



The Wraparound Bulletin

Family Driven. Youth Guided. Community Based. Culturally Competent.

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Fall 2007

Volume 1, Issue 3

From the Desks of...

<p>Philip Endress Commissioner Department of Mental Health</p>	<p>Marie Morilus-Black, LCSW-R Director Family Voices Network</p>
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There are many changes occurring within Erie County’s system of care. For the first time we are proud to say, ***“We no longer have a wait list.”*** The wait list for families to receive services is eliminated. Erie County has maintained this status since June 2007. Within ten days of receiving a completely filled-out application from a referral agency, families are assigned to a care coordination agency to receive appropriate care.

During November-December, we will distribute a new “Referral Process Application” to all agencies and/or families who want to refer a child to Family Voices Network (FVN). We have developed one referral package for all children or youth referred from mental health, social services, juvenile justice, probation, detention, preventative services, foster care, etc. We will have ***“One Form. One Process. One Application”*** for all children & youth in Erie County. Look for the lime-green envelope in your mail this December.

Change:
Change has an adjustment period. Change does not look for a resting-place, just the next launching point.

Management Team Meeting

Held: Every other Thursday

478 Main Street, Floor 5

Written by one of our Parents

The Management Team consists of families, youth, care coordination agency supervisors, care coordinators, vendor services providers, and representatives from social services, juvenile justice, probation, preventative services, evaluation, social marketing, and family support team members.

Our focus is on collaboration and ensuring that the Wraparound Process principles are followed within the Erie County system of care. The meetings have been exceptionally well attended. This meeting is open to any families or youth who want to attend and meet every two weeks, on Thursday at 10:00am - 11:30 am.

At the meetings, we address barriers within FVN and work to overcome those barriers through a consensus decision-making process. We share information, update

one another on community and system events, and distribute information that is relevant to parents, youth, families and agency partners.

The Evaluation team provides valuable information and statistics on FVN to monitor our progress and show areas in need of improvement.

What is most productive about this meeting is that everyone is working toward the same goal - to improve the lives of our families and to make the wraparound process as effective as possible for families.

The Management Team brings together 40+ people. Family members and youth are always welcome and are encouraged to attend.

If you are interested in attending and need the schedule, please call Angie Walker at 716-858-1546 for details.



Consistency:

The ability to maintain a particular standard or repeat a particular task with minimal variation, and to have a common direction, insight, and participation.

Orientation

Held at Families CAN: 135 Delaware Ave



Orientation is a training geared to educate and empower families to participate in their Plan of Care determined by the parents/caregivers and youth. We strongly encourage all families enrolled in FVN care coordination to attend an Orientation session. The training will educate parents and prepare families on what to expect from the FVN wraparound process.

The Orientation is also open to care coordinators, supervisors, and service providers - all help to **maintain consistency** in implementing the wraparound process. Family response to the Orientations has been very positive. Written evaluations have included comments that "this training is great," "I think I am pretty well informed now, really enjoyed it", and "all families should be mandated to take." Please call **Debbie at Families CAN to schedule attendance at an Orientation at 884-2599 ext. 300.**

FVN Vendor Services

By Mark Smith, New Directions

A committee of family members, Care Coordination and Vendor Agencies has been meeting over the last few months to review the Vendor Services offered and the credentials required to provide the Services.

The objectives of the Committee are to:

- re-write the definitions so that they are consistent with the practices and principles of the Erie County Family Voices Network;
- eliminate Services not offered or inconsistent with our practices;
- combine Services that are either a duplication or redundant;
- and identify the appropriate level of credentialing per service to ensure high quality and consistent Services and Supports for our families.

As we complete this project over the next month, we will produce a Directory for all members of our System of Care.

Family Movement: Families CAN! Is Growing

By Vicki McCarthy, Director

Families CAN provides families with the support, education, and advocacy that empower each family to navigate the various systems in Erie County serving our children. Kenneth Pryor, Family Support Coordinator, and Milton Williams, Lead Family Support Partner are our team leaders.

