

**Mountainland Regional Youth Council
Provo School District
January 6, 2009**

Attendees:

Jared Ferguson, Provo School District
Zenaida Martinez, DWS
Julie Lay, DWS
Maira Lesa, WIA
Glen Bailey, Alpine School District
Gary Lacock, Provo School District
Scott Taylor, Vantage Point
Cheryl Cummings, Juvenile Courts
Shirlee Silversmith, Learning for Life
Troy Gasser, DCFS
Joe Allred, DCFS
Scott Taylor, Vantage Point

WELCOME - Jared

Thanks for coming on this snowy day. Change of agenda. Introductions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPT 30TH.

Jared entertained motion for approval of the minutes. Cheryl moved for approval. Scott Taylor seconded the motion. The motion carried.

REGIONAL COUNCIL UPDATE – Jared

Regional Economist presented on economic condition of region. Shared 5 star occupations and highest paying occupations, jobs in demand, etc. Construction industry hit hardest in Utah County - down 3,386 jobs. Growth areas are in Education, Healthcare, Leisure and Hospitality, and Government.

Concerned about WIA because solidly funded until last year when rescission reallocated money to the war effort. Now some State Funding is making up for the Federal loss and the question is, how will the funds be handled in this coming year?

OUTSTANDING YOUTH RECOGNITION – Colton Thompson, DCFS

Increased motivation and becoming member of society. Colton is fun to work with, intelligent, motivated, very willing to take criticism with humility, shown great strides. High school graduate, UVU enrolled, starting this semester.

Colton's remarks – "When I first came in custody I thought people took kids out of homes for no reason. Now I see that I was being helped and this changed my perspective. I am the first person in my family to go to college and it makes me happy to know people are behind me. Thank you. I went into state custody at 15 years old."

Question was asked: What made difference to you? Biggest change was DCFS telling me they'd help me, not do it for me. I had to do it myself. I had to face challenges. The biggest thing is motivation. My family also helped me through my life. Colton wants to be caseworker when he graduates.

EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION –

Cheryl Cummings, Juvenile Court

Always like to read about what makes a difference in kids' lives. The answer always is that if they could have one person in life that is a positive influence and who believes in them is real key.

Story of Jeffrey: He came on probation supervision at 17 years old, was a meth addict. His younger sister is in DCFS custody and actually thriving. Came on probation and had to get cleaned up – it wasn't easy. He was sick and had to go to detention because of meth use. Got cleaned up, got a job and went to WIA program. WIA gave him hope, real key in working with kids. Bought old car but engine broke down. WIA worker told him to get GED and he would get funds to fix car. WIA also paid for his counseling. Two year ago he got married, has a good job as a mechanic.

Cheryl reported she is the Truancy Officer for Alpine School District: First time school district hired truancy officer to follow through with kids until 21. Courts have jurisdiction until 21. If on probation at 18, adjudicated in adult courts but will coordinate with adult courts and work with them. 33% of all youth have involvement with court system by age 21.

Police referral – have option to take to detention (peer court) or Vantage Point. More than one offense goes to group setting to detail consequences of no changed behavior. Third offense gets probation officer and evaluate what is causing youth to misbehave. If truancy referral comes through will meet with youth, do risk assessment and figure out what needs to happen to fix problem. Personality testing, what motivates them, how do they learn, what is something key to get on track. To do risk assessment can be short or lengthy. Serious crimes, ie, sex offender, do not only risk assessment but send to Mental Health to do assessment.

A lot of programs have been cut, no more Wilderness program. Sentencing guidelines reviewed. Important to collaborate with other agencies to compare information to make a better determination on what is going on with youth. When make recommendation to juvenile court judge, have all information to refer to.

When kid is placed on probation have average of 10 adjudicating charges. Severely mentally ill, drug users, and abused kids are usually in truancy courts.

Members requested copy of presentation to be sent to Julie, who will share with group.

EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION -

Joe Allred, DCFS

Extend appreciation to each of you. Feel lucky to be working with you on youth issues. Average age of American kids that become independent from parents is 28 years old. Yet we require DCFS youth to become dependent at 18. DCFS youth start at 14 years old in TAL so any kid that comes in at 14 they work with them trying to monitor their goals in court for reunifications with family or independent living. Can have kids stay in custody until 21, basically what judge then orders will depend on how youth is doing. TAL team's primary focus is to not let youth fail and to be successful members of society.

