**INTEGRATING FAMILY SERVICES**

**Meeting Minutes: Youth and Family Partnership Work Group**

***Chairs:*** *Cindy Tabor, VFFCMH and Cheryle Bilodeau, IFS*

***Date:*** *February 10, 2017*

***Time:*** *9:30-12:00*

**Present:** Cheryle Bilodeau, Cindy Tabor, Amy Lincoln Moore, Anna Berg, Will Eberle, Matt Wolf

**Regrets:** Cheryl Huntley, Julianne Nickerson, Josh Miller, Diane Bugbee, Todd Bauman, Heather Case

**By phone:** Cinn Smith,JoEllen Tarallo-Falk, Dawn Powers, Donna Sherlaw

**Work Group Goal:** Create a clear plan to assure youth and family voice representation is systemic and meaningful

**What are we going to focus on in this group?**

* What is our philosophy?
* How do we put it into action?
* Continuous quality improvement--What do we do when we get feedback from families?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Review Framework  Discuss:   * Is there anything missing in the framework? * What are the three most important aspects/components of this framework? * In looking at the last page specific to commitments to family voice are we missing anything? * What are the financial and human costs to not funding and supporting this? | Lieutenant Governor, Zuckerman is committed to hearing from the youth of Vermont. He is going to go to one high school every month and also in May he is hosting a youth town hall.  The group felt like the beginning of this framework set the tone in a positive manner and clearly laid out the needs and why of family and youth partnership.  In the pyramid, we are talking about all families—biological, kinship, foster, adoptive – we need to make this clear  Valuing less system involvement for the next generation  More notes captured on the framework | Anna Berg will forward the information to this group—Done on Friday afternoon-thank you, Anna! ☺ |
| Determine talking points for AHS Leadership | Human cost to not funding family support:   * More families fractured * Increase in children in DCF custody * Youth and adults in DOC * Long-term MH issues * There is a human cost to the system not supporting both biological families and foster parents – the trauma inherent in removing children. The stress for foster families in parenting and supporting a child in their care. * Investing in partnership with families, we will reduce the number of children in DCF custody, in residential, increase kinship placements—how do we get numbers to back this up? (housing example given-moving funds from hotel vouchers to leasing apts. For families) * We need to give data and stories. How much does it cost to incarcerate someone, for a child to go into foster care, etc. If peer support and partnerships are stronger we would be expecting better results. * We are trying to effect a change to the optimal degree possible which requires grass roots leadership and buy- in, political will and support from high level leadership. * Partnership and imparting skills to be able to partner are the major components of this framework. * We see this evidenced by best practice when many people are willing to put their own issues, agendas and mandates aside to support families.   Donna: a recent example: a family who was not attached to any of the local services who has a child with an extremely important medical need.  Local level and state level can't meet the needs.  Parents don't know where to turn.  The dad searches desperately for resources and discovers info about VFF and local parent rep. via UVM Medical Center social worker. Through support of them and the gathering of some local providers, family becomes more aware of the system, resources and feels supported (some of the weight of the fight is now off their shoulders).  Sadly, systems issues such as Medicaid and out of State Care is still an issue and the youth may need to come back to local level that does not have the expertise needed.  Health care being recognized, accepted and at the same rates across states stop people from getting the expertise and care they need.  In this case where the youth is really struggling medically the human cost is/can be the youth's life.  Also, the toll this had been on the parents and sibling emotionally, physically and socially can never be completely tallied up into a final number because the cost will have a long term effect. | Donna will talk to the family to ask about sharing information about this situation so we have an example to share with AHS leadership |
| Wrap Up and Next Steps | Cheryle and Cindy will incorporate feedback from today and then send the framework out ONE MORE TIME for feedback and final edits.  Next step will be an IFS Meeting with AHS leadership to discuss the recommendations from this workgroup. | |