

## Children's Mental Health Systems Work Group Minutes

Tuesday, 2 February 2010

1:00 – 2:15 p.m.

Family Services Center, Room 7

*In attendance:* Rakshya Ban (Prairie St. John's), Janelle Cheney (Clay County Probation), Lanette Krinsky (Parent representative), Kristin Phillips (Clay-Wilkin Head Start), Barb Schaub (Lakeland Mental Health Center), Jill Skarvold (Moorhead Area Public Schools), Ruth Smith (REACH), Dawn Tommerdahl (Collaborative Coordinator), Stacie Loegering (FirstLink)

Lanette volunteered to chair today's meeting. She welcomed the group and we did a round of introductions. Minutes from 1/05/10 meeting were unanimously approved. (Janelle/Rakshya) No changes were made to today's agenda.

*Suicide prevention efforts in our communities:* Stacie Loegering, FirstLink

(<http://www.myfirstlink.org/>), explained that 235-SEEK turns forty years old this year. 211 is a new service that doesn't always work, depending on telephone service provider. The national 1-800-SUICIDE also goes to the FirstLink line locally. FirstLink is one of 140 call centers across the country. For most callers, talking to the hotline person is enough to get them going on a different track. 1-800-273-TALK.

- They have been targeting 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students in health classes in Fargo with suicide prevention education – usually following the mental health unit. They depend on teachers to invite them to their classes. Presentations typically run 45 minutes. The hotline sometimes receives prank calls after working with younger students. They revisit the schools in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, asking students to brainstorm about “What would you do if...” with scenarios of friends indicating they're having suicidal thoughts. Their responsibility for reaching out to help someone in need is broached with high school and college students. ND has the second-highest youth suicide rate.
- Trainers follow the Yellow Ribbon curriculum. They hand out as many cards with suicide hotline information on it as possible. They teach coping skills and how to recognize warning signs.
- Moorhead High has students in their SADD chapter do the suicide prevention. They'd like to include suicide prevention in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Explore curriculum.
- FirstLink works with veterans organizations. AFSP (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention - <http://www.afsp.org/>) has a Fargo chapter. They have developed videos for younger children through college age.
- NDSU is asking all students take an online screening for depression. Counseling Center staff have also placed magnets with Counseling Center contact information and 1-800-273-TALK.
- Researchers estimate that for every completed suicide, there are twenty-five attempts.
- AFSP and FirstLink both offer suicide survivor support groups.
- FirstLink offers a 2-day ASSIST training for community members or professionals who want to become more involved in reaching out to people who may be having suicidal thoughts. Cost is \$200. They can also offer a 2-3 hour training.
- Looking back over 5 years, suicide calls to FirstLink have doubled. They were up significantly in 2009 over 2008. FirstLink doesn't track the number of completed suicides. Nationally it's 32,000 – 33,000 per year.

The group discussed how to strengthen suicide prevention efforts in Clay County.

- Ruth will contact school staff in Hawley.
- Jill will bring it up for discussion at the Safe and Healthy Learner Committee. Scott Matheson (student assistance counselor at Moorhead High) is the chair. The committee has developed protocols for teachers, students and parents to follow in cases where young people express their concern about suicide.
- Dawn will contact the other counselors to let them know that this option is available.
- Perhaps Facebook and Twitter would be good resources for students.
- Head Start could include FirstLink's Information & Crisis Services brochures in the folder that they distribute to families in the fall.
- The group discussed how to gauge the impact of suicide prevention efforts. Check the MN Student Survey for questions related to suicide (feeling cared about at school, etc.). Completed suicides are reported at the state level. It's harder to know about attempts.
- We could sponsor a 2-3 hour training. We could support school teams in getting ASSIST training. The goal is to create a bigger cadre of gatekeepers in our communities.

### **FY11 work plan**

After some discussion, the group decided to change the goals listed on their work plan to match the strategic plan that was developed for Children's Mental Health.

*A motion to replace the FY10 work plan goals with goals from the strategic plan passed unanimously. (Janelle/Jill)*

The group will work on the budget next time. Dawn will forward funding requests from Steve Grineski (MSUM) for his/his students' work with students at RRALC and Barry Nelson (Metro Youth Partnership) for administrative time Deb Shasky spends processing flex requests that come to us.

### **FY10 work plan: budget and program updates**

No discussion at this time – Dawn will send out an updated budget and program updates by the end of the week.

**Agency updates:** No time for these!

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, March 2, 1 – 2:30 p.m., meeting room 7

Respectfully submitted,  
Dawn Tommerdahl  
Collaborative Coordinator