

***Orleans and Northern Essex
Building Bright Futures
&
Children's Integrated Services***

August 3rd, 2015

1:00 PM

Regional Council Meeting
Emory Hebard State Building

MINUTES

Attendance: Sylvie Corriveau, Colleen Moore De Ortiz VHD, Ashley Cleveland VHD, Lorraine Vernet VB3, Jennifer Johansson VHD, Liza Fleischer CIS, Michelle Maitri-Mudita CIS, Linda Michniewicz EH/HS, Mark McMillen Promise Community, Jennifer Phillips CMCC, Chris Nelson VB5

CIS Business:

Newport Children's Integrated Service has submitted their end of year report, and this will not free them up to do more public outreach and connect with referral sources. CIS was awarded a \$2,000.00 grant from Orleans and Northern Essex Building Bright Futures BBFDS grant, and they plan to host a variety of parent education opportunities.

Announcement:

- 1- WIC partners with Farm to School and are currently offering WIC participants a \$30.00 coupon book to be used at any Farmer's Market in the state of Vermont. Families can go to the Farmer's Market when WIC is there or they can log in to wichealth.org and take two of their classes, and then go to the Newport WIC office and pick-up their coupons. These will be available until the end of October, and it was reported that these are being underutilized.
- 2- Head Start is in the process of doing their Community Assessment and they are asking community members a variety of questions on the needs of those eligible for Head Start services.
- 3- Vermont Birth to Five (VB5) I requesting proposal up to \$2,000.00 per applicants (maximum of \$1,000.00 requested per playgroups) to implement a plan to support Family, Friends, and Neighbors care through playgroups during the period of September 1st, 2015 – August 30th, 2016. Submission are due Friday August 7th, 2015. Email proposal to info@vermontbirthtothree.org
- 4- Chris Nelson is the new VB5 Mentor for home providers. She offers support 30hrs/week to local home providers for anything from helping them with achieving such things as their STARS, obtain certificates, get ready for Act 166, and offer them her wealth of knowledge from years in the industry.
- 5- The Regional Council meeting for September will be held on September 14th due to the Labor Day holiday.
- 6- As of February 1st, 2016, WIC will no longer be doing home deliveries. Recipients will be given a card and will be able to shop for WIC approved foods at local grocery stores. Other regions are doing this now, and Orleans County has been able to learn from those other regions. This will be a significant change for some families, and they may need support in figuring out transportation and other obstacle. WIC will offer shopping advice as well as the approved foods will have a WIC sticker on them.

- 7- News from the Newport Vermont Department of Health of health office is that Colleen Moore De Ortiz is now the new

Act 166:

Act 166 continues to be an on-going item on our Regional Council agenda. When asked if there were any questions or update, the story on WCAX was mentioned. The news outlet ran a story depicting Act 166 as pitting parents against child care providers over tuition. In response to the story, Building Bright Futures wanted to clarify some of the talking points.

Point #1

There is overwhelming evidence that high quality early learning and development is a good, sound public investment which reaps countless cost benefits later in life. Public funding provided through the passage of Act 166 supports high quality early learning and development for all 3-, 4- and 5-year olds in Vermont, not already enrolled in kindergarten. By improving quality in early education, we increase access for parents who expect quality early learning.

Point #2

Providing high-quality early learning opportunities for families requires full-day, full-year coverage as many families work full time. It involves many additional costs to providers like hiring a licensed teacher, improving quality standards, etc. Currently, public support means funds 10 hours per week during the academic year.

Point #3

The economic benefits of investing in early childhood comes in future higher earnings as better educated children turn into adults. In addition, investing in early childhood lowers avoidable costs of child welfare, remedial education, police and corrections, individuals with addiction, and unemployed, underemployed, unproductive, and unhealthy adults.

Point #4

Full implementation of the law was delayed for a year in order for school districts across Vermont to prepare. Act 166, though only funding 10 hours per week, is a bold step toward “levelling the playing field” for children and their families who are often shut out of opportunities to improve their economic mobility.

Point #5

Nearly 65,000 Vermont children under 13 live in households where all of the parents are in the labor force – working or looking for work.* Many parents struggle with child care fees in Vermont that typically exceed \$8,000 per child per year. Although Vermont provides child care subsidies based on family income, the subsidy, which is paid directly to the provider, is woefully inadequate and less than the federally recommended level.

This will continue to be an on-going topic on the Regional Council agenda and members took the opportunity to pick Chris Nelson’s brain in regards to how home providers are feeling about this transition. There are still a lot of unanswered questions, which make this challenging for providers, such as what happens when children are in a shared custody situation and live in different districts part of the time. Also talked about the fact that on average, a licensed teacher will cost approximately \$5,000.00 so if a provider only has one child who lives in a district where Act 166 is being implemented the \$3,000.00 tuition would not be sufficient. There was also talk about budgeting classes, and what could be helpful to providers. These talks will continue in hopes of identify ways of supporting home providers.

Let’s Grow kids:

LGK will be at local fairs promoting their message and looking for new pledges this summer including at the Orleans Country Fair in Barton from August 19th-23rd, 2015. They also have a new initiative where they will go around in their new van and record testimonials. According to them, the personal stories of Vermonters will be

an effective and persuasive tool to frame the challenges of finding high-quality child care, and to determine how the system can be improved to serve everyone well. Look for them at the Fair!!

Next meeting – September 14th, 2015 1:00 at the Emory Hebard State Bldg. conference room 250