



**Operation Youth Success**  
**Families Work Group Notes**  
Tuesday, February 20, 2018  
9:00-11:00 AM  
Heartland Workforce Solutions

Purpose Statement: Empower families to better understand the system and engage in their youth's care.

Families Working Group Charter

- Empowering families to better understand the system
- Engage youth and families
- Seek help when needed

1. Introductions

- a. Present: Margaret Vacek, Ravan Charles, Jim Hubbard, Mark LeFlore, Andrea Wright, Shawne Coonfare, Janee Pannkuk, Karla Dush, Catherine Rivier, Judith Gutierrez, Debora Faga
- b. Ravan Charles, with Terra Luna, gave a little bit of background on herself

2. OYS Updates

- a. Douglas County has hired their DMC Coordinator, A'Jamal Byndon, and he starts on February 26<sup>th</sup> and he will be officially introduced at the next DMC meeting on Wednesday, the 28<sup>th</sup>, from 9 am to 11 am
- b. NJJA Conference in Kearney, NE, starts May 1<sup>st</sup> – OYS backbone staff will be attending
- c. OYS Backbone staff attended the 2018 Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Ally College Conference, February 16-18
- d. School Based Arrest Work Group partnered with Norris Middle and South High Schools with a Provider Resource Fair during Parent-Teacher Conferences
- e. Judith has joined the Families Group with Through the Eyes of the Child and brought a brochure they are handing out; discussion was held about our brochure and how it should be distributed

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For **all youth** who do enter our justice system, our goals are to provide **effective, compassionate** and **individualized** support that empowers youth and their **families** to **succeed** and to build an environment of **mutual trust and accountability**.

### 3. Review

- a. Summary of last meeting's activities
  - i. Identified an ongoing need to continue to educate others and ourselves to bring us up to speed on what different touch points in the system we are engaging youth and families – Family Engagement 2.1 – last month presenters were:
    1. Shawne Coonfare – Diversion
    2. Joy Suder – Court Hearing and Process
    3. Jaci Dai-Klabunde – Juvenile Re-Entry Project, Legal Aid
  - ii. Is everyone satisfied with the way the Family Engagement information has been presented? The general consensus is yes.
  - iii. How would the group feel about putting together a snapshot of all the system points and taking that to Knowledge Exchange (the next one is on April 30, 2pm-4pm)? The consensus is yes.

### 4. Activity – Tabled to next meeting

- a. Approval of Work Plan – draft
- b. Strategy sub-groups

### 5. Family Engagement 2.1

- a. Mark LeFlore, Douglas County Youth Center, presented
  - i. Distributed two different brochures that are mailed out in a “welcome packet” to the families who have a youth that enters DCYC
  - ii. Education and family engagement are two priorities
  - iii. Family visitation is also important
  - iv. All youth are given a math and reading test upon entry and again after 90 days
  - v. All youth that come in are evaluated by both the medical staff (pediatrician and nurse) that are affiliated with UNMC
  - vi. Region 6 provides three Mental Health Practitioners and a Psychologist that are available to youth.
  - vii. About two-thirds of the youth that come in have already been involved in the juvenile justice system
  - viii. DCYC is in the process now of implementing PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) and as a result the dynamics of the Youth Center has changed. They follow a ratio of 1 staff to every 8 youth. In the event there are more than 8 youth on the unit, an additional staff must be

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present. Thus, bed availability has decreased from 144 to 96. There has been an advantage in this for the educators.

- ix. With a few exceptions, the youth have every resource available in their education that they would have at their regular school. Education is cornerstone to what they do. DCYC serves 8 different school districts.
- i. Parent teacher conferences are held and parents are invited to attend them as well as graduation. If a student is struggling, parents are contacted and made aware.
- ii. DCYC was able to help families through the OYS Families WG Linen Drive
- iii. In order to hear more from involved families, DCYC would be glad to be a site for a “safe space” for families to be able to talk about their experiences

#### 6. Decision Making/Next Steps

- a. Approve workplan draft and begin strategy actions
- b. Is OYS planning on having a presence at the youth march on March 24<sup>th</sup>? It would be up to the Executive Team.
- c. Advocacy training for youth would be a good way to engage youth

#### 7. Feedback Surveys – Handed out

#### 8. Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 20, 2018

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