

LIT Connections

March 20, 2023

I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgement; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship. ~ Brene Brown



Present: Cheryle Wilcox, Deb Forrett, Suzanne Smith, Amy Lincoln Moore, Kristin Prior, Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, Alice Maynard, Chris Mitchell, Kheya Ganguly, Cheryl Huntley, Olivia Gaudreau, Alicia Hanrahan, Donna Sherlaw, Krista Barbagallo, Maria White, Marlene Wein

Agenda Items

Truancy: Cheryl H. brought up being interested in hearing from others of high volume of CSPs and truancy:

- In Addison:
 - They were getting overwhelmed with CSP meeting requests so they coordinated a meeting with schools and principals-got very broad agreement that they needed to streamline communication and coordination.
 - The truancy protocol as written doesn't work very well in a post covid age because they have 100's of students who meet the criteria based on missing 5+ days of school.
 - This is a public health issue to have this many youth not in school.
 - In Addison they will be meeting with their with judge, DCF-Family Services director, and State's Attorney-DCF is taking lead to schedule and they will be looking to revamp their truancy protocol.

- Deputy Sec., Alicia and Lindy Boudreau, and a couple of others are talking more about truancy and what to do about protocols—have noted the same issue with increase in truancy.
- There is a 2014 interagency agreement which created a truancy protocol and includes if more than 15 days absent can do a CSP.
- Suzanne Smith is part of a truancy task force in Chittenden. The college of medicine is doing a survey with families to get more detailed information about barriers. When will the results be ready? Home visiting is one of the best ways to address truancy.
 - Truancy Work Group, Howard Center. Chittenden County. Contact Cara Gleason Krebs at CaraG@howardcenter.org – See if Cara could come to our next meeting.
- Part of the truancy issues we are seeing is a trauma response. Kheya is available to be at meetings-Kheya.Ganguly@vermont.gov, AHS Director of Trauma Prevention and Resilience Development.
- The letter that goes out is not family-friendly and needs to be trauma responsive so caregivers that receive the letter don't feel like there will be a punitive response.
- Are there best practice we should be thinking about and how do we think as a statewide system, rather than alone in regions. How do we share information so there can be some type of roadmap to help all regions.
- How do we approach this to help families? Could we have informal gatherings for families going through this?
- Krista, Rutland, brought up being invited to meetings where children are missing 40 to 100 days of school. Asking schools what they are doing to actively address children's concerns to help get them back into school.
- Amy LM shared that often when this ends up in front of a judge they ask for results of the CSP.
- What is the school obligation?
 - What is the age of the child? At, 16 year olds they can legally drop out
 - Is the child on an IEP or 504?
 - If it is about hazing or bullying there are policies that need to be followed
 - Can they offer virtual learning? Tutoring? GED prep
- **AOE update**—Secretary French is leaving his post in April. Interim Secretary will be Heather Bouchev; also three division directors positions are vacant.
- **LIT Extravaganza--Brainstorm**
 - Agenda items
 - CSP updates

- Truancy—may have folks from regions or state folks who have data or updates.
- Spaces
 - Sally Fox-could we remove the tables? That would still make us close to capacity-need ventilation
 - Vermont Technical College-Randolph
 - Elks Lodges?
 - Churches—can make some people very uncomfortable meeting in those spaces. Reminder to check cultural holidays before booking a date.