

## Child & Youth Services Committee Meeting

### Douglas County, Nebraska

Tuesday, August 1, 2017

The meeting convened at 1:00 p.m. in Room 903 of the Omaha-Douglas Civic Center, 1819 Farnam, Omaha, NE 68183. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is located on the wall near the entrance of the room. A notice of the meeting was published in the July 25, 2017, issue of *The Daily Record*. County Commissioners present at the meeting were Chris Rodgers, P.J. Morgan and Mary Ann Borgeson. Others present at the meeting included Pam Murphy, Diane Carlson and Catherine Hall from County Administration; Janee Pannkuk, Operation Youth Success; Shelly Hug, Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative; Deb Neary and Whitney Mastin, Midlands Mentoring Partnership; Elija Ali, DMC (Disproportionate Minority Contact) Committee; Brad Alexander and Mark LeFlore, Douglas County Youth Center; Adi Pour, Douglas County Health Department; and Constance Mierendorf, Douglas County Clerk/Comptroller's office. Commissioner Rodgers conducted the meeting.

A video recording of the meeting is available on the Douglas County Website:

<http://commissioners.douglascounty-ne.gov/board-meetings/videos>

#### Douglas County Youth Center

- Brad Alexander reported that today the population at the Youth Center is 88. The Center averaged 81 in June, which was the first full month without the staff secure population.
- Length of stay averaged 43 days in June and 44 days in July. The first 7 months of the year average is 47 days.
- Jennifer Beck, who is the school liaison for the Youth Center has been asked to co-chair the School Re-entry Program for Operation Youth Success (OYC) with Darci Poland.
- An application is being submitted for Dave Collins, lead teacher at the Youth Center, to become a member of the Schools Working Group.
- The Youth Center now has a special education teacher present 3 evenings/week and on the weekend, which is very helpful to the youth at the Center.
- Graduations are scheduled for August 3 and August 10.
- Region 6 has increased funding to the Center for one more Licensed Mental Health Professional. Discussions will be held on August 3 with Region 6 to discuss funding to add a psychiatrist.
- A presentation was made to Mary Parker and the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging to 40—50 people regarding the Foster Grandparent program.
- The Youth center will also be meeting with 2 yoga groups on August 3 and 10.

- A meeting will be held with Jean Hartnett, new director of the Douglas County Health Center, on August 9.
- A meeting will also be held with Joe Lorenz to discuss adjusting the per diem at the Youth Center. It is currently \$210.56 per day. Lancaster County is \$276 per day, which is the rate that was agreed upon with Probation. The County Attorney told the Youth Center that it could use market value or the actual costs to determine the per diem. Joe Lorenz will be able to breakdown the actual costs.
- A bill passed by the legislature shifted a number of youth from adult to juvenile court. The juvenile system moves more slowly than the adult system. 25-30% of youth at the Center are awaiting mental health evaluations. More and more evaluations are being ordered, and they take a long time. Of the 88 youth at the Center today, 8-9 are waiting for placements.
- Mr. Alexander said most youth are coming in on gun offenses.
- Mark LeFlore said many of those with mental health issues come back from placement. They act up and are returned to the Youth Center.

#### Operation Youth Success

- Janee Pannkuk said she received 106 Program Coordinator applications and is scheduling interviews for August 14.
- She will be doing a requisition to replace Emily Adams, data analyst, who is leaving to pursue her Ph.D. in August.
- Douglas County Juvenile Justice Comprehensive Plan activities have been ongoing. 120 survey responses have been received in person. Activities have been held with approximately 100 people and yesterday 30 people participated in the Juvenile Justice Provider forum.
- The first draft of the Plan will go before the OYS steering committee in January. The Plan is not due until July, but the team wants to get as much input as possible before final submission as possible.
- The National Association of School Resource Officers will hold a second-level training for all 135 School Resource Officers (SROs) in Douglas County next week.
- Strategies for Youth will be here in September to help make connections between SROs, School Administrators and Omaha Public School Security. The goal is to improve communication and keep youth out of law enforcement contact and detention.
- During the last school year, after training last summer, the Omaha Public Schools reported a 50% drop in referrals by SROs to the court or justice system due to better strategies and attitudinal changes in SROs.

