

## **East Central DHHS Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Sept 17, 2013**

**Meeting time 4:30 – 6:00**

**Meeting Location – Benton Stearns Education Building**

**Meeting facilitator – Brenda Hommerding**

In Attendance – Danelle Gournaris (Guest Speaker), Melinda Brown, Michelle Isham, Rosemond Owens, Jean Euteneuer

Absent – Kathy Fischer, Nona Hendrickson, Emily Smith – Lundberg, Phillip Gallant and Rich Diedrichsen

Staff- Diane Leonard (DHH Specialist), Shannon Lindboe (note taker), Anne Janckila (staff interpreter) and Judy Leach, the interpreