

**Children and Youth Behavioral Health Subcommittee  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, October 9, 2019**

**Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introductions**

The Children and Youth Behavioral Health Subcommittee meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. with Barbara Granger (CYBHS co-chair) providing a welcome to the members. Members introduced themselves. Table 1 shows attendance for the meeting.

Table 1: The CYBHS Subcommittee member attendance.

MEMBER NAME	YES	NO	MEMBER NAME	YES	NO
<b>Behavioral Health Advisory Council</b>			<b>Suicide Prevention</b>		
Donna Fagan	X		Merily Keller		X
<b>Community</b>			Lisa Sullivan (Alternate)		X
<i>Heart of Texas</i> Ron Kimbell	X		<b>TX Correctional Office Medical/Medical Impairments</b>		
<i>Heart of Texas</i> Telawna Kirbie (Alternate)		X	Emily Eisenman	X	
Vacant			<b>Texas Dept. of Family &amp; Protective Services</b>		
<b>Family</b>			Lauren Bledsoe		X
Barbara Granger	X		Trace Burks-Bell (Alternate)		X
Valencia Gensollen	X		<b>Texas Dept. of State Health Services</b>		
Verlyn Johnson (Alternate)		X	Claire Niday	X	
<b>Health and Human Services Commission</b>			<b>Texas Education Agency</b>		
<i>Children's Mental Health</i> Amelia Somers		X	Julie Wayman		X
<i>Medicaid</i> John Huffine		X	Denise Magallanez (Alternate)		X
<i>Mental Health Coordination</i> Lillian Nguyen	X		<b>Texas Juvenile Justice Department</b>		
<i>Texas System of Care</i> Kisha Ledlow	X		Susan Palacios	X	
<i>Substance Use Treatment</i> Suzanne Alley	X		Marie Welsch (Alternate)	X	
<b>Children's Traumatic Stress Network</b>			<b>Youth/Young Adult</b>		
Vacant			Vacant		
<b>Higher Education</b>			Nigel Cunningham Williams		X
<i>UT-TIEMH</i> Molly Lopez	X				

Yes: Indicates attended the meeting

No: Indicates did not attend the meeting

Attended Online: Glinda Shaffer, Josette Saxon, Kay Brotherton, Ivonne Tapia, Krissy Perez, Leela Rice, Alissa Sughrue, Jamie Mack.

Also in attendance: Arnold Amador, Jameson Cardenas, Glenn Dembowski, Kaleigh Emerson, Zatarra Lumen, Cory Morris, Molly Sanders, Cristopher Burton, Cara Santucci, Ari Acosta, Tracy Levins, Jessi Davis, Veronica Martinez, Alma Carillo, Antoinette Teague, Anne Bondesen, Hugh Simmons, Jessie Brennan, Brenda Keller, Tovah Woodson, Marquez Butler, Anne Halliday, Monica Lucas, Linda Litzinger, David McClung, David Grant.

### **Agenda Item 2: Family/Youth Experience (Antoinette Teague)**

Antoinette Teague shared that she is a mother and a family partner. She has a son who has a disability and behavioral health challenges and has experience in residential treatment. Eight years ago, Ms. Teague was a housekeeper at Waco Center for Youth when her son began having challenges. Earlier this year, she took on the position of a family partner, where she can help other families be heard.

Early in her family's journey, she and her husband tried to get help for their son, but were unsuccessful. They turned to the child welfare system for help with residential treatment. Her son's first two experiences with residential care were negative. She reported that it was only housing for children, and that the experiences caused additional trauma. Her son's third residential stay, although farther away, was beneficial for the family.

When asked what made the third residential center more helpful, Ms. Teague said she knew it was right just with the interactions with the staff and how she felt being there. She said the staff were well-trained, and seemed more sincere and caring. She reported that the staff seemed to understand and connect with her son and also talked frequently with the family. She reported that her son liked it because they listened to him and cared about his feelings. This was a significant step for him because he had not been verbal with his feelings and anger previously. At this residential program, her son learned how to use his coping skills, and she and her husband learned how to be more patient as parents.

### **Agenda Item 3: Children and Youth Behavioral Health Subcommittee (CYBHS) Business**

Barbara announced we have met quorum today and will take care of outstanding business from the last few meetings.

#### *Review and Approval of Minutes*

The minutes from the April 9, 2019 meeting were presented for review and any modifications. Suzanne Alley made a motion to approve the minutes, and Molly Lopez seconded. Approval was unanimous, with no abstentions.

The minutes from the July 10, 2019 meeting were presented for review and any modifications. Lilly Nguyen made a motion to approve the minutes, and Valencia Gensollen seconded. Approval was unanimous, with no abstentions.

#### *Nominations for Co-Chair*

The nominations for CYBHS Co-Chair had been shared with members by email prior to the meeting. Barbara referred to Kisha Ledlow's and Lauren Bledsoe's biographies in the handouts. Members wrote down their vote on notecards, which were collected and counted. Kisha Ledlow was announced as the new CYBHS Co-Chair.

