

Adult Services: Policy and Practice Initiative 2015

Adult Services Policy and Practice Initiative is a new practice model for Adult Services Programs which engages the community to assist the elderly population to remain independent, healthy, and safe in their homes for as long as possible. The goal of this model is to position the Adult Services programs to meet the demand for services for a growing and vulnerable population in a time of limited public resources and to support the capacity of staff to deliver these services as efficiently as possible. PPI began in May 2013 with the formation of a Change Team that attended training in June and July 2013. Members of the Change Team are those key individuals in Adult Services that will be the leaders and facilitators of implementing PPI in the agency.

There are 3 tiers with PPI: Caseload Priority Analysis, Family Centered and Community Based Plan, and The Impact of Traumatic Stress: Responding to Secondary Trauma and Building a Recovery Environment in Adult Services.

Caseload Priority Analysis promotes regular and periodic reviews of clients' risk, needs, and strengths with service plans that have concrete objective and clear paths for ending case management involvement upon their achievement. Cases are assessed according to risk, dependency, and outcomes with the goal of reducing the need for DSS services and increasing the linkages with informal support services.

Family Centered and Community Based Plan promotes active engagement of the individual's natural supports and enhancement of private and public community agencies so that provision of support and assistance is a true partnership between the Department, the adult, and the community. This plan identified a need to meet together with community partners to identify gaps in services and subsequent ways to achieve these needed services and "Breakfast Bites" was created. The first meeting was held in September 2014 with on-going meeting held every other month.

The major needs that were identified were Financial Stability, Health, Community Outreach and Education, and Resource Development. At the March 2015 meeting, the ad hoc committees consolidated and future meetings will focus on the identified gaps with the whole committee.

The concept of "The Villages" was introduced through Community Outreach and Education. A Village is a network of neighbors helping neighbors; a community based grassroots organization that provides the support services and the social and educational programs needed to help older adults stay in their homes and remain active in their communities for as long as possible. The Village Process is in the initial stages of development in Talbot

County and has formed an exploratory committee to determine if the Village Concept can help fill senior care service gaps that exist in the county.

Responding to Secondary Trauma and Building a Recovery Environment in Adult Services promotes the importance of all agencies acknowledging and addressing the secondary trauma that staff experience as a result of working with vulnerable populations

and its impact over the short and long term duration of case involvement. This practice model also provides the knowledge, skills, and tools

necessary to build individual staff resilience to secondary trauma. Talbot DSS already has a very supportive environment and administration regarding the need for self care. We have many activities available for staff to participate in and to promote their self care such as the Wellness Committee, All Staff Day, activities of the Board, Social Work Celebration, yoga, walking, Weight Watchers, program appreciation events, chair massage, etc. A recovery work group has been formed with the goal of promoting activities and creating policy where needs were identified regarding self care. Adult Services has recovery and self care in their PPI policy plan, however, this environment is now one that is supported and beginning implementation throughout the entire agency.



June 15, 2015, Talbot County's Senior Financial Exploitation Task Force hosted its second annual workshop, "Stop Senior Exploitation" at the Talbot Senior Center at Brookletts Place. Pictured standing left to right is Michael Stefanowitz, Maryland Insurance Administration; Joyce Malik of Talbot Bank; and Pam Haynes of Upper Shore Aging, Inc. Sitting left to right are Lee Newcomb, TCDSS and Jane Bateman, Home Instead Senior Care.

Highlights

Talbot County Foster Parents of the Year 2015

Patty and Timmy McNeal of Easton have been named the 2015 Foster Parents of the Year by the Talbot County Department of Social Services. The McNeals have been foster parents since October 2014. In addition to being kinship providers for a grandchild and legal guardians of another grandchild, the McNeals have provided foster and respite care for a number of children of different ages with varying levels of special needs.



Caption: Pictured is Talbot County 2015 Foster Parents of the Year, Patty and Timmy McNeal of Easton. Pictured left to right are April Sharp, director of Talbot County Department of Social Services with Timmy and Patty McNeal and their grandson Christopher Feliciano.

