

Early Childhood Task Force minutes 4-28-2021, 9:30 am

This meeting was held via zoom with the following present:

Ginger Knisley, Carolyn Baker, Jolene Dilks, Melissa Daugherty, Amy Hayes, Sarah Maxwell Leckband, and Paula Vandervelde

The agenda and previous meeting minutes were accepted as written

Ginger gave an **administrative update** including a recap from the March retreat, funding updates, board representation needs, and an update on the EC website. In regards to public awareness around the mental health consequences of COVID shutdowns, Paula suggested Connections Matter could be a good resource. In discussion regarding the Children First bylaws committee looking at whether or not to keep term limits, Jolene and Melissa both said they could see the benefits of being able to keep experienced board members on indefinitely but also recognize the value of fresh perspectives on a board.

Updates per sector:

Mental Health: Ginger shared that the board has authorized her to make a large purchase of books that are geared toward helping young children cope with mental health issues. The books are in sets of 10 different titles, approved by child psychologists, reviewed and endorsed by Jamie Beskow. These will be distributed to hopefully all EC sites in our two counties.

Family Support: Ginger shared that Missy reported yesterday the HOPES program will not be implementing a return to in person home visits any time soon as MIECHV has not been released to start that process and she maintains one set of rules for her entire program.

Melissa shared that VBPAT is in a similar situation. Due to HIPAA laws they are not allowed to ask medical questions of their clients and so cannot ask if they have had a COVID vaccine. They also have one Parent Educator who has been vaccinated and one who has not and suspect that many of their families have not taken the vaccine. They will not be moving to in person visits any time soon under the current guidance. She reports group meetings continue to be well attended virtually but that Nest participation is somewhat down. They do have openings for more families but now have WIC in person at their building and are hoping that helps with referrals. They are preparing family activity boxes designed to get families outdoors and active that will be distributed in May. The boxes also include home safety items. The local CAPC council hosted a story walk recently that was well attended and they intend to host another soon. VBPAT is going through National PAT accreditation this year for the first time.

Oral Health: Jolene reported that LCHD was present at her center for the dental screening and fluoride program today and they are reporting being back in the schools and very busy.

Child Care/Preschool: Amy reported she is starting to get out in the centers doing health and safety checklists and injury prevention checklists along with providing TA and conducting CPR trainings. She is still quite busy with COVID clinics but feels that is starting to slow down. They are looking at possibly doing some pop – up clinics around the community. She is really still learning her role as she was hired in October 2019, certified in February 2020 and then COVID happened in March of 2020. Jolene stated Amy has been very valuable throughout the pandemic and has done a great job of keeping up with

CCNC duties. Jolene also shared she has completed the NAC certification and sees value in having met and networked with other area Directors. She also shared information about a new funding opportunity from DHS being administered through CCR&R that is called Investing in Iowa Child Care (IICC). Paula added that IICC is geared toward 3 main areas: startup of new child care sites, expansion of existing child care sites, and urgent regulatory needs of current child care sites. Paula also shared that CCRR would appreciate help with provider appreciation promotion and welcome pictures and posts of provider appreciation events.

Other programs/business:

Carolyn shared that the Bridges Out of Poverty had been paused due to COVID but is up and running now but they do not have any children involved at this time so she is not personally involved at this time.

Sarah shared RVAP has a coloring/activity book available for family boxes that family support programs are giving out, or to be included in other community projects.

There will be no ECTF meeting in May 2021. The next ECTF meeting will be on Wednesday, JUNE 23rd, 2021 at 9:30 am via zoom with the possibility of in person.

gk