#### *Voting for Current Vacancies for Membership*

Kisha stated that there is a current vacancy for the National Child Traumatic Stress Network member. Molly indicated that this role was on the subcommittee because of a previous grant, but that there would not be a clear role for current grantees to serve on CYBHS. Lilly indicated that it would make sense to shift this to an advocacy role and have two member positions. Kisha shared that the nominations committee would create an application process, and we could seek volunteers to serve in those roles.

Barbara held a vote to approve creating two member positions for advocates in place of the one NCTSN member role. Approval was unanimous, with no abstentions.

#### *Membership Application Process*

Kisha spoke about the other vacant slot on the roster for a Community Representative for Local Mental Health Authorities. This vacant slot was previously a System of Care community. The committee proposed having a membership application process for this vacancy as well so organizations or communities could apply. This item did not need to be approved since there would be no change to the bylaws.

### **Agenda Item 4: Residential Treatment Center Parental Relinquishment Prevention Project Overview (Tovah Woodson)**

Tovah Woodson presented an overview of the Residential Treatment Center Parental Relinquishment Prevention Project (RTC Project). Please refer to the presentation slides. The RTC Project is a collaboration between the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). It is intended to prevent parental relinquishment to meet children's mental health needs and was established in S.B. 44, passed during the 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislative session.

The RTC Project officially launched with the first RTC placement in January 2014. The program gained funding to serve 30 additional children in the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, 2015, and funding for beds increased as a result of the 85<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, 2017 and 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, 2019. The RTC Projects has two goals:

1. Serve children and youth ages 5-17 who suffer from severe emotional disturbance (SED) and whose parents cannot access RTC placement due to lack of resources; and
2. Prevent relinquishment to DFPS solely to obtain mental health services.

DFPS refers youth who meet initial eligibility criteria to HHSC after abuse and neglect has been ruled out. The eligibility criteria are as follows:

1. Community resources are unable to meet the mental health needs of the child;
2. The severity of the child's needs makes it unsafe for the family to care for the child at home; and
3. The family has exhausted all of its resources.

CPS is the family's first point of contact. CPS will open an investigation to ensure the child is eligible for the RTC Project and ensure there is no abuse or neglect. There are several steps to the process, which include:

1. Submitting a referral to HHSC
2. Receiving a referral/assessment
3. RTC eligibility determination
4. Submit a completed application packet
5. Assist family with choosing appropriate RTC
6. Bed availability and placement
7. Admission/placement
8. Discharge from RTC

The Relinquishment Avoidance RTC Project has been successful in diverting many families from relinquishment, including over 438 children referred since inception of project, 267 children placed in RTCs, and over 70 children diverted from RTC placement due to community resources. HHSC is planning to open enrollment for additional RTCs in the next few months.

There was a recent stakeholder meeting in which some concerns were shared; discussion focused on how to create a system that does not lead families to relinquish custody. Valencia shared that there seems to be challenges to accessing services when a child has co-occurring mental health and intellectual or developmental disorders. It seems that crisis situations lead families to turn to DFPS for rapid placement when families cannot access care. Tovah acknowledged that many RTCs do not accept children with IDD, as they are not able to meet their needs. The issue of family travel to the RTC was mentioned, and Tovah shared that the RTC can sometimes provide travel assistance, along with Medicaid or the Local Mental Health Authority. Travel is also supported within the Texas System of Care (TxSOC) expansion communities.

### **Agenda Item 5: Texas Building Bridges Initiative (Cory Morris)**

Cory Morris presented an overview of the Texas Building Bridges Initiative (BBI). Please refer to the presentation for additional information. The Building Bridges Initiative is a national effort to promote implementation of best practices in residential treatment centers. The best practices include youth engagement, family involvement, community collaboration, reduction of seclusion and restraints, elimination of level systems, and cultural and linguistic competence and responsiveness. The goals of BBI are as follows:

1. Improved long-term outcomes
2. Decreased lengths of stay
3. Reduced recidivism

4. Person-centered and trauma-informed care
5. Decreased use of psychiatric hospitalization, juvenile and criminal justice, and foster care

BBI is continually committed to creating strong, coordinated partnerships between families, youth, community and residential treatment providers, and policy makers; and providing quality technical assistance and training to a number of growing residential treatment leaders to ensure effective, individualized, and sustainable implementation of BBI best practices. Support for implementation has included webinars, conferences, a learning action network, and site reviews. BBI's RTC champions are Krause, New Life, Camp Worth, St. Jude's Ranch for Children, and Waco Center for Youth. There are many successful TxBBI outcomes, and some of those include:

1. Creation of youth advisory boards
2. Employment of family partners
3. Ensuring diversity and cultural responsiveness in administrative practices
4. Policy and programming informed by youth voice
5. Dramatically reducing incidents of seclusion and restraint