Families CAN is a vendor of family support services for families enrolled in care coordination services through the Wraparound Process. We offer monthly Roundtable meetings that serve as a voice for families as we move forward with a system of care in Erie County that is family driven and youth guided. For new families enrolled in care coordination services, we offer "Orientation" to the *Child & Family Team* (CFT) Process. (See article above for more information)

New this Fall - Meet our Team:

To serve the needs of our families in the Juvenile Justice System and family involvement with Erie County Department of Social Services (DSS) Preventive and Birth/Foster Care Departments, we have added three new family support partners.

Our Team

- **Tanya Hernandez: 884-2599 ext. 306** - Juvenile Justice:
Tanya is also one of two family support providers that speak Spanish for our families where English is their second language and can assist families involved with all juvenile justice issues.
- **Susan Munford: 884-2599 ext. 305** - Erie County Department of Social Services (DSS) -- Family Support Partner for families involved with Preventive Services.
- **Jonathan Bush: 884-2599 ext. 204** - Family Support Partner for Birth/Foster Parents involved with DSS Specialized Services.
- **Kenneth Pryor: 884-2599 ext. 301**, Family Support Coordinator
- **Milton Williams, 884-2599 ext. 303**, Lead Family Support Partner
- **Vicki McCarthy, 884-2599 ext. 302**, Executive Director



Communication:

The exchange of thoughts, messages, or information ... Something that is communicated by, to or between people and groups.

Our Voices Count Too! (The Referral Process Form)

*One Form - One Process
- for all Children & Youth*

Current and past FVN youths are becoming more involved with the structure of Erie County's system of care. They are finding ways to have their voices heard throughout Erie County. They participate in Social Marketing by sharing their experiences, expressing their concern and suggesting improvements to communication material. Our youth are helping to improve FVN and the wraparound process.

One project the youth are working on this Fall 2007 with Social Marketing is to develop a package of information that all referring sources should have or know about, particularly, when referring families to FVN Care Coordination/ Wraparound.

We are moving to a more *consistent* way in which applications are processed for *all* children and youth in Erie County. We have created one form that will be used throughout Erie County's system of care. The form is called "*Our Voices Count Too! - The Referral Process.*" Its name was chosen by our youth who felt their voices are as important as their parents and/or caregivers. The package will be mailed to all agencies that have referred families in the past and available to other agencies upon request.

All information on the form will be used to assess children and youth needs that are involved in behavioral health, social services, juvenile justice, probation/PINs, detention, foster care, and family support team will follow this one process.

The mailing is scheduled for distribution in late November-December and will be available on our website December 1, 2007. You may request additional copies after December 1st, by contacting:

Deborah Porter, (716) 898-6134 or
Email: daporter@buffalo.edu

Youth Involvement

Our youth take pride in their knowledge and ability to share information. They are involving themselves in mental health affiliations and events, conferences, support groups and taking an active role in the Social Marketing & Evaluation Committee (S.O.M.E.). They attend monthly meetings for the S.O.M.E. committee, Roundtable Discussion, Management Team and are

continuously looking for ways to help improve the system and have their voices heard. They are learning to advocate for themselves and advocate for their peers.

Fiscal Allocations

By Kathy George, Parent



It is important that families understand the specific policy on usage of *flex fund dollars* so that services provided through the wraparound process are to address the family's emotional and behavioral challenges.

Families and care coordinators are making service choices that families will be able to continue with after they have transitioned out of wraparound. The services provided will not create a financial burden on the family and the family will be able to use community-based services after wraparound has ended.

At the Child & Family Team (CFT) Meeting the disbursement of funds are discussed. The funds are to meet the specific needs of the child, youth and family.

