

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

FASD Workgroup

LOCATION

Governor's Council Conference Room
3601 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska
Teleconference

Meeting Date

April 1, 2014
3:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Tommy O'Malley

Travis Hedwig

Anna Attla

Barb Chambers

Alex Edwards

Staff: Christie Reinhardt

Patrick Pillai

Trish Smith

Chair: Jeanne Gerhardt –Cyrus

Co-chair- Art Delaune

CALL TO ORDER – 3:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Welcome from the Chair

Jeanne welcomed the group members

Old Business

Anna Attla reported on SAFA, Self Advocates with FASD in Action, a national group of self advocates with an FASD or which Anna is a founding member. She talked about the group, the meeting she attended in DC and how other states have SAFA chapters. Christie added some information on the materials SAFA had for self advocates and how the national group had been working on a trainer manual for starting groups. The group was very supportive of this initiative. Christie will send info on the National SAFA chapter to Workgroup members to start.

There was also a discussion about exploring and advocating for drug and alcohol abuse treatment programs for those with an FASD. Anna shared that the Arc had a program in the late 80's. The group expressed an interest in finding information about programs in the past as well as current programs. A suggestion was made to start with talking to the UAA Center for Psychosocial Studies.

Jeanne led a discussion with the group on the workgroup's relationship to the Alaska Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse FASD Partnership. It was decided that the Council FASD Workgroup would not become a sub-committee of the Partnership, but would continue as a partner and collaborator. The Workgroup will report to the Partnership on its activities and share agendas and minutes. There are also three members of the Council FASD Workgroup who are members of the Partnership Steering Committee.

New Business

Alex stated that there were some preliminary discussions at Center for Behavioral Health Research and Services (CBHRS) on FASD Into Action Train the Trainer sessions. She told the group that it was too early to share much, but that she would keep us informed.

There followed a discussion on the Action Priorities of the Group. The group agreed with Travis that the overarching work focus for the group should be FASD Informed Care. Following this the group defined three areas to work on that fit with this focus and with the work of the Council.

First is Self Advocacy. Part of this is the creation of an SAFA chapter in Alaska. Christie will contact the National SAFA staff and see what materials are available and what other states are doing and share it with the group. Barb has offered to help with this project. Also under Self Advocacy was the exploration of drug and alcohol abuse treatments that are FASD informed.

Second, as stated by Tommy, is the need for the Prevention of Secondary Characteristics. The group will explore and advocate for an understanding that FASD prevention is not just informing folks about the danger of drinking during pregnancy, but also about preventing secondary characteristics after a child is born with pre-natal exposure.

The third area is advocating for DD eligibility for those with an FASD diagnosis. Currently only those with a significant physical or cognitive impairment are qualifying for eligibility and the rest is passed off to Mental Health services (or residential treatment or corrections) which are not as comprehensive. Issues to be addressed under this area are the need for a 1. service home, 2. appropriate educational services and 3. lifespan supports. The group agreed that the first way to make all this happen was to advocate for FASD to be a DD recognized disability which would open doors not just to eligibility for comprehensive services, but also establish a brain based disability lens for other programs and agencies to look at FASD.

Trish brought up meeting Gigi Davidson and her work with FASD Communities. These are safe, supported living communities for adults with an FASD. The first community is scheduled to open in Madison WI. She has material to share with the group

Adjournment

The group agreed that 3:00 was a good meeting time and the meeting was adjourned at 4:00.