

**FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, February 10, 2015

TIME: 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Oshkosh Human Services Building
220 Washington Ave., Oshkosh
Conference Room #33

PRESENT: Beth Culp, Sharon Oberkrieser, Amy Stack, Barb Sheldon, Kortney Dahm, Tracy Gehrke, Cindy Flauger, Sherry Nedens, Celeste Brennan, Tom Polakowski and Ben Manogue

STAFF PRESENT: Dorothy De Grace, Human Services

Sharon Oberkrieser called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m.

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Tracy Gehrke moved for approval of the agenda as written; seconded by Cindy Flauger and carried.
2. **Approval of Minutes for the December 16, 2014 Meeting:** With no additions or corrections, Beth Culp moved for approval of the minutes of the December 16, 2014 meeting; seconded by Tracy Gehrke and carried.
3. **Member Sharing:**

Barb Sheldon reported that this summer the WIC program will be converting the monthly benefits payment to consumers from paper checks to an EBT type card. The card will show the list of items that a person is allowed to purchase, and it will show the balance after being electronically scanned at the grocery store.

Tracy Gehrke said the Winnebago County Public Health Department received a Department of Transportation grant which offers vouchers to families for child car seats. The Health Department will be doing activities in child care centers this year regarding eating the right foods and the importance of physical activity, and also giving information to mothers regarding breast-feeding.

Celeste Brennan recently started a business, “Happy Face Apparel.” She designs and creates adaptive clothing and accessories for children with special needs. Items can be found on her website www.happyfaceapparel.org.

Kortney Dahm said the Menasha Public Health Department recently sent out a letter to schools encouraging families to have their children vaccinated with the MMR vaccine if they haven’t already done so.

Beth Culp said the Family Support team has received an increase in referrals for children aged three and under with autism diagnosis and they continue to receive many referrals for children with severe emotional disturbances.

Tom Polakowski is the house coordinator for the Oshkosh location of Cerebral Palsy House of Mideast Wisconsin, which is a short-term respite program for disabled individuals. The program serves up to 16 children during the day, and eight children can stay overnight during the week and weekends. They also have an after-school program which includes educational and social activities.

Sherry Nedens represents the Downs Syndrome Association, Fox Cities. She said the association provides grants and scholarships to children with Downs Syndrome. In coordination with Special Olympics they are offering \$350 to any school or organization that would be willing to be part of a campaign “Spread the Word to End the Word.” They also do peer sensitivity training through the schools.

Sharon Oberkrieser asked everyone to spread the word about meetings of the “Down to Earth” group which is comprised of parents of children with Downs Syndrome or other disabilities.

4. Bethesda Protected Tomorrows Presentation:

Ben Manogue is a Family Resource Coordinator for Bethesda Lutheran Communities in Wisconsin. Bethesda has been in existence for 110 years to service the residential sector for individuals with special needs. They currently serve over 3,000 individuals in 14 states and 9 countries. He explained a new service that they are offering in the area which helps families plan for the future. They are partnering with “Protected Tomorrows,” which is an advocacy firm that specializes in planning for the future for families that have a loved one with special needs. Ben shared information about the process used in working with families which focuses on quality of life and peace of mind for the entire family. They collaborate with the family’s entire team, which may consist of attorneys, financial advisors, insurance agents, etc. The plan is both practical and sustainable, but should be reviewed annually to accommodate and address life’s inevitable changes.

5. Family Support Program Updates:

Beth Culp provided statistics which she included in the 2015 Family Support Plan—in 2014 we provided service to 70 children for an approximate cost of \$75,000.

- 2015 Statistics – Beth said so far this year we authorized services for 26 children for \$83,000. We are able to provide a service or an adaptive piece of equipment to families that need them as soon as possible.

6. Birth-to-Three Program Report:

- 2015 Stats – Cindy Flauger said they’ve had 39 referrals in the month of January compared to 45 last year; we are actively serving 125 children and families.

Cindy said the self-assessment process is something we go through annually, and on the fifth year the state does an assessment with us to make sure we are being attentive to indicators showing we are demonstrating best and evidenced-based practice. She said our self-assessment went well, but we will have a follow-up phone call regarding an indicator that we missed—we failed to refer a child to the school within 90 days of their third birthday. In January we met with local education administrators and discussed how we adhere to timeliness and how the schools could use some of the information for ongoing assessment of children that are eligible for special education programs. Cindy said we ended the year 2014 on budget for Birth-to-Three services which are contracted with Winnebago County for \$682,000. In addition, we bill third party insurance or medical assistance which generates about \$82,000; also Goodwill contributed nearly \$183,000.

Cindy shared the results of a survey that was given out by the Birth-to-Three program to families as they left the program during 2014. The results reflect that families felt supported in the program.

7. Shortened School Days:

Beth Culp referred to a bulletin from the Department of Public Instruction regarding shortened school days for students with disabilities. The bulletin reinforces that when a child's school day is shortened by the school, it needs to adhere to all of the points in the document. An individualized education program (IEP) team meeting should be held prior to shortening the school day, and it should be documented in the IEP. There also must be a plan in place indicating when the child's school day will be increased.

8. Additional Items: There were none.

9. Future Agenda Items and Meeting Time/Place:

Committee members were asked to let Beth Culp know about their request for specific topics or speakers for future meetings. The dates of the remaining meetings for 2015 will be May 5, August 4, and November 3.

10. Next Meeting: With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Family Support Advisory Committee has been scheduled for **Tuesday, May 5, 2015** from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. in **Room 33** of the **Oshkosh Human Services Building**.

Respectfully submitted by Dorothy De Grace, Secretary