Cultural & Linguistic Competency (CLC) Initiatives

By Doris Carbonell-Medina

The CLC team is up and running and doing many interesting things related to education, training, and services. We have a family training team that will be doing training in the community on cultural sensitivity and how to work with different cultural groups. The data and outcomes sub committee is working on gathering pertinent information related to communities of color, how to increase access, and provide better health care services to the community. To place your name on our listserv or to receive information on our activities, please contact:

Doris Carbonell-Medina, 716-858-2621 or
Email: carboned@erie.gov

The CLC group meets the second Monday of every month. Call today for details!

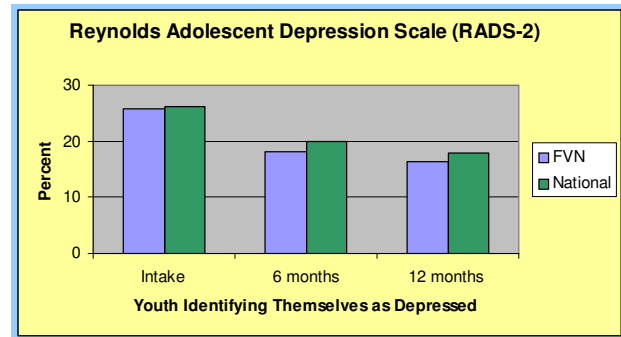


Evaluation Update

By Joan Kernan

The FVN Evaluation Team has been interviewing families and youth at intake and every six months thereafter for up to three years. One of the surveys we do with youth (aged 11 or older), is the Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale-2nd Edition (RADS-2). The RADS-2 assesses youth depression using the youth's description of his or her feelings. The national evaluation collects information on depression among youth in systems of care because depression is as one of the most common problems among youth receiving services.

The chart at the right shows that at intake about 25% of our youth identify themselves as being clinically depressed. This compares to the national data of about 26% of youth. After 12 months in services, this percent had declined to 16% of FVN youth and 18% of the national dataset.



Obtaining a better understanding of depression among youth with emotional and behavioral problems may aid in the development of services that can be integrated into systems of care to help youth cope with or reduce depression.

From the Heart of our Youth ... a personal story of survival



Brittany, 18,
Buffalo

Reaching deep down and grasping on to that of which I am, yet knowingly could be classified as different to this unknowingly society out there; finally made me realize that what people think is neither who I am, nor what they should think of me if I come out and told the truth. Therefore, why should I hide it from every one?

I suffer with bi-polar disorder

Now that I have gotten that off my chest, I want to tell you about the fear of exposing myself to the world as having a mental health disorder. How I have struggled, and how I overcame it all.

Wacko. Crazy. Psychotic. Looney. Insane. Nuts. Weird.

This is only the beginning of how terms like these were used to describe me. It is the exact opposite of who I am. Those words are far beyond the stereotypes, lies the internal heaviness of the **mental**

health stigma in our society. However, not only myself but also the greater amount of our population with the fear of being "open" about their mental health diagnosis due to ignorance of other people.

For approximately a decade, I have walked around with this weight on my shoulders. A weight that you would think would be bearable in this supposedly "open-minded" society. Unfortunately, that was not the case! My entire pre-teen and teenage years were anything BUT bearable, only fighting others and myself about coming out with my disorder. In the past, I have spun out of control causing myself to fail in school and have trouble getting along with my family.

I was not happy with whom I was, and honestly can say I gave up on myself for a good amount of time. Taking approximately 8 years, being now eighteen years old, I have finally found more comfort in myself. This comfort has made me realize this is a permanent disorder and I will have to come to terms with; and that has **helped me overcome my fear of sharing my story.**

I have finally found the right medicine after much trial and sickening error, and I have enrolled myself in a charter high school that I attend daily.

I want to stress the fact that **you need to love yourself before you can help yourself; and be yourself before you are comfortable with yourself. It takes time, so do not give up.**

To subscribe/unsubscribe to this newsletter, to offer comments, questions or inquires, please send a note to:

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