

**Clay County Collaborative**  
*Successful Partnerships building Successful Families*  
**Program updates, Work Group updates and Coordinators' reports**  
**December 2011**

**Program updates: Project Work Groups**

**Family Support Model** – *from AJ Schuler, The Village Family Service Center*

AJ facilitated one family group conference in November. She will have two conferences in the second half of December. Her work with wraparound teams continues.

**Reentry Services** -- *from Shelley Ford, Probation*

Funding from the new Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs grant that supports the program will start on January 1, 2012. An article in a late November Fargo *Forum* highlighted the films made by students who participated in this summer's Arts Adventure program at Trollwood. Several of the clients involved in the Reentry Services Project participated in that program. The next meeting of the Joint Re-entry Services/Restorative Justice Program Advisory Group will be February 2 at 1 p.m. in meeting room 7 at the Family Service Center in Moorhead.

**Restorative Justice** – *from coordinator Charles Kaspari, Victim Services, Clay County Attorney*

All referrals to the Restorative Justice Program after December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 will be required to pay a \$25 fee to participate in the program. This fee will be collected sometime prior to the final Restorative Justice Conference and notice of this fee will be included in the documentation mailed to referrals regarding the program.

The fee is mandatory for all, with an exemption for families receiving MNFIP and, the North Dakota equivalent, TANF assistance. The RJ program will follow up and apply the exemption when appropriate.

There will be no additional paperwork added to the referral process and no additional requirements to refer a juvenile to the program. If you have any questions please let me know.

**Truancy Intervention Program** - *from coordinator Michael Ochoa, The Village Family Service Center*

One of the family advocates who covered Barnesville schools and two Moorhead elementary schools resigned effective December 2, leaving four family advocates to cover all Clay County public schools.

School District	Contacts	Students involved in the program
Barnesville	55	5
Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton	15	6
Hawley	16	3
Moorhead	1083	274
Ulen-Hitterdal	9	3

**Work Group updates: Systems Change Work Groups**

**Children's Mental Health – Churches United for the Homeless Family Case Manager:** Ann Leuthard gave the following update at the Children's Mental Health work group meeting on December 1: Since November 9, Churches United has been allowed to house extra residents due to

the cold winter weather. On Monday, December 5, twenty-five people slept in the dining room and wherever else there was room. The New Life Center will soon offer overflow for single men. The YWCA has overflow for women/children. Churches United is the only place where families can turn. Five families started out in overflow and have since moved to family rooms. The seven rooms plus one smaller room are currently full. Four families moved out to permanent housing in the last month. Amy Baker (Lakes & Prairies) will meet with families to offer financial literacy skills training.

The Christmas Store is shaping up and everyone is excited about it. Other Christmas activities (such as tour of Christmas lights in Lindenwood Park) have been arranged so that children can participate in “normal” activities at this time of year.

The Children’s Consultation Network will offer Nurtured Heart Approach training to shelter staff so that everyone can be on the same page about reinforcing the skills Shawna and Jody will work on with parents and children. Other training activities planned: January – professional boundaries; February – de-escalation skills; March – mandated reporting.

**Children’s Mental Health – Rural Children’s Mental Health:** *from Amy Ebert, family support worker:* 35 students from 18 different households. 396 pounds were distributed between Hawley Public School and Ulen-Hitterdal Public School. 132 bags were given out. 9 *Salvation Army vouchers* were given out to families to assist with gas for medical appointments, utilities that were going to be turned off, rent to prevent eviction, and other services to help with job seeking which impacted 19 children in November. 7 *thrift store vouchers* were given out to families with children to purchase clothing or needed household items. *Thanksgiving food baskets* were given out to families in the surrounding area in Hawley on 11/21. 48 Clay County families received a Thanksgiving Food Box benefiting 96 children. The Food Box included a turkey, 2 boxes of stuffing, a tube of biscuits, an apple or a pumpkin pie, cool whip, potatoes, and squash. We are looking forward to the *Spirit of Giving* and have several children signed up to receive gifts that are given by local individuals sponsoring name tags.

#### **Children’s Mental Health – Other projects**

- 1) **Respite:** none disbursed since last meeting
- 2) **Flex Funds:** Distributed in November: \$185.00; Distributed so far in FY12: \$2764.17 (\$1412.00 for children under 9, \$1352.17 for children 9 and up)
- 3) **Follow Along Program:** Liz Bjur (Clay County Public Health) reports that for the period 10/1/11-12/6/11: 474 Active clients, 233 ASQs were sent with 75 returned; of these 70 reported no failures. 68 ASQ-SEs were sent with 24 returned; of these 21 reported no failures. Currently our computer program is incorrectly calculating the number of new clients, thus this item is not indicated at this time.
- 4) **Lessons from the Field Series:** The spring session is scheduled for March 29 from 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. in the ITV room, 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Family Service Center in Moorhead. The topic is Traumatic and Children’s Mental Health: Trauma-focused care for school-age children and youth with presenter Anne Gearity, PhD, author of *Developmental Repair: A training manual:* <http://www.clinicalsocialworkmn.org/publications/DevRepair-TrainingManual.pdf>. Online registration will be available in January at [www.cmh.umn.edu](http://www.cmh.umn.edu).

**IIP (Individual Interagency Intervention Plan):** At their meeting this month, the work group discussed using AJ Schuler as a training and coaching resource person for special education staff in rural schools and parents who may want assistance in facilitating IEP team meetings.

