williams, Terry Carter

Guests: Rico Woods, Joshua Tolliver, Phil Mitchell, Katie Gatten, Herbert Ross, Sharonda Wilson, Tara Lautzenhiser, Olysse Elkins Walter, Julie Litt, Kaye Clark, Alan Mitchell, Zach B, Whitney Lindsay, Kayleigh Willeroy, Melissa Berkshire, Jamie Starkey, Patricia Dollisch, Anne Vermillion, Aurelio Diaz, Kathy Goodwin, Mario Davison, Stevanie Brown

1. Call to Order & Introductions

President Dan Varn called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM and began introductions. A quorum was established with at least 6 voting members in attendance.

2. Approval of November 7, 2024, Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting (November 7, 2024) was made by Joe and seconded by Sherry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

3. Treasurer's Report

In Toby's absence, Lori reviewed the financial report with Council members. Lori advised members the expenditures to date may seem low based on the budgeted amounts; however, some October invoices may not have been received and processed until November. Lori informed members the Auditor's office will stop processing payments as of mid-December to allow the Auditor's office to close the year. She added Toby had sent e-mail notices to vendors to let them know if invoices were not received by December 4th, they would not be processed and paid until the end of January. Members will see a marked increase in expenses in January and February as the Auditor's office reopens and invoices are processed and paid. On the MUNIS report, Lori called attention to the MSY reimbursement listed under expenses. Lori explained the reimbursement was paid to reconcile unspent MSY funds that had been requested and received for youth but had not been utilized.

Kevin K. made a motion to approve the financial report. Joe seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

4. Old Business

A) Director's Report

1) Service Coordination

Currently 26 youth, ranging in age from 2-20 years old, are involved in service coordination with Rico. One youth has transitioned from an out-of-home placement back home and Rico is working with the family. \$17,000 in FCSS funds has been utilized to assist youth/families involved in service coordination with respite care and transportation (bus tickets and/or gas cards). Youth from school districts all over the county are involved in service coordination. Additionally, youth involved are working with multiple agencies (systems) such as Juvenile Court, Mental Health, RCJFS, Children Services, Special Education, Board of Developmental Disabilities, etc.

2) Risk Reduction Campaign

Michelle reminded members the Council still has risk reduction items such as outlet covers and cupboard latches available for families who may need them.

5. New Business

A) Additional SFSC Funding

Michelle informed members that any counties with a current Strong Families Safe Communities grant can apply for more funding. Councils may receive up to about \$11,666 in additional funds. Richland County and Huron County share the grant and will be applying for the additional funds.

B) 2026 Fiscal Agent

Michelle advised members the Council will need to appoint a fiscal agent for the 2026 fiscal year. Councils need to inform DCY no later than February 10. The fiscal agent will assume financial responsibilities as of July 1, 2025. Only mandated council members can be appointed as fiscal agent. Please contact Michelle if you are interested in the responsibility of fiscal agent.

6. Council Reports

A) Early Intervention

Julie provided an early intervention update to members. Julie informed members the program has undergone compliance monitoring/state auditing and has done very well—excellent case documentation, 45-day compliance/100%; timely receipt of service/100%; transition planning conference/100%; and LEA report/100%. Julie added several complaints noted involved a family who thought the Part C provider lied about reporting the family to Children Services (being a mandated reporter) and another complaint involved a family reporting the Part C provider was not listening to the family's concerns. Julie stated both issues have been resolved, locally.

Julie stated she is continuing to conduct outreach through participation in community groups such as the Prenatal – 5 Committee and providing information about the program to Clearfork Schools to share with parents. Julie shared the state has released a "Sparkler" app for phones which enables a family to track a child's development. If the app notes concerns, EI can reach out to the family to provide support and information about the program.

B) OhioRise – Whitney Lindsay

Whitney informed members OhioRise has added three new Care Coordinators and one Manager to its local staff. She added the program is seeking new office space to accommodate its growth. The local program has added 20 new customers to caseloads (six referrals and transfers). According to Whitney, OhioRise is continuing to work with AETNA to resolve the issue of certifying respite providers.

C) Prenatal – 5 Committee

In Wendy's absence, Michelle provided the report. Michelle stated, at the last meeting, Roger Higginbotham from Family Life Counseling provided information regarding the agency's play therapy and sand therapy practices for children.

