

Clay County Collaborative

Successful Partnerships building Successful Families
Coordinator's report - December 2005

This edition of my report is dedicated to the staff you have assigned to Collaborative work groups. I urge you to communicate about Collaborative activities within your organizations. Minutes from work group meetings can be found on the Collaborative's website: <http://www.claycountycollaborative.org>. It has been a great pleasure to meet with these work groups. I have learned much in these past two months.

Systems Work Groups

Children's Mental Health: Because of having to reschedule after the storm, this group has met only once so far. The group will start working on some key areas identified in last year's Children's Mental Health Focus Group.

IIP: In November, IIP sponsored two training sessions in Moorhead and Hawley. Attended by approximately 70 educators, service providers and others, the training provided an overview of the IIP process and writing global goals. The group plans to hold training for parents in the spring and perhaps a special session devoted to goal writing.

School-Age Disability: In the short-term, this group wants to develop a resource website with links to local information that will be of use to parents, educators and service providers. They have identified a gap in system coordination for children in grades five through eight.

Planning and Evaluation: You can expect a recommendation for evaluating projects from this group in the spring. Dr. Shawn Ginther from MSUM will meet with the group in January. Kathleen Bergseth from NDSU has also been invited to attend. Both will share their expertise in assessment with the group.

Parent Involvement: This group will meet for the first time in January.

Project Work Groups

Family Support Model: This group is researching current practices in Family Group Decision Making and Wraparound for their next meeting. They want to learn more about both of these models before deciding where to focus their energies for the future.

Reentry Services: A major topic of discussion at the meeting of this work group was the lack of independent living skills in young people ages 16 – 21. The group will explore training a cadre of peer mentors who would aid in the transition to independent living.

Restorative Justice: Plans for next year include adding at least a part-time staff person to help deal with the explosion in referrals. Jill reports an average of 10 – 15 per quarter since the inception of the program. In the third quarter this year, she received 30 referrals and by December 1, she had already received 30 referrals for fourth quarter.

Truancy Intervention: Now that the successful transition to the Village has been made, this work group will focus on program assessment.

Problem-solving Work Groups

Prevention and Early Intervention: A major challenge for this group is defining "early intervention." Their working definition is: Early intervention is a continuum that depends on the individual and his/her circumstance. In January, they will evaluate existing programs and those in danger of being defunded in an effort to identify overarching issues that need addressing.

Substance Abuse: This group has learned of several exciting prevention initiatives in the county. In January they will look at successful programs and identify areas that need attention.