



**Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council (BBF SAC)
Meeting Minutes
February 25, 2019**

Present: Julie Cadwallader Staub, David Young, Cheryle Wilcox, Renee Swain, Amy Johnson, Reeva Murphy, Kate Rogers, Kim Keiser, Breena Holmes

On the phone: Chloe Learey, Emily Merrill

Absent: Stacy Weinberger, Sara Barry, Aly Richards, Mike Mrowicki, Richard Westman, Martha Maksym, Sue Ceglowski, Nicole Grenier, Katie Watts, Janet McLaughlin

Community Partners/Guests: Lee Lauber, Kelly Ault, Nancy Steely, Kristin Fontaine, Ann Dillenbeck, Robyn Freedner-Maguire

Staff present: Carolyn Wesley, Katie Mobbs, Jay Austin, Julia Andrews, Amanda Biggs, Beth Truzansky, Steve Ames, Liz Hamel, Darla Senecal, Dora Levinson, Ellen Taetzsch phone: Steve Ames, Robin Stromgren

1. Welcome, Introductions & Other Business

Carolyn Wesley called the meeting to order at 12:11pm

a. Welcome all in attendance, review agenda

b. Consent Agenda

The board passed the minutes from the January 28, 2019. Kim Keiser made a motion to accept, with a second by Julie Cadwallader Staub. All members voted in favor of approving.

c. BBF ED Hiring Process

Out of 27 applicants, there was a scoring process which narrowed the field down to 6 candidates for first round interviews. Final two candidates were selected to present on a specific task today immediately following the SAC meeting.

d. SAC Co-Chairs

Reeva Murphy has reached her 2 term limit serving as public Co-Chair of the council, the Executive Committee has begun discussions and will likely recommend Cheryle Wilcox, Department of Mental Health to serve as Co-Chair, to the full council at the March 25th meeting.

e. Federal PDG B-5 Grant

CDD is working on MOUs with various partner agencies and sub-grantees that can be processed the minute we get federal approval. Federal agencies have already given states a one-month extension through January 31st 2020, based on the fact that states haven't received approval letters.

f. ECAP Update

BBF is laying the groundwork to facilitate an update to Vermont's Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP). We are assembling a working group to lead the process and work with the ECAP Committees on revisions. The working group will also ensure that the ECAP is aligned with other plans and documents such as the State Health Improvement Plan and the Vermont Guiding Principles for the Full Participation of Each and Every Child and their Family in Early Childhood Settings.

2. 2018 Vermont Early Care and Learning Household Survey

The council reviewed the 2018 Vermont Early Care and Learning Household Survey, conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. Commissioner Reeva Murphy of the Child Development Division led a review of key findings of the survey, looking at parents' work schedules, use of child care (center-based, in home, paid and unpaid), costs paid, and hours used. The group had a robust discussion about the findings that examined affordability of care, the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP), and use of home-based and/or center-based care. The discussion also included an examination of discrepancies between what other data says about Vermont's families and their need for child care, and what this study suggests.

3. Actions of a State Advisory Council

The Council completed a "popcorn session" to brainstorm and reflect on possible council strategies to improve child and family well-being informed by the National Children's Cabinet Network at the Youth Investment Forum.

4. SAC 2019 Policy Priority- Early Childhood and Family Mental Health

The SAC dedicated a significant portion of this meeting to a discussion of one of its key priority areas for 2019: early childhood and family mental health. We started with a data review of key indicators including the number of young children served in the Designated Mental Health Agencies (DAs) around the state and rate of children in protective custody. In addition to what the data trends tells us, we know from consistent anecdotal evidence that the DAs are seeing a sharp rise in acuity of cases among young very children.

The data are being influenced by many factors. Children's struggles come from many places, including substance use in the home, social isolation, poverty, and homelessness. Providers also see a lot of generational trauma.

The council heard from staff at several local Designated Mental Health Agencies, (Lauren Norford-Rutland Mental Health, Cheryl Huntley-Counseling Service of Addison County, Maria D'Haene-Washington County Mental Health, Liz Mitchell-Howard Center) about the spectrum of services and supports they offer to young children and their families. These ranged from whole-population promotion and prevent efforts, cross-sector training for adults who support young children, and targeted family therapies and interventions. One key takeaway was that that vast majority of mental health services are not provided on site at the DAs, but more often in the home, or in collaboration with community partners, including schools, child care programs, and pediatric offices.

The council explored challenges including recruiting and retaining mental health professionals, caseloads that don't take into account the acuity of cases, and the need to address mental health with families earlier- as close to conception as possible- to help address issues before a family is in crisis. Universal supports for health social and emotional development provided by Early Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (Early MTSS) are another key to turning the curve.

As we closed this initial conversation, there was an acknowledgement that the data available on children's mental health is not sufficient to fully understand the situation. There are some data improvements underway, but there is no real way to measure the acuity issue. It was also suggested that at least one strengths-based measure (such as number of children flourishing) should be considered when deciding how we measure success.

At their March 25th meeting, the State Advisory Council will be building on this discussion to identify possible council actions in the coming year that would support and improve our systems of early childhood and family mental health.

Post meeting meet and greet presentation with final (2) BBF Executive Director Candidates

Next Meeting- Monday March 25th | 12- 3:00pm
Vermont Insurance Agents Association
600 Blair Park, Williston VT 05495