7. Additional Items Addressed by the Council

Summer Youth Employment

Michelle reported Catalyst has submitted a narrative and projected budgets for the upcoming TANF Summer Youth Employment program. The projected budget to serve 25 non-TANF eligible youth is \$123,383.70.

Service Coordination Mechanism

Michelle informed members the Service Coordination Mechanism has been finalized; all corrections have been made. Michelle reminded members the Service Coordination Mechanism outlines the Council's procedures when working with youth and addresses such topics as dispute resolution and keeping youth out of placements. Lori made a motion to accept the Service Coordination Mechanism as the final document to be submitted to DCY; Joe seconded the motion.

Shared Plan Quarterly Updates

According to Michelle, the Council is required to provide quarterly updates regarding the county's Shared Plan. These updates are due January 15, April 15 and July 15. Michelle reminded Council members the Shared Plan outlines the county's shared priorities; strategies; outcomes; what's worked/what hasn't worked; and need for resources.

R.I.S.E. Monthly Events

Michelle stated she is seeking hosts for the upcoming R.I.S.E. events in 2025. She added the first event will be hosted by Youth and Family Council at Richland County Job and Family Services. If you would like to host an event, please let Michelle know.

Permanent Change of Meeting Date

Michelle posed the idea of changing the meeting date for the Council meeting from the first Tuesday of the month to the second Tuesday of the month to eliminate the problem of the Finance Committee meeting after the full Board several times each year. After polling voting members present, the discussion was tabled to be addressed at a later meeting. Dan asked members who would be able to meet on January 9th vs January 2nd since the next meeting falls in a holiday week. Sherry suggested polling voting members by e-mail to see who could meet on January 2nd and who could meet on January 9th. Sherry made the motion to hold the next Council meeting on January 2nd or January 9th dependent upon the availability of a quorum for attendance. Nikki seconded the motion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Community Baby Shower

Ashley presented an overview of the Community Baby Shower held on October 17, 2024. According to Ashley, 116 spots were reserved by potential Baby Shower attendees and 100 guests were present (per registration check-in). 29 community vendors were present during the event. Lunch was provided to the attendees and vendors. Community vendors provided items for the raffles. The intent of the Baby Shower was to provide a "passport to resources" for parents/caregivers. According to surveys completed by attendees (51 completed surveys were submitted), attendees were "very satisfied" or "mostly satisfied" with the event.

Ashley stated the organizers may have to expand the event next year. The "Save the Date" for next year's event is October 16, 2025.

6. Updates/Announcements

Zach, YWCA, announced YWCA Resource and Referral has conducted Parent Cafés for foster and adoptive parents. During the meetings with parents, the parents and YWCA representatives discuss protective factors. The Parent Cafés provide an ongoing support network to the foster and adoptive parents. Participating families may receive Resource Kits that include diapers and other care items. Michelle reminded Council members the Council provides funding for this project.

Stephanie Brown, Buckeye Community Schools, introduced herself as a new Social Worker working with youth. Stephanie stated she is making herself aware of resources available to youth and their families and would welcome any information agencies might provide.

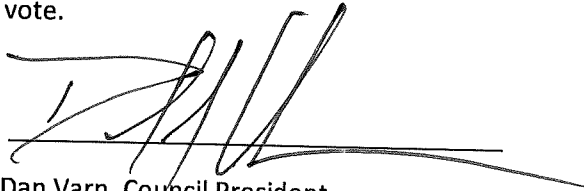
Nikki introduced Tara Lautzenhiser as the newly appointed Executive Director of Children Services. Tara will be replacing Nikki in this position when Nikki retires at the end of January.

Jean informed members Regional Planning has conducted two meetings as part of the planning process for the mobility grant. The first meeting included employers; the second meeting included social service agencies and public transportation users. Both groups were asked to identify needs and concerns regarding public transportation in the county. Jean provided a survey and asked members to share the survey with community members. Additionally, Jean stated Regional Planning is making the survey available to as many community residents as possible through various venues (social media, paper copies in agencies, local employers to employees, etc.).

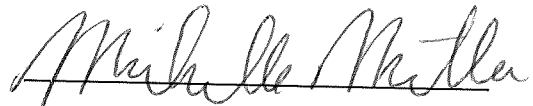
Travis, Village Network, informed members Village Network is seeking partners to recruit foster parents. Contact Travis for more information.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Sherry and seconded by Nikki. The motion passed by voice vote.



Dan Varn, Council President



Michelle Miller, Executive Director