According to Paris Quillet, Special Projects Coordinator, Talbot County Department of Social Services, “Patty and Timmy are new foster parents to Talbot County Department of Social Services, but you would never know it! They have a busy home and a lot of love to give. They are a great asset to the families of Talbot and we truly appreciate their dedication.”

There is an Information Session for people interested in becoming foster parents on August 4, 2015, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Dorchester County Department of Social Services at 627 Race Street in Cambridge, MD. For further information, call 410-820-7371.

Community Call to Action: Empower Me!

Did you know?

- 1 in 10 children suffer from child maltreatment *
- 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 20 boys is a victim of child sexual abuse*
- Self-report studies show that 20% of adult females and 5-10% of adult males recall a childhood sexual assault or sexual abuse incident*

You can make a difference. Help us prevent child abuse by joining TCDSS’ new COMMUNITY PREVENTION planning team. Our message, delivered through a curriculum called “Empower Me” is that ALL KIDS are special and deserve to be safe. Our mission will be to coordinate a “train the trainer” presentation, identify and recruit community members who will be trained in the curriculum and use different methods of outreach to take our message into our community. We need YOUR help to spread the message and to help prevent child abuse.

Please contact Katie Russ at 410-770-5227 for more details about the program and how you can help.

*Data collected from Crimes Against Children Research Center, Director, David Finkelhor

Save the Date

Upcoming Events

July

- “Village Concept” Meeting**
7/1/15, 5:30-7:00pm
Union United Methodist Church
101 Freemont St, St. Michaels
For more information contact
Lee Newcomb, 410-770-4781
- “Empower Me” Planning Committee Meeting**
7/9/15 9am, TCDSS
For more information contact
Katie Russ, 410-770-5227
- Nurturing Program**
Parent Education Program
7/14/15, 5:30-7:00pm, TCDSS
For more information contact
Laura Roth, 410-770-5750

August

- Foster Care Informational Meeting:**
8/14/15, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.,
Dorchester County DSS.
For more information contact
410-820-7371
- Annual Back to School Event**
School Supplies Give-Away
8/6/15 4:30pm– 6:00pm
Talbot County DSS
- Foster Care Informational Meeting:**
8/20/15, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.,
Caroline County DSS.
For more information contact
410-820-7371

September

- PRIDE Training**
Resource Parent Training Session
9/1/15– 10/27/15, 5:30-8:30pm
Dorchester County DSS
For more information contact
410-820-7371
- “Empower Me” Train the Trainer**
Date and location TBD in September
For more information contact
Katie Russ, 410-770-5227



Mid-Shore LDSS's Foster Youth gear up for a Summer of Experience!

On the Mid-Shore preparing foster youth for independence is of the utmost importance. Initiatives like RB21 and the recent Thrive@25 have made it possible for new innovations and funding to come to the area to develop the resources and opportunities we are to support our youth. Denise Winder, Mid-Shore Independent Living Coordinator works directly with the youth in the region to prepare them for self sufficiency.

The Talbot County Department of Social Services ranked "weight management education" most important in a survey taken by the agency's Wellness Committee. Over the years, the high stress environment has taken a toll on workers. Healthy eating and exercise habits were overlooked and rewards came in the form of comfort foods. In the past year, self-care has been introduced in the agency as a means for staff to continue performing at a high level without risk to health and wellbeing. Weight management had to become a top priority.

So in January of 2015, 23 people out of a staff of 65 committed to join a 12 week Weight Watchers at Work program. This program was subsidized by the Community Transformation Grant awarded by the Talbot County Health Department. The group immediately embraced the program with a loss the first week totaling 66.4 pounds! At the end of the 12 week program, the staff had lost a total of 258.4 pounds and were so encouraged by their success and the impact this weight loss had on both their mental and physical health that they were anxious to join for another 12 weeks. In all, 30 people have participated in the program. The second 12 week session began on April 7 and ends on June 24. As of June 10, the total weight loss for the group is 475 pounds! WW leader Carolyn Harty has never seen this level of commitment to a Weight Watchers at Work program in the 20 years she has facilitated groups for Weight Watchers. She has been a true champion for the staff by offering encouragement every step of the way.