Motivation, knowledge, ability, and support are keys to succeed. Objective as TAL team is to make sure youth have those success factors in place before release. Within TAL team have different programs – Academy of Excellence is one. Going through basic life skills is a 19-week course, 4 hours each week. Teach kids that are in custody. Class is getting popular; judges have referred youth to class. Got permission from State Education Board to get 5 elective credits for graduation requirements. Do provide moving kit to start their first independent life. DCFS pays youth to attend class.

Work well with community partners, biggest asset to help kids be successful. Because of economic downturn is focusing on kids' concrete skills but how to save money as well as find jobs. Learn basic car repair skills, etc. to help save money. Work with Bank of American Fork to talk about personal finances, banking options, FAQs how to establish credit, etc. Realized our strength is community support to try to align partnership to benefit youth. Personal trainers to talk about proper exercise and dieting, medications, etc. Receive Medicaid until 21 and then after-care services if needed.

If been in custody after age 14 and no reunification with parents, able to provide after-care services which is same thing as doing in custody but youth has to initiative. Job placement, Medicaid, increasing skills, etc. as part of after-care.

Plan activities for youth to give opportunities they wouldn't normally have – camping, Lagoon, etc. for youth that are doing a good job in their own cases. Work heavily with WIA, huge support and huge success with many youth. One young lady finished first semester at UVU, in foster home, 3.8 GPA and doing very good, partnering with WIA. Great success with Vantage Point. Once youth is 18 years old Vantage Point can't take them, biggest problem right now is homeless youth because there is no place to house them after turning 18.

Do monitor kids into program at age 14, every year have milestones that kids need to be doing to determine skill levels.

There are 526 kids in foster care in Utah County, Heber, Juab County – half are 14 and older. Have 5 TAL specialists in region so a lot of kids don't get benefit of specialty.

DCFS is losing funding and will result in loss of staff in near future. Will require better coordination with other agencies that serve youth.

DCFS is unofficially soliciting supportive help from kids that have graduated from program to support youth in custody by being guides and mentors. Foster parents are really one of the greatest resources to get them where they need to be and to guide these youth to success.

Abundance of homes of foster parents who want young children but always need homes for teenagers. Never have had enough homes for them.

WIA POINT REVISION – Maira

39 closures last 6 months, youth that closed cases and transitioned out of active services.

Outcomes by Area/District

Enrollments July 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008

Program Total: **45** Enrollments

- (7) Alpine – 15%
- (3) Wasatch – 5%
- (14) Nebo – 30%
- (21) Provo/Orem – 50%

Closures July 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008

Program Total: **39** Closures

District	Total Closed	OE/PS	Obtained CRED	EFL Gain
Alpine	6	5/6 or 83%	3/6 or 50%	2/2 or 100%
Nebo	11	8/10 or 80%	9/11 or 82%	3/6 or 50%
Provo/Orem	15	8/12 or 67%	11/15 or 73%	2/4 or 50%
Wasatch	7	4/5 or 80%	3/7 or 43%	2/4 or 50%

Key

- (): Total Number of Enrollments per District
- OE/PS**: Obtained Employment / Enrolled in Post Secondary Education
- CRED**: Obtained Credential (GED, High School Diploma or Certification)
- EFL**: Increase in Educational Functioning Level (Reading, Writing, or Math)

DESCRIPTION OF POINT CHANGE REQUEST - Change in priority points allows more youth to be served. This new proposed point system allows more in-school youth to be served. Requesting 5 barrier points

Out of school youth will have 3 points and lack of occupational skills is 2 points, guarantees 5 points.

Added point to chronic behavior problems at school. Required to spend 50% out of school and 50% in school really hard to enroll out of school youth. That's why we made the point system for out of school youth easier.

Jared entertained a motion for approval to change the point system as proposed. Glen Bailey moved for approval. Gary Lacock seconded the motion. The motion carried.

RESOURCE BROCHURES – Jared

Please go back and work on information and email to Julie Lay before next meeting. Remind members before April and to send logos, if possible. Want to make available to all individuals working with youth, including guidance counselors, etc. List adult Ed program but only include contact information to save space. Will develop a student friendly flyer that doesn't have as much detail but is more eye-catching for youth. Stay away from using contact names because it will outdate the information if that person leaves.

Scott asked if we could staff cases at any of our meetings. Jared polled the group for consensus.

Meeting adjourned.