### Midlands Mentoring Partnership

- Deborah Neary and Whitney Mastin discussed the Midlands Mentoring Partnership (MMP) (Attachment A). The program began in 1999 and was totally volunteer until 2009 when it received 5 years of funding and support from the philanthropic community.
- MMP is not a mentoring program per se; it supports mentoring programs and promotes evidence-based practices through training. It offers a screening test for mentors that may be better than a traditional background check. MMP is committed to enlisting more mentors to work with at-risk youth.
- MMP began collecting data in 2009 and discovered that the overwhelming majority of students they were serving were not at risk. Only 2% had been touched by foster care or the juvenile justice system. The goal was to help students at risk.
- Since 2012, the number of foster care youth served by partner agencies has increased 139%. Since 2011 there has been a 153% increase in the number of juvenile justice youth served by MMP partner agencies.
- The success of the program may be attributed to its unique Youth Initiated Mentoring (YIM) approach, which matches at-risk youth with mentors they have a connection with. Youth provide names of people they know who they believe could make a difference in their lives.
- In 2014, MMP was the first program in the country to adopt the YIM model in a community-based, one-on-one program. MMP was approached by Jean Rhodes, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts Boston, to participate in a formal study funded by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Qualitative data is being completed and the study is being prepared for publication. Research will continue to measure the long-term results of YIM.
- Ms. Neary said the formal mentoring agencies are monitored with money from the County.
- Members of the MMP board include Chris Rodgers, Vernon Daniels, John Ewing and Greg Gonzales.
- Mentors are asked to commit to 4 hours per month for 1 year, though they usually do more.
- Mr. LeFlore said the Youth Center added a question to their Transition Success Plan regarding mentors. Ms. Mastin said MMP would be willing to work with the Center to see how the mentoring program could help youth at the Center.
- Mr. Alexander said he was anxious to participate to connect youth with caring adults.

### Douglas County Health Department

- Dr. Adi Pour presented the 2016 Youth Risk Behavior Study (YRBS). It is the third time the study has been conducted and is sponsored by the CDC (Center for Disease Control). The study is conducted every 2 years. 2100 students in grades 9-12 were invited to participate. With the permission of their parents, 920 participated. 41% returned their surveys. As has been true with past YRB studies, generalizations cannot be made for the entire population based on the results of the study (Attachment B).
- The survey covers six major areas that are considered to be the behaviors that put youth, grades 9-12, at primary risk of death:
  - Weight, physical activity and nutrition
  - Personal safety, violence and bullying
  - Mental health and suicide
  - Substance abuse
  - Sexual behavior
  - Other: food insecurity, dental visits, asthma, tanning, allergies and sleep
- Dr. Pour explained that the gray color on the slides indicates Douglas County (DC) youth are average compared with national data. The green color indicates that Douglas County youth are doing better than the national average and the red color indicates the opposite—that DC youth fare worse than the U.S. averages and the County has some challenges.
- Slide #1 Weight shows that DC youth are leaning toward obesity. 19.2% are overweight and 12.7% say they are obese. Significantly, 44% of students report that they are trying to lose weight. The question becomes how can adults make this easier for them through more programs, activities, school lunch programs?
- Slide #2 Physical Activity shows that DC students are worse than their national peers when asked if they get 60 minutes per day of physical activity. The Douglas County schools are not providing physical education classes every day for students.
- Slide #3 asks a new question about concussions. While 85% of students reported no concussion, 15% reported from 1-4 concussions. This will be used as baseline data for the County.
- Slide #4 Nutrition shows that DC youth are on average with the rest of the country.
- Slide #5 Beverage Consumption shows a positive trend with students drinking fewer sugary sodas.
- Slide #6 Personal Safety. Texting while driving and not wearing a helmet while bike riding are 2 areas of concern.
- Slide #7 Violence shows a positive trend ahead of the national average when students were asked if they had been in a physical fight in the last 12 months. However, 4.4% responded that they had carried a weapon to school.