Participating staff report they have more energy, a more positive outlook and better moods and they all mention that this is a lifestyle change for them and not "just a diet". Several staff report improved blood pressure and lower cholesterol – so much so that in some cases medication is no longer needed. The support of co-workers seems to be one significant factor to their high rate of success. As one member put it "we can celebrate our successes together as well as cheer each other on when we have disappointments."

Noteworthy too is the far reaching impact of the program beyond those enrolled. Spouses and family members have lost weight as a result of the Weight Watcher member sharing the information at home and helping their families make healthy choices. One spouse has lost over 50 pounds with his commitment to support his wife through the program. Candy dishes have disappeared from the office and agency events where food is offered now include healthier choices. Another local DSS learning of Talbot's success registered for their own Weight Watchers at Work program and they have turned it into a competition to lose more weight than our agency!

Now that's worth a celebration! Bravo!



This summer the youth are provided with two opportunities to enhance their skills, networking and have a little fun!!

June 24th-25th the 21st Annual Teen Conference was held at Towson University. This conference is for youth ages 14-17. Denise Winder can take 10-15 youth from our region to the conference this year. The youth had an opportunity to hear the keynote speaker, Mr. Michael Sanders and attend workshops, networking and recreation activities.

After return from the conference, the youth have gone full speed ahead into the Summer Employment Program. The program allows youth in foster care to be matched with employers based on their career interests and they are provided with a stipend. Delmarva Community Services is the vendor for the program this year and they are excited about this opportunity to work with the youth. They will conduct all of the interviews, develop business partnerships, monitor and support job placements and provide payroll for the youth. Orientation and Interviews will take place in June and job placements will begin July 6th until July 31st. Currently there are 26 youth registered to participate in this summer's program.

Open Table and Talbot County Young Father's collaborate to help local fathers in TRANSFORMATION!

The Talbot County Young Father's/ NPEP (Non-Custodial Parent Program) Program was re-energized in 2008 and since that time has been instrumental in improving the lives of father and children in Talbot County. The program has sponsored and collaborated with a number of programs and initiatives through the years. The recent collaboration with Open Table is met with excitement and enthusiasm by everyone involved.

Open Table is a model created by Jon Katov, founder and CEO in Phoenix Arizona in 2005. The purpose of the model is to provide faith based organizations with the framework and technical assistance to transform individual and families from poverty, one person at a time. This model was first introduced in Talbot County to match youth exiting the foster care system with "tables" in local congregations. That population continues to be served however, it was quickly discovered that we had another population that was interested and in need of this opportunity as well, the Dads of our Fatherhood Program!

The model was presented to a small group of these fathers and they were excited and in shock that this existed and were eager for the opportunity. Church recruitment, licensing and training continued by collaboration of TCDSS and Open Table. The first church licensed and willing to accept a referral for a father was St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Easton, MD. Their first referral was James Carter, one of the Fatherhood Programs shining stars!

James started with Open Table in January 2015. His table consists of 7 members that all hold various seats around the table with the primary goal of developing relationship and supporting James through his transformation. On April 23, 2015 James and two of his table members shared on a panel at the Avalon Theater in Easton, MD about Open Table. James describes the beginning of this process as invasive, personal and uncomfortable at times but recognized that the process of "breaking bread" and "back grounding" were necessary steps in forming the relationships he has with his Table Members today. James is a father of 6 and the primary custodian of 1 of the 6 children. He has a story of poverty, substance abuse, incarceration, hurt and pain but his story has taken a different tone in the past several years. Now James shares about his sobriety, healthy relationships, work ethic and dreams. James and St. Mark's plan to continue their work together until January 2016 but some of his table members have realized already that their relationship with James will far exceed the timeline of their formal Open Table work, they are in relationship.



