

Children and Youth Behavioral Health Subcommittee (CYBHS)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 10, 2024
10:00 am – 3:00 pm
Virtual

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

The Children and Youth Behavioral Health Subcommittee meeting was called to order at 10:05am by Verlyn Johnson. Verlyn provided a welcome to the members and invited all attendees to fill out a Qualtrics form for attendance tracking purposes. She also asked attendees to indicate in the chat box if they desired to offer public comment during that section of the agenda. Table 1 shows attendance for the meeting.

Table 1: The CYBHS Subcommittee member attendance.

MEMBER NAME	YES	NO	MEMBER NAME	YES	NO
Behavioral Health Advisory Council			Advocacy Organizations		
Yolanda Nelson	X		NAMI Texas		
Tracy Hicks		X	Greg Hansch	X	
Cynthia Humphrey		X	Alternate: Hannah Gill		X
Victoria Rodriguez		X	Alternate: Lysette Galvan	X	
Nasruddin Rupani		X	Texans Care for Children		
Community Provider Representatives			Stephanie Rubin		X
Heart of Texas Center			Dept. of State Health Services		
Kristen Hejl	X		Kim Beam		X
Alternate: Jessica Jimenez		X	Alternate: Susan Bareis		X
			Suicide Prevention		
Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare			Josette Saxton	X	
Melissa Zemencsik	X		Alternate: Lisa Sullivan	X	
Alternate: Shannon Miller		X	TCOOMMI		
Family Representatives			Emily Eisenmann		X
Donna Fagan		X	Alternate: Lenny Colunga	X	
Valencia Gensollen		X	Dept. of Family and Protective Services		
Verlyn Johnson	X		Jennifer Nichols (CPS)	X	
Youth/Young Adult			Alternate: Angela Roberts (CPI)		X
Rohan Satija	X		Brooke King (PEI)		X

MEMBER NAME		YES	NO	MEMBER NAME		YES	NO
Health and Human Services Commission			Higher Education				
Behavioral Health Services Amanda Britton		X		UT Austin – Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health Molly Lopez		X	
Alternate: Liz Pearson		X		Alternate: Natalie Fikac			X
Medicaid Kacie Cardwell				X	Texas Education Agency		
Office of Mental Health Coordination Lillian Nguyen		X		Julie Wayman			X
Texas System of Care Project Director, Vacant				Alternate: Tammy Gendke			X
Substance Use Letisia Balderas MacDonald		X		Texas Juvenile Justice Department			
Family Health Services Daniel Gunter			X	Susan Palacios			X
				Alternate: Vacant			

Yes: Indicates attended the meeting

No: Indicates did not attend the meeting

Also in Attendance: Sarah Stephens, Cathay Gaytan, Kendall Jones, Jennifer Nichols, Julie Abreu, Lissette Angelica Amparan, Leonardo Colunga, Linda Litzinger, Larisa Brown, Susan Scott, Victoria Kelley, Mathew Smith, Holly Gurslin, Deandra Powell, Ophelia Jaushlin, Stacy Wilson, Jenny Baldwin, Greta James Maxfield, Megan Hill, Trellis Grant, Laura Rushing, Ryan Heare, Shannon Hoffman, Sheaffer Lapham, Heath Newton, Megan Ward, Mckenzie Bentley, Raven Garza, Brooke King, Ashley Lilavois, Zatarra Lumen, Yolanda Nelson, Stormy Holifield

Agenda Item 2: Membership Update

Ophelia Jaushlin, TxSOC Assistant Project Director announced that Sherry Rumsey, the previous TxSOC Project Director is no longer a member, and has begun a position at DFPS in the Office of Behavioral Health Strategy. Her position will be filled by the end of the month.

Agenda Item 3: Youth Experience Presentation

Kaylah Topasna introduced 17-year-old Aileen. Aileen started her mental health journey in elementary school. Her first inpatient experience was in 6th grade; however, the program made her feel like her pain was not as bad as others around her, which worsened her symptoms. She found it frustrating to have to keep telling her story to different psychiatrists for several years. She felt that hospitals concentrate more on emergency management than offering long-term

support. Moreover, the referrals for outpatient treatment she received from the hospital were not available in her area, which meant that having to travel for mental health care was a barrier to her receiving treatment. As a result, she decided to switch to a residential treatment center. Later, she joined an intensive outpatient program that was also far from her community.