**School Age Disabilities:** A pool party for kids with special needs, their families and friends is scheduled for Saturday, January 14 from 7 – 9 p.m. at Sanford’s Family Wellness Center in Fargo. Ulen-Hitterdal Community Education is using their allocation from this work group for stress-reduction activities to offset costs of an all-day women’s retreat on January 28 at the school in Ulen.

### **Work Group updates: Collaborative Committees**

**Parent Involvement Committee:** Discussion of *Being The Other* will be held on January 24 and February 7 from noon – 1 at the Family Service Center in Moorhead. Cost is \$15 for the book and two lunches. The work group previewed the documentary “What the BLEEP Do We Know?” (<http://www.whatthebleep.com/index2.shtml>): “Exploring the worlds of Quantum Physics, Neurology, and Molecular Biology in relation to the spheres of Spirituality, Metaphysics and Polish weddings. Part documentary, part drama, part animation, How does it all fit together???” They will offer a lunch-time showing of this thought-provoking film on February 16. The work group will sponsor two people to attend the MN Fathers & Families Network’s Summit in St. Cloud on January 23-24.

**Planning and Evaluation Committee:** No update at this time.

### **Work Group updates: Problem-solving Work Groups**

**Prevention & Early Intervention:** The winter session of the group for fathers of young children started on December 1. The last workshop in this year’s Fatherhood Leadership Circle was held on November 29. Glen Palm (St. Cloud State University) spoke on fatherhood and early childhood. The leadership circle had a table at the FMWF Chamber’s Holiday Business After Hours on December 1. They will meet in early January to make their work plan for 2012.

**Substance Abuse:** Three work group members spoke about the impact of Moorhead smoke shops on children and the culture of Moorhead at the Moorhead City Council meeting prior to the drug paraphernalia ordinance passing. After seeking and not getting grants to fund strategic planning and other substance use prevention activities, the work group has decided to go ahead with planning without a state grant. Stay tuned!!!

### **LCTS coordinator’s report:**

We received notice of our Quarter 3 Local Collaborative Time Study reimbursements in the amounts of \$19,303 for Medical Assistance, and \$18,360 for IV-E for a grand total of \$37,663. Unfortunately, this amount does show a 20% decrease in our earnings compared to the same quarter last year. Based on the information Collaborative Coordinators received from DiAnn Robinson of DHS last month, we somewhat anticipated this reduction which is presumably due to a change in the definition of Code letter “B” which falls within the Foster Care Candidate codes of the time study. The state’s explanation is that the new definition makes the code’s activities more clear and therefore, it is possible that participants now have a better understanding of the code and what activities accurately fall under it.

On the training side of the LCTS, refresher training has now been completed in Moorhead, D-G-F and Ulen-Hitterdal, and has been scheduled in Barnesville in mid-January. Hawley will also be scheduled in January which will then wrap up refresher trainings for this school year.

*Submitted by Jane Patrick, LCTS Coordinator*

## Coordinator's report

This month I've spent some time visiting with a few school counselors about what I learned at the Program Sharing Conference I attended in October. This year's keynote on the Science of the Positive was given by Jeff Linkenbach, director of the Center for Health & Safety Culture (<http://www.mostofus.org/>) at Montana State University in Bozeman. The Science of the Positive, built on the three-legged stool of Spirit, Science and Action, is designed to create the social conditions in which transformation can occur. Dr. Linkenbach shared the following chart that highlights the difference between change and transformation:

Change is...	Transformation is...
Temporary	Lasting
Surface level	Deep core
Combines same elements, new formats	New elements, synergistic reactions
More common	More rare
Easier to measure	Difficult to measure
Linear and stages	Quantum leaps
Current paradigm	Paradox and shifts

If that's hard to wrap your head around think **change** = caterpillar getting bigger vs. **transformation** = caterpillar turning into a butterfly.

What really struck me about Dr. Linkenbach's research into the science of the positive is that it begins in spirit or story. I'm proud that many of the programs our Collaborative funds are rooted in strength-based practice to the extent that they start with a client's or a family's story (aka spirit/culture) and grow from there. I would guess that many of you could tell success stories of families whose lives were transformed when their story or spirit was honored and built upon. Story is not the easiest place to start the process of transformation, but Linkenbach's research has shown that without starting there, the science (data) and action (activities) are likely not as effective as they might otherwise be.

So after trying to paint as bleak a picture of Clay County youth as possible (given our 2010 Minnesota Student Survey data) for the unsuccessful grant applications mentioned in the Substance Abuse work group report above, I'm pleased to report that our kids must not be that bad – since we didn't receive the grants. Stay tuned to what the Substance Abuse work group will be working on in the coming months! This group of committed and passionate adults who work with youth and young adults are about to embark on a project that will analyze the MSS data in a different way to paint a more well-rounded picture of youth in our county.

On a related note, many staff members from Collaborative partner organizations attended the Youth Venture Alliance Summit on December 1. We heard the finding that a low percentage of youth in our communities feel valued by adults. This finding comes from the 2007 Search Institute survey of over 10,000 youth in Moorhead, Fargo and West Fargo schools that was done at the time that Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative expanded to Fargo and West Fargo. Two youth-led community events were initiated to address this finding: the youth summit, which draws hundreds of youth from our communities and the surrounding counties, and the Fill the Dome campaign were initiated in response to that finding. We know that these events have grown each year and are now wildly successful. I would hope that if a new survey were given to youth in 2012, it would show that a higher percentage of youth feel valued these days. As always, thanks to each of you for all that you do for children and families in our communities!