Pictured above are James Carter, St. Mark's Brother with Open Table and his daughter, Cimir Carter

For more information about TCDSS Fatherhood Program contact Emliy Joiner at 410-770-4719 emily.joiner@maryland.gov.

For more information about Open Table contact Paris Quillet at 410-770-5870 paris.quillet@maryland.gov or visit theopentable.org



From the Directors Desk.....

Community resilience is a measure of the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations. What can we do to enhance our county's ability to prevent, as well as recoup from a crisis or disaster. Talbot County citizens are rich with human capitol knowledge, skills, and experiences.

How can you help the effort? Consider joining one the following opportunities to further the department's mission as included in this edition of Highlights:

- Train our children to be safe – **Empower Me**
- Join a Network of Neighbors to help Seniors – **Villages**
- Provide a loving home and relationship with a child – **Resource Parent**
- Develop a life plan with someone in Poverty – **The Open Table**
- Advocate for Department of Social Services Programs – **TCDSS Advisory Board**

So, the last item on the list is the Talbot County Department of Social Services Advisory Board. Without a specified article, the details about the Board are here. Comprised of individuals with diverse skills this group appointed by the Talbot County Council serves three year terms to provide: advisory consultation to the Director, advocacy for Department activities, community education about our programs and services, and supports department resource development. Contact Cheryl Blades (Cheryl.blades@maryland.gov or 410-770-4848) for more information.

Thrive@25: Phase II Implementation Update

The application for Phase II funding of Thrive@25 was submitted to the United States Department of Health and Human Services on Tuesday May 26, 2015. Thrive@25 is Maryland's approach to ending homelessness for youth involved with the child welfare system and with child welfare histories. The grant was written by our partners at The Institute for Innovation and Implementation at the University of Maryland, Baltimore in partnership with DHR, the Talbot County Department of Social Services on behalf of the five local departments of social services on the rural Mid-Shore, and the National Center on Housing and Child Welfare.

Thrive@25 builds upon Maryland's Ready by 21 (RB21) Initiative (designed to address the needs of transition-aged youth in out-of-home placement) to develop a comprehensive and coordinated approach to preventing and solving the issue of youth homelessness, with a particular focus on rural homelessness. Phase II is fully reflective of the collective priorities of partners in this work and a commitment to addressing the specific needs of youth at

different engagement points.

During Phase II, Thrive@25 will utilize functional assessment tools and a risk survey; hire a dedicated Family Involvement Meeting (FIM) transitional planning facilitator for the Mid-Shore; employ resource developers to address identified gaps in services and infrastructure, expand the summer youth employment program to be year-round; provide focused trainings to address knowledge gaps; engage youth and young adults to lead and participate in the work at the management level; and leverage opportunities afforded through Maryland's Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project.

If awarded, Phase II of the grant will bring over \$600,000 each year for three years in order to implement and evaluate the strategies proposed. It is likely that HHS will not announce awards until late August or September. Phase I of funding ends September 30, 2015. Until then please join us in keeping our fingers crossed!



the missing link

Dear Missing Link,

I am the parent of a teen, age 13, and summer is a tough time. What can I do to make sure that my teen is safe and occupied during the summer?

Thanks,
Planning ahead Mom

Dear Planning ahead Mom,

This particular age presents difficulty because your child is old enough to stay at home but not without plenty of structure. First of all safety is of utmost importance. Begin to take a look around your house and take inventory. Household safety checklists change as your child matures and develops.

Safety controls change from keeping cleaning products out of a toddler's reach to locking up alcohol/medications, and installing safety controls on the internet. Adolescents need boundaries of all kinds including physical, environmental and behavioral guidelines.

Identifying activities for your teen to participate in is also key. Check with the local YMCA, Parks and Recreation and Academy of the Arts for opportunities for teens this summer. Exploring volunteer work is also a healthy option for youth.

Being connected and available emotionally, getting to know your child and listening to the stories they tell all helps a child build a sense of security. This is the building block for growing a sense of responsibility for both you and your child.



Highlights from Talbot DSS Talbot County Department of Social Services

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