

Arlington Community Services Board – Children and Youth Committee

January 14, 2014

Committee Present: Shauna Alonge, Janine Finnell, Betsy Greer, Linda Staheli, Marguerite Tomasek

Apologies: Naomi Verdugo

Staff: Tom Wallace (minutes)

Guest: Laurie Meyer, Alexandria CSB

1. Call to order: meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Shauna Alonge.
2. Minutes: minutes from the November meeting had been approved via e-mail. Going forward, draft and final versions of minutes will be clearly labeled.
3. Systems of care grant services in Alexandria: Laurie Meyer, Team Leader at the Center for Children and Families in the Department of Community and Human Services in Alexandria (programs of the Alexandria CSB) gave a presentation on the services provided by the Center and largely funded through systems of care monies. The program comprises community wraparound services, and is designed to maintain children with behavioral health concerns in the community, keeping families together. Services include outpatient, community- and home-based, and intensive care coordination. The CSB received a systems of care expansion grant over the summer, for approximately \$500,000, which will be used to expand services, with parent coaches, a lead parent partner who will oversee the parent coaches and parent partners, and a youth voice coordinator to bring youth voices to the community.

Ms. Meyer discussed the array of services and how they are organized in Alexandria. She described some unique programs, including the Youth Review Committee, comprised of supervisory-level staff from agencies throughout the community, which meets monthly to thoroughly review the facts surrounding a child who is at risk of being placed in residential treatment. She also discussed the funding sources that are used to provide services, including CSA, Medicaid, and Promoting Safe and Stable Families.

The programs have 15 staff persons, which includes two part-time staff. A psychiatrist provides services and is shared with other programs. Most cases are teamed, with caseloads between 13 and 15. The programs serve 89 families per year. Outcomes focus on how many children are successfully maintained in the community.

The committee asked several questions about the demographics in Alexandria, including ethnicity and poverty levels, and about the extent of gang involvement among Alexandria youth. Ms. Meyer's program partnered with other community agencies and an apartment complex to observe Mental Health Month in May 2013, holding a fun fair in the Arlandria community, which is considered to be a high risk community. Turnout was strong. The committee would like to see such an event occur in Arlington.

4. Monthly statistics: Tom Wallace circulated the monthly statistics. The downward trend in total numbers served continues; this will be further researched, as the number of cases closed has reduced after recent staff departures and the inflow of new cases remains strong. Tom Wallace shared with the committee that permission has been received to hire for the five vacant positions.

5. Planning for APS-DHS Mental Health Task Force meeting: Several members of the committee will be attending the meeting on January 22. Betsy Greer has prepared some talking points that she will circulate to the committee, then to Tom Wallace for passing to the task force chair, Brenda Wilks. Tom Wallace circulated the previous strategic plan that guided the work of the task force; this may be the starting point for developing a new plan.

6. General Assembly bills: The 2014 of the Virginia General Assembly is now in session. Tom Wallace circulated a document summarizing the bills introduced that involve children's behavioral health and juvenile justice issues. The document is attached to these minutes.

7. New business: Shauna Alonge had visited the children's behavioral health page of the county website and found it sparse, as did the rest of the committee. She will offer some suggestions for making the website more informative, up to date, and useful for the public. Tom Wallace will work with website content staff to make the changes.

8. Old business:

- Expanding number of substance abuse treatment providers: Tom Wallace met with court staff and DHS contracts staff to discuss identifying additional substance abuse treatment providers. The goal is to have more options available for Arlington youth who need treatment. One site is already under contract: Mountain Manor in Baltimore, which provides substance abuse and dual diagnosis services. Niasha John, of the court's probation staff, specializes in substance abuse issues and is continuing research, which will be shared with the group working on this issue and with this committee.
- Action plan: We will keep the action plan on the agenda for each of this committee's meetings, and will revisit it at next month's meeting.
- Meeting time: The group agreed to return to the previous meeting time of Mondays at 4 p.m. on the first or second Monday of each month, depending upon the schedule of the CSB Executive Committee. For February, this will be February 10 at a new location: the Drewry Center.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Next meeting: Monday, February 10, at 4:00 p.m. at the Drewry Building. Details to follow.