#### **Agenda Item 6: Memorandum of Understanding Tracking Tool (Tracy Levins and Kisha Ledlow)**

Kisha Ledlow shared an overview of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Tracking Tool. Please refer to the handout for reference. Each of the TxSOC state agencies designed, developed, and signed an MOU in 2017. It outlines how each of the agencies work and use SOC values, principles, and approaches in their systems. This MOU tracking tool was created to document activities within each agency that moves SOC efforts forward. Each agency has a separate tab on the workbook for easier navigation. Information will be entered on the MOU tracking tool every six months, with agencies providing their first update at the April meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 7: Texas System of Care Strategic Finance Plan (Tracy Levins and Kisha Ledlow)**

Kisha shared that the TxSOC is required to submit a Strategic Finance Plan by SAMHSA by the end of September 2019. The plan was submitted and in the next six months, TxSOC will be working on how to gather finance data in the most efficient and appropriate way. Once a timeline is established for this, discussions on findings and recommendations will be made.

#### **Agenda Item 8: Project Updates**

Kisha shared that youth engagement efforts have been busy. ACCEPT has 53 youth and young adult members from across the state. In late June, four ACCEPT members attended the Association of Recovery in Higher Education, the National Recovery Schools conference, and the National Alternative Peer conference held in Boston. At the end of the conference, one of the members was honored as the Collegiate Recovery Student of the Year. Several members attended the Youth Recovery Summit in Plainview, TX, and they also partnered with four recovery organizations to present a keynote on Reaping Recovery at the TxSOC and Community Resource

Coordination Groups (CRCG) Conference. The conference also included a presentation on Youth Engagement and a game night. Over the summer, they conducted four-day appreciative inquiries in Colin County, where they looked to identify youth and young adult organizations that could be partners in the TxSOC work in those communities. They finalized and piloted their Passion into Action training with Unlimited Visions and Krause.

Barbara shared updates about Texas Family Voice Network (TxFVN). TxFVN was able to host a Family Meet and Greet at the TxSOC and CRCG conference through a donation from the Hogg Foundation. Approximately 30 family members attended. At the last TxFVN meeting, a national consultant attended and provided technical assistance on sustainability for the organization. Work towards sustainability will continue. TxFVN was able to publish a family leadership workbook titled "Journey to Family Leadership". This document was developed to support families in growing their leadership skills. The group also hosted two regional family empowerment summits in McKinney and Lufkin. Nine family leaders have been involved in planning and carrying out these training events over the past month.

Cris Burton shared updates about the Alliance for Adolescent Recovery and Treatment (AART). There were two fidelity visits with providers in August at Central Plains and Houston. Both of these site visits were conducted by the Seven Challenges facilitators. The fidelity visits went really well and incorporated a tool that Tracy and Cris developed, which has now been adopted by Seven Challenges called Fidelity Assessment Coaching Tool (FACT). There have been two subcommittees that have been created from AART's stakeholders' implementation group. One of them is examining data for students who have encountered substance use-related disciplinary actions in the public schools. This group is examining what happens to these students and identifying recommendations for opportunities to link students with treatment and recovery supports. The second group is chaired by Jesse Davis and is looking at the licensing practices for Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors (LCDCs) and opportunities for supporting members of the prospective workforce in this process.

Jameson shared updates about the TxSOC website. The website has been updated and has officially launched September 12<sup>th</sup>. The new website is now mobile responsive. Some new features of the website include the resource library, a new newsroom, an event calendar for upcoming trainings and public meetings, and a new highlights page. The art contest will open on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 and will close on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

Kisha shared updates about S.B. 241, which requires HHSC to submit a report to the Legislature on the availability of "system of care services" based on information provided by CRCGs across the state. A timeline has been developed for administering and gathering the data from communities, and the data will be shared in April to foster further discussion on policy and statutory recommendations to be included in the report.

Kisha shared updates about the TxSOC and CRCG Conference. The conference was held in July, with almost 200 people in attendance. There were two keynotes, Tonier Cain who has lived experience and is a trauma survivor. She spoke about her experience and held a question and answer session following a screening of her documentary "Healing Neen". The second keynote was Liz Manley, who was formerly the Associate Commissioner of Systems of Care in New Jersey. She spoke about the importance of SOC and collaboration. There was a youth panel, a family panel, and a panel on cultural and linguistic responsiveness, all of which were well received.

Molly Sanders shared updates about the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit on Advancing Behavioral Health Collaboratives. The theme this year is Strong Schools - Advancing Student Wellness and Resiliency in Texas. Keynote speakers will be Dennis Embry, and a youth advocate, Evan Transue. There will also be two panels of presenters highlighting best practices in school-community partnerships.

### **Agenda Item 9: Public Comment**

Linda Litzinger (TX Parent to Parent) provided public comment. She indicated that the House and Senate have requested ideas for interim charges. She requested that people share their good ideas with her, indicating that Texas Parent to Parent is willing to speak to legislative staff in favor of good ideas that will benefit Texas families.

### **Agenda Item 10: Next Steps**

Next Meeting: January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 10:00 am and will be held at Brown Heatly.

The meeting adjourned at 2:21 pm.