

Franklin County Service Providers

September 2, 2008

In attendance:

Don Covington, Franklin County Sheriff's Dept.

John Falcone, HealthCare USA

Carla Poepsel, Putting Kids First

Phyllis Hicks, United Way, 2-1-1

Micki Hoffman, ECC Adult Education & Literacy Program

Jon Althause, Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, Inc.

Norma Klemme, Habitat for Humanity

Armin Klemme, Union Food Pantry

Regina Sullivan, Harmony Health Plan

Holly S. Schmitt, Washington Healing Arts Center

Carolyn Winship, visitor

Paulette Hensley, Jefferson-Franklin Community Action

Sandy Thilenius, Putting Kids First

Sue Luedde, Literacy Coordinator

Dee Restrepo, Lutheran Family & Children's Services

Franklin County Service Providers
September 2, 2008
Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sandra McKinnon with University of Missouri Extension. Introductions and the following announcements were made:

Franklin County Service Providers: A sign up sheet for 2009 speakers was passed around along with a promo flyer for our meetings. An announcement was made to be thinking of nominations for the chair, vice chair and secretary positions. The election is held at our December meeting.

University of MO Extension:

Sandra McKinnon announced two upcoming series/workshops and handed out brochures. One, H.O.M.E. for home ownership made easier and two, Women's Financial Education Series for Thursdays in October from the 2 – 30th at 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Putting Kids First:

Sandy Thilenius and Carla Poepsel reported that the campaign for creating a Franklin County Children's Services Fund to provide a comprehensive mental health plan for children ages 0 – 19 including drug, substance and child abuse will be on the November 4th ballot as Proposition 1. Carla had window clings to handout to those who want them for their cars and office windows.

Adult Literacy & GED:

Mickie Hoffman announced a new site has been offered for Adult GED at Gerald and an instructor with strong math skills is needed for the fall sessions at both Washington and Union locations.

Students are being sought for the literacy classes.

Union Food Pantry:

Armin Klemme announced the need for stocking the food pantry. There will be the Scout Drive in November, but until then, the shelves get could get very bare. A suggestion was made for FC Service Providers to bring canned food to the next meeting. Armin said fruit, cereal, fruit juice and different kinds of vegetables were good items to donate. (Avoid the same run of the mill green beans, corn, peas, beans.) Sandra will run an announcement along with the next meeting announcement.

Lutheran Family Services:

Dee Restrepo announced that Lutheran Services would be looking for an office space in Franklin County and trying to line up counseling services here in 2009. Any ideas for office space available on the least expensive side would be of interest to them.

Carolyn Winship newly retired from serving the area schools as a Special Services Coordinator visited the group meeting for the first time today and was introduced.

Habitat for Humanity:

Norma Klemme provided an update on the most recent housing accomplishment and said money would now be needed in order to go forward on a new house for 2009. She suggested if you have a service organization or church group, that this is a good project for working on together.

Legal Services of Eastern Missouri:

Jon Althaus announced that they have received a grant from the MO Dept. of Health for assisting clients with domestic violence issues. They will be partnering with ALIVE to receive and utilize these funds.

SART and ALIVE:

Don Covington explained the various organizations he serves briefly and announced he would be speaking in detail about how these work at our next meeting. He also mentioned that Cathy Covington will be speaking about ALIVE also at the next meeting.

Embracing Change, Inc.:

Holly Schmitt handed out a brochure regarding this counseling, life coaching and ceremony service. She also spoke of the new massage that is done with non-chemicals that endorses the holistic approach used by the entire healing arts center.

Jefferson Franklin Community Action Corporation:

Paulette Hensley discussed the services offered at the St. Clair office below the Post Office and Curves. This is a relocation from their previous Gray Summit office. To find out more about all of their services you can visit the website at www.jfcac.org and a brochure with all pertinent information was distributed.

Main Points:

One of the main services is **energy assistance**. If an applicant is about to be disconnected a grant can be applied for. Grants are given in an Oct. – March time frame for both gas and electric although Oct. applicants are for the disabled and senior citizens. Summertime assistance is for electric needs only. One of the difficulties is now the energy companies have policies not to cut off customers completely and so bills become so large it is difficult to get enough assistance to pay off the bill. These grants are income and need based. Targeted coaching is offered for those who also need budgeting knowledge.

Another service is **Head Start** for young children needing special assistance to develop up to grade level at a preschool age. Challenges here deal largely with transportation needs with increased gas prices. Students are only in class ½ day and unless they live in an existing bus route, parents may need to drive to school and pickup midday. Head Start currently is full with a waiting list.

The Housing Choice Rental Assistance is currently full with a waiting list of 800-1000 in Franklin and Jefferson Counties together. This income based housing assistance is dependant upon available affordable housing in the area close to the applicants working needs. Now they are also working with individuals on home ownership. In general, there is not enough affordable housing or money for the needs.

Community Events offered in addition to on-going services are:

1. Health Fairs – Such as the one recently held at ECC used to be called the back to school fair and attendees must pre-register.
2. Poverty simulation workshops - These are held with cooperation of groups such as non-profit organizations and legislations to provide an understanding of the plight of low income individuals' frustration trying to get assistance and improve their living conditions. Most recent example would be the one held with CASA.
3. Step Up to Leadership is training designed to train low income individuals how to become strong communicators in the community so their perspective and voice can be heard and this segment of the citizenship can become more actively involved

Besides the overview brochure a handout was distributed that is entitled, "To Make Matters Worse: Why it Costs More to be Poor."

Thanks to Paulette for a good overview of the Jefferson Franklin Community Action Corporation!

Next Meeting – Tuesday, October 7 at 12:00 at ECC Multi Purpose Bldg.

Respectfully submitted by,
Sandy Thilenius
For Lisa Epple