In 8th grade, Aileen gained access to the Youth Empowerment Services (YES) Waiver program which she found to be helpful. During this time, therapy became the center of her world. It was both beneficial and challenging for her, as she realized that she could not heal herself alone. She had experiences with music therapy, art therapy, and recreation therapy. Aileen recalls feeling self-sabotage when faced with the prospect of graduating from the YES Waiver program because she was afraid of losing services. However, she was able to move on knowing that she was doing better and taking a spot from someone who was once in her position. Aileen believes that learning how to handle mental health in the right way is empowering for herself and others.

Discussion

Audience members thanked Aileen who then answered some questions. When a member asked her what service providers should be aware of when working with struggling youth, Aileen suggested providers encourage struggling youth to get out of their comfort zones while maintaining it will get better. She suggested asking youth directly if they are ready to share their personal stories and added parents can encourage youth to help others by sharing their own story. One member commented that sometimes vulnerable communities are resistant to admit that they need help and asked how to approach youth who may not know they need help. Aileen shared that representation helps. For example, seeing other people in your situation or hearing about it in the media helps validate your experience. She highlighted her positive experiences with peer-to-peer programs. Finally, she responded to a member inquiring about engaging youth resistant to treatment by explaining her mom's role in encouraging her and the use of helpful icebreaker activities.

Agenda Item 4: Consideration of October 11th, 2023, draft meeting minutes

Josette Saxton confirmed that a quorum of members was present. Minutes from the 10/11/23 meeting were sent to members before the meeting for their review. Molly Lopez moved to approve the minutes; Lilly Nguyen seconded. The minutes were approved with no changes recommended.

Agenda Item 5: Substance Use Presentation

Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System (YRBS) Data Overview

Sabeena Sears from the Department of State Health Services presented the latest substance use data in Texas, specifically focusing on the prevalence of tobacco

and alcohol use, drug use, and student substance abuse. Ms. Sears discussed the trends in data from 2017-2021, with a focus on the 2021 results.

State-Level Programming (HHSC/OSAR)

Letisia Balderas MacDonald, the Treatment for Youth Coordinator from Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and Anna Eisenberg, the Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral Services (OSAR) Waitlist Coordinator for HHSC, provided an overview of state-funded substance use (SU) treatment services for youth 13-21 years old. They emphasized the importance of family involvement, court advocacy, virtual services, women and children residential treatment, and co-occurring Psychiatric and Substance Use Disorder (COPSD) services. Ms. Eisenberg provided information on the OSAR process. (See slides)

Discussion

During the meeting, members discussed YRBS data and interventions for high need subgroups. One member asked about the number of students caught with drugs compared to those receiving treatment. Ms. Sears clarified their data only includes prescription pain medication and not a specific subgroup for fentanyl.

Regarding youth substance use treatment services, Ms. Balderas MacDonald stated there is a small waitlist for youth, and females seeking substance use residential treatment may wait for a week or two. There are no priority populations among youth, but interim outpatient services are available.

Ms. Balderas MacDonald identified a gap in alternative schools not getting treatment services and emphasized the need to address discipline as a public health issue. Ms. Eisenberg highlighted the need for funding for detox and Narcan distribution, with fentanyl and polysubstance use increasing in Texas. Lastly, a participant expressed interest in local groups being part of conversations between HHSC and TEA.

Agenda Item 6: Children's Mental Health Strategic Plan Update

Diana Busler, HHSC Strategic Initiatives Coordinator facilitating the Children's Mental Health Strategic Plan subcommittee of the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (SBHCC) summarized initial decisions the subcommittee has made. Currently, they are in the foundational drafting stages of deciding how to accessibly organize the plan and deciding what their recommendations will be based on a common understanding of existing services. She plans to present to BHAC in February with more details on the plan. Verlyn Johnson is the CYBHS representative to the committee drafting the plan. Josette Saxton reminded the group that some members expressed interest in creating an ad-hoc workgroup to provide input for Verlyn to use as they develop the plan (list below). Additional people interested in participating may contact Ophelia Jaushlin at HHSC.