- Slide #8 Bullying and Dating Violence appears to be at the national average with 20% of students saying they were bullied on school property in the last 12 months.
- Slides #9, #10 and #11 Mental Health and Suicide show that every year the YRBS has been conducted, Douglas County youth were above the national norm in suicide attempts and in attempts that resulted in a need for medical attention. Overall 16% of the students had seriously considered suicide and 12.9% had made a plan for how they would attempt suicide.
- 22.3% of female students answered they had seriously considered attempting suicide as opposed to 10.0% of males.
- Slide #12 Substance Use-Tobacco showed DC youth fared better than the national average when asked if they ever tried cigarettes. This is a lower, more positive number than 2 years ago.
- Slide #13 Substance Use- Tobacco II also showed a positive trend in those who had ever used or are currently using a vapor product. This is better than the national average.
- Slides #14, #15, and #16 Alcohol Use indicate that nearly half of students (46.3%) reported ever drinking alcohol. This is significantly lower than the national average, which is 63.2%. Binge drinking is also lower than national reports: 11.7% of DC youth reported binge drinking in the past 30 days as contrasted with 17.7% reported by U.S. students.
- Slides #17 and #18 Substance Use-Illicit Drugs showed DC youth fared better than the national student responses when asked if they ever used marijuana. 25.5% responded that they had, but this is down from the last 2 surveys. When asked if they used marijuana in the past 30 days, DC youth were also better than the national responses and lower than they had been in the last 2 surveys at 14.7%. At 21.8% responding positively, DC students were on par with U.S. students when asked if they had been offered, sold or given an illegal drug on school property.
- Slide #19 Prescription Drug Use. 11.3% responded they had taken a prescription pain reliever not prescribed for them. 7% reported current use (within 30 days) of a pain reliever without a doctor's prescription. There were no significant differences by gender.
- Slide #20 Other Drug Use. The highest number of students who were offered illegal drugs on school property were male students in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Slide #21 Sexual Behavior. DC students are not appreciably different from youth across the country. The rate of sexual intercourse is lower than the national average. The STD rate in the community is high because there is a high infection rate—not that students are engaging in sexual activity more than other students across the country.
- Slide #22 Sexual Behavior. More than 1 in 5 (22.3 %) students who are sexually active used alcohol or drugs prior to their last sexual encounter. Nearly 6 in 10 (58.6%) reported they used a condom in their most recent sexual experience. 5.8% said they had been given something of value—money, a place to stay, food, or something else of value—in exchange for sex.
- Slides #23-24 Other Selected Indicators. 12.3% reported they sometimes go hungry because there is not enough food at home. Northwest High School has created a food

pantry so students can take food home. The highest rate of food insecurity occurs among 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

- This is a CDC questionnaire and cannot be looked at for zip code or other identifying data.
- Slide #25 Grades shows that 82.5% of respondents described themselves as “A” and “B” students.
- Slides #26-#29 summarize areas of comparison between DC youth and U.S. students:
  - DC students did worse than U.S. students in mental health and physical activity
  - DC youth did better than U.S. students in hours spent watching television; fighting; engagement in sexual intercourse; tobacco, marijuana, and alcohol use
- Slide #30 illustrates the progress DC youth have made from 2014 to 2016. They improved in a number of areas and were worse only in the amount of time they are spending on the computer for non-school related activities.

#### **Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI)**

- Shelly Hug presented data analyzing Warrants and DMC (Disproportionate Minority Contact) from 2015-2017 (Attachment C).

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 P.M.