

## **Youth & FASD Workgroup MINUTES - 12.7.12**

### **Alaska FASD Partnership**

**Present:** Aimee Roland (director of case management, Denali Family Services); Angel Gonzales (peer navigator, Alaska Youth & Family Network); Brittany Arey (youth advocate); Ken Komakhut (youth advocate); Maria Chythlook (adoptive parent); Mike Baldwin (advocate); Mary Williard (adoptive parent); Paul Cornils (executive director, Alaska Youth & Family Network); Teri Tibbett (advocacy coordinator, Alaska Mental Health Board/Advisory Board on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse).

**I. WORKGROUP PRIORITY:** The workgroup discussed the priorities for action by the workgroup. Eight people voted by email on their top three priorities from a list that was brain-stormed at a previous meeting. The final tally was:

1. Research and identify FASD training that offers a hands-on approach, with interventions and better understanding of how to work with people who have an FASD. Need promising or best practices. (5 votes)
2. Research and promote programs in schools to educate teens about FASD (4 votes)
3. TIED: Hands-on presentations (youth to youth) about FASD (3 votes)
4. TIED: Get information to clinics that serve pregnant women (birth centers, Planned Parenthood, obstetricians, public health centers, etc.) (3 votes)

The workgroup agreed to combine #2 and #3 because they are similar:

1. Research and identify FASD training that offers a hands-on approach, with interventions and better understanding of how to work with people who have an FASD. Need promising or best practices.
2. Research and promote programs in schools to educate teens about FASD, using hands-on presentations (youth to youth).
3. Get information to clinics that serve pregnant women (birth centers, Planned Parenthood, obstetricians, public health centers, etc.)

The workgroup further decided that because these were similar, they could be combined into one priority:

**Research and promote evidence-based FASD prevention programs, presentations, curriculum, pamphlets, awareness campaigns, etc. for schools and other youth-serving entities, using a hands-on, peer-driven approach.**

## **II. DISCUSSION:**

- Have individuals who experience an FASD do the presentations, because peers will listen better to a peer than to an authority figure. Presentations/information should point out the realities of having an FASD from people who have experienced them.
- Create a video/DVD of the presentation that can be distributed throughout Alaska.
- Consider a “FASD Presentation in a Box” with the DVD, pamphlets, workbooks, hands-on materials, etc.
- Include a multi-ethnic focus.

- Include a confidential resource line for teens and young adults to answer questions about FASD.
- Support birth moms, grandparents, and adopted moms to address grief.
- Need to address alcoholism and underage drinking as it pertains to one's inability to control their drinking, even when they know they shouldn't, because the addiction has them believing and acting as if nothing else matters beyond getting the alcohol in their system.
- Stigma is an issue. If we can take away the stigma and guilt about having consumed alcohol during pregnancy, moms will feel freer to admit the problem and get services – the more the information gets out there, the more moms may feel comfortable “coming out.”
- Be sure to include information for moms who suspect they could have a child with FASD and offer resources to them. Important to reassure moms that their kids won't be taken away if they admit they drank during pregnancy.
- Look into what the state of Minnesota is doing (e.g. pregnancy tests in bar bathrooms).
- Look for programs that work for 6<sup>th</sup> grade and up.

**II. ACTION FIRST STEPS.** Before the next meeting of this workgroup (January 4), members will:

1. Research a master distribution list of entities in various regions around that state (schools, organizations, agencies) that serve youth and could benefit from an awareness/prevention campaign.
2. Research evidence-based (proven successful) prevention programs/presentations/curriculum/pamphlets/awareness campaigns, etc. that we will adopt and promote.
3. Each member or team will be responsible for a region:
  - Southcentral = Angel, Aimee
  - Southwest = Mary
  - Interior = Brittany, Ken
  - Northwest = Paul
  - Kenai Peninsula/Kodiak = Maria
  - Southeast = Teri
4. Teri will send out a list of entities serving youth by region (with contact information).