Agenda Item 7: Children's Mental Health Program Update

Liz Pearson, Director for Adult and Children's Mental Health at HHSC, gave a short update. They hired a new Children's Mental Health Manager, Amanda Britton, who will be the new CYBHS member. Amanda comes from the Texas Juvenile Justice Department and has previously participated in CYBHS. She started with the Children's Mental Health team in November and she is a resource for questions about the service and delivery of children's MH services. Ms. Pearson reminded everyone that their team is responsible for technical assistance and oversight for local mental and behavioral health authorities' children and adult services, including YES Waiver. They are currently in the process of working through legislative implementation for children's mental health. They will have more of an update at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 8: SAMSHA Grant Updates

Holly Gursslin updated the group on a LAUNCH grant that was awarded to TIEMH this year from SAMSHA. The purpose of this five-year grant is to promote the wellness of young children zero through eight years old in respect to social, emotional, cognitive, and physical aspects of their development. TIEMH has been a part of this grant previously with DSHS. The core components include: increasing surveillance through screening and assessment; providing family and parent training; providing infant/early childhood mental health consultation (IECMHC); training, and technical assistance around children, childcare, behavioral, and mental health topics; and to support the collaboration of early childhood wellness councils around the state. The grant has both a state focus, and community implementation within Travis, Cameron, and Hidalgo Counties. Partners include People's Community Clinic, Any Baby Can, United Way of Greater Austin, Easter Seals of Rio Grande Valley, and MHMR of Tarrant County.

Kendall Jones provided an update on the Texas Mental Health Creative Arts Contest. The submission deadline for all categories is March 1st and it is open to elementary, middle, high schools, and adults. TxSOC and HHSC are also hosting Children's Mental Health Acceptance Day with exhibitors and youth performances. Members were asked to vote to select a theme.

Ophelia Jaushlin shared that Kaylah Topasna applied to be a presenter at the upcoming 2024 SOC Summit in May and was selected! She will speak about cultivating authentic youth partnerships in SOC.

Agenda Item 9: Behavioral Health Advisory Committee recommendations and updates

Verlyn Johnson shared updates from the BHAC Peer and Family Support committee and from the HHSC Peer Support and Recovery staff. They are working on a workforce curriculum and updating the youth and young adult peer

support endorsement. They will be hosting a training soon and are looking for potential trainers for the youth and young adult peer support. They also have several trainings for group facilitation, certified family partners supervision, and family partner certification happening this month, which can be found on the centralized training website.

The group also learned more about the recovery housing project, which is working with the peer-run youth crisis respite program. HHSC is finalizing the statement of work, and more information should be available soon. The Texas Workforce Commission Vocational Rehabilitation program is now working on a VR endorsement for the Mental Health Peer Support and Recovery Peer Support certifications. They would like to pay for people to get those services from peer providers, but they need to be certified through the VR program to get payment.

Agenda Item 10: Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 11: Review of action items and agenda items for April 2024, meeting

Linda Litzinger asked a question during this time about the availability of residential treatment centers for victims of human trafficking in Texas. Brooke King provided context on the specific needs of trafficking victims and how the specific treatment centers needed are not abundant in Texas yet. Josette Saxton suggested this be discussed in the state plan ad-hoc committee.

In closing the meeting, Josette Saxton summarized the following next steps.

- There are volunteers for the ad hoc committee (Children Mental Health Strategic Plan); we will share information on setting this up.
 - Kathy Gaytan
 - Chera Tribble
 - Greta James
 - Linda Litzinger
 - Amanda Britton
 - Mary Beth Fisk, The Ecumenical Center
 - Shannon Hoffman, Hogg Foundation
 - Dr. Aaron Loeb
 - Kristin Hejl
 - Letisia Balderas MacDonald

Agenda Item 13: Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 10th.

If have anyone has agenda items for the next CYBHS meeting, please email them to info@txsystemofcare.org.

Location for presentation slides and handouts -
<https://utexas.box.com/s/pd5tcyw3wcer43tjl42qoumf78eudecb>