

**Alaska FASD Partnership
Steering Committee – MINUTES (final)
Wednesday, August 13, 2014**

I. Introductions

Wendy Barrett (Stone Soup Group); Eliza Jamison (Alaska Youth & Family Network); Vickie Tinker (FASD Diagnostic Clinic, Frontier Community Services); Deb Evensen (FASD consultant); Jenn Wagaman (Alaska Center for Children’s and Adults); Amy Hansen (Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse); Mike Jeffery (Courts); Sean O’Brien (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation); Patty Owen (Dept. of Education and Early Development); Trish Smith (Volunteers of America Alaska); Christie Reinhardt (Governor’s Council on Disabilities and Special Education (GCDSE); Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus (parent); Teri Tibbett (Alaska Mental Health Board/Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse). Guests: Cheryl Nino (Alaska Psychiatric Institute) and Dr. Kathleen Myers (Seattle Children’s Hospital).

II. Approval of Agenda – Approved.

III. Approval of Minutes 6.11.14 – Approved.

IV. Conversation with Dr. Kathleen Myers and Cheryl Nino about A-PAL

Dr. Kathleen Myers is a child and adolescent psychiatrist, Cheryl Nino is director of the Telebehavioral Health Institute at Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API). A-PAL is complication-based program that provides free consultation for providers who work with youth who experience extreme behaviors who may or may not be prescribed psychotropic medicines. Dr. Myers also offers more complex consultation that can be set up for a cost. Providers can call or email for a free formal consultation with Dr. Myers about evidence-based medication management related to psychotropic medications, as well as other appropriate interventions. A report is generated for the referring provider. Contact apal@seattlechildrens.org or kathleen.myers@seattlechildrens.org or call 206-987-1663 or 1-800-345-2725.

V. Member Updates

Eliza gave the update for the Youth and FASD Workgroup, which met on July 10, and was attended by Eliza and four non-youth. The first goal of the workgroup is to recruit more youth. Deb and Trish offered to spread the word to the youth they know. A doodle poll will go out inviting people to another meeting and steering committee members are invited to distribute the invitation far and wide.

Deb offered an update on Kenai School District’s FASD efforts. This is the 3rd year for district-wide program, following the model being used at the Anchorage School District (ASD), which is in its 6th year. In Kenai and British Columbia they are doing a wide sweep through the district offering in-depth teaching information on FASD, then getting passionate people who are master educators and who know the subject, to work with the district to deal with the challenges. The strategy suggests that master teachers who are passionate will come up with good solutions. Under the direction of the district’s special education director, Clayton Holland, they have hired a full-time person within the district, and Deb remains the consultant. Currently, the district has a host of teachers who have received all the trainings and the workshops offered and are working on effective solutions, e.g. eight magic keys, that are community-based and collaborative in nature (teachers, parents, youth, diagnostic clinic, DJJ, etc.); they are also working on a research element so they can report outcomes. They’ve had great success turning things around for some very special needs students with FASD. Once the administrators get it and are on board, then things really start to roll, Deb said. Judge Jeffery commented on the fact that it’s a state law that school districts educate teachers, principal, and special education directors on FASD. How can we get compliance with that? Deb replied that understanding FASD is equivalent to getting a Master’s degree. The first hurdle is understanding fully what

FASD is and the appropriate interventions, so the teachers can come up with the appropriate solutions. A common problem is that the “system” doesn’t get it – the administrators, the teachers as a whole, the school nurse, etc. It’s a system shift that is necessary. Until the “system” gets it we won’t see the changes we need. The strategy is to get teachers inside the system to change the system – thus working within with passionate master teachers. Another strategy that ASD is doing (not Kenai, yet) is to have an FASD expert, or “holder of FASD information” in every building in the district, a go-to person that teachers, parents, administrators can go to for questions and consultation. KSD is collaborating with Frontier Community Services (FCS) (the diagnostic clinic in the area) so everyone is on the same page.

Vickie said historically their clinic (FCS) had difficulty getting into the school district, but when Clayton Holland came on and embraced FASD, things started rolling. Now at IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings the teachers and parents and administrators “get it,” so no more impasses between parents and teachers. “A lot of grace coming from school employees” she said. Also they’re seeing children succeed and not blowing out of their classrooms, as was common historically. FCS is working with Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) in Kenai, and with Dr. Mattheis, who is doing clinics in the DJJ facility – diagnosis and medication management. Finally, FCS and Dr. Mattheis are educating DJJ about FASD and trauma and appropriate interventions for serving this population. FCS occasionally gets referrals from the Public Defender Agency (PDA) in Kenai to diagnose and testify on adults cases, and PDA is paying for it. Also, Vickie has been invited to court to explain FASD to the judge.

Trish completed Camp Hope, it was very successful, 30 children with and without a diagnosis, great staff who understand the disability and work with the kids successfully. Trish’s position at VOAA is changing to something related to community outreach, and will still be doing camps that focus on FASD.

Teri reported that she and Judge Jeffery are working on a chapter for a book related to FASD and the legal system. The chapter is about “FASD as a Mitigating Factor in Alaska.” The book has many contributors and will be published by Springer Publishing.

VI. Statewide Workgroups/Committees Updates

Jeanne and Christie reported that the FASD workgroup of the Governor’s Council on Disabilities and Special Education (GCDSE). The SESA (Special Education Services Agency) committee is working on a survey about the knowledge base and needs, and what they would like to see in terms of training and support; they’re working on FASD Day activities; they’re working on IDD (Intellectual/Developmental Disability) eligibility for individuals with FASD; they’re working on SAFA (Self Advocates for FASD in Action) with Anna Atla and are looking for a sponsor agency and talking to a few self-advocacy groups around the state; they want to reinstitute substance abuse treatment for people with a developmental disability, particularly FASD, like a program that was at the ARC of Anchorage, called Bryn Mawr, and she wants to see that happen again, and they’re working on that, they’re looking at a model that relates to Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).

Teri reported Juneau FASD Workgroup is working on putting on an Alaska-Canada FASD Conference in Juneau in 2015. More details will be reported as things are finalized.

VIII. Direction for Fall Action

The group discussed inviting Clayton Holland from Kenai School District and Dr. Phil Mattheis to serve on Partnership’s steering committee. There was no objection.

It was suggested that now is a good time weave together the new things that are happening in the state.

It was suggested we work with the GCDSE on their “Employment First” effort and invite other agencies to have FASD training that include emerging research and practices.

IX. Next meeting: September 10, 2014