



## Regional Service Council Region # 2

**Meeting Date:** Friday, March 8, 2024 – 9:00 a.m. CST  
**Meeting Location:** Porter County/Virtual Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

**I. Meeting Called to Order:** Regional Service Council meeting was called to order by RM Brian Brown.

**2. Introductions - Welcome:** RM Brown welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining the meeting. RSC members present: RM Brian Brown, Judge John Potter, Brian Broek, Shawna Smith, Crystal Bradley, Rachel Fehland, Sarah Fink and Angelina Brouillette.

**3. February 9th, 2024, Minutes:** RM Brown asked for additions or corrections to the minutes. Brian Broek gave a motion to accept the February 9<sup>th</sup> minutes as written which was seconded and passed, minutes accepted.

**4. Community Partners – Geminus:** Kristin Smith went over the Community Partners report:

Open Referrals – 145

New Enrollments – 94

Discharges – 73

DCS County Referrals – Total of 56

- Benton/Newton – 4
- Jasper – 8
- LaPorte – 24
- Porter – 13
- Pulaski – 4
- Starke – 3

Non DCS Referrals -Total of 38

- Benton/Newton – 2
- Jasper – 2
- LaPorte – 20
- Porter – 12
- Pulaski – 0
- Starke – 2

Non DCS Referral Sources: Total of 38

- Self – 16
- Community Agencies – 9
- School – 5
- Medical System - 1
- Family Resource Center – 5

- My Healthy Baby – 1
- Juvenile Probation - 1

Flexible Funds

- Request – 13
- Approved – 13
  - ✓ Rent – 3
  - ✓ Beds – 3
  - ✓ Water – 4
  - ✓ NIPSCO - 3
- There were 1 CFTM request:
  - Porter – with 1 enrolled
- One safe sleep request completed in Porter.
- Kristin gave an overview of the successes and attended events.
- Nicholas Neal discussed the upcoming events which include the Annual Bidder's Symposium scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup> at PNW in Westville.
- Kristin gave a detailed report from LaPorte's Family Resource Center as reported from Amanda Satterfield:
  - ✓ Total attending the center:
    - Total Families - 67
    - Adults - 114
    - Children - 118
    - New Families -15
    - Returning Families - 52
  - ✓ Total tours given - 24
  - ✓ Computer usage 11
  - ✓ Outside (the region) referrals - 5
  - ✓ Co-Locating Services – 7
  - ✓ Discussed community connections & collaborations, and outreach & highlights.

**5.Services – Dion Smith:** Dion thanked everyone for their hard work in completing the regional biennial plan which has been submitted to the director. RFPs will be open in the fall and the service standards look different due to updating the language and combine items. Dion gave a friendly reminder they are conducting checks on family preservation reports. Specifically looking at if treatment plans are being followed and should be uploaded. Every family preservation case should have evidence-based models. Please make sure reports are being sent in a timely manner and completed. Dion informed providers they can contact him for a link that will report how their agency is performing. Dion stated there is an open RFP currently for intensive foster care services that will close on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Providers can go to the proposal page for information on the RFP. RM Brown asked Dion for information on the RFP for Community Partners which Dion stated the RFP should open this fall and there will be more information before the fall. Dion asked if anyone has a provider that needs information on RFP's to please contact him. Krystal Pollard explained the RFP for intensive foster care has been extended to April 17<sup>th</sup>. There will be a practice forum that will launch on March 19<sup>th</sup> for more discussion. RM Brown asked what exactly intensive foster care which Krystal explained dealing with children who are in inappropriate

settings (group homes/residential) already and getting them into more like home settings. Plus get the children into group activities.

**6. Finance – Joni Tusing:** Joni went over the financial report for February:

- Budget Target is 66.67%, Region 2 actual 67.69%.
  - ✓ Benton: 64.82%
  - ✓ Jasper: 70.51%
  - ✓ LaPorte: 68.96%
  - ✓ Newton: 62.43%
  - ✓ Porter: 68.24%
  - ✓ Pulaski: 66.83%
  - ✓ Starke: 57.65%
- Expenditures were \$1,362,875 (YTD: \$10,484,812 - up 42.3%, \$3,116,901)
- In-Home YTD was \$1,694,258: up 16.6% (\$241,215)
- Out-of-Home was \$8,790,553: up 48.62% (\$2,875,685)
- County expenses for:
  - Benton - \$57,856 (YTD \$354,134: up 11.2%-\$35,655)
  - Jasper - \$115,772 (YTD \$741,510: up 17.11%-\$108,363)
  - LaPorte - \$662,381 (YTD \$6,478,792 up 53.77%-\$1,915,729)
  - Newton - \$62,412 (YTD \$371,558 up 63.84%-\$144,775)
  - Porter - \$314,251 (YTD \$2,487,338 up 58.2%-\$915,086)
  - Pulaski - \$71,206 (YTD \$491,308 up 57.72%-\$179,808)
  - Starke - \$78,998 (YTD \$560,172 down 24.57%-\$182,516)

RM Brown discussed the residential placements and how intensive foster care will help the children's care.

**7. Community Partners RFP opening this year new contracts will be awarded early 2025 new contracts start July 2025:** Discussed in the services portion of the meeting by Dion Smith.

**8. Possible legislation changes:** RM Brown discussed:

- House Bill 1310 – Child removed from parents 12/22 months, have permanency plan that includes at least one intended permanent or long-term arrangement for care and custody in addition to reunification.
- House Bill 1369 – Provides that DCS or a court shall consider ensuring the child's safety to be the most important consideration in the determination of a child's best interests under family and juvenile law. Provides that there is a rebuttable presumption that a child is a child in need of services if the state establishes that the child lives in the same household as an adult who was a perpetrator of a child fatality or near fatality that may have been the result of abuse, abandonment or neglect. Add sexual misconduct with a minor as an offense that may be alleged in a petition to terminate the parent-child relationship when a child is conceived as a result of the offense. Amends the circumstances under which a court may terminate the parent-child relationship with regard to a child in need of services.

- Senate Bill 169 – DCS will be assessing physical and sexual abuse up to the age of 20, and update on LCPA license.
- Senate Bill 171 – Someone on the violent sexual offender registry, we do not need to have reasonable efforts.
- Senate Bill 1051 – DCS communication with foster homes/parents.
- Senate Bill 1064 – All ages will be eligible for adoption subsidy.
- Senate Bill 1101 – Problem solving court for children from the ages of 0 to 3.
- Senate Bill 1123 – Child Advocacy Center being able to have more information on a case.

**8. Open Discussion, Questions, Information, Good Things Happening:** RM Brown answered a question on how DCS recruits' homes for high acuity children and the procedure. Finding foster homes for all the children is a struggle and the region welcomes any ideas on recruitment. Krystal Pollard discussed they are trying to locate after school programs which would help in recruitment on having a place for the children to be after school until the foster parents are off work.

**9. Next RSC Meeting:** The next meeting will be held in the Porter County office or virtually on April 12, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. central time.

**10. Adjournment:** RM Brown thanked everyone for their time and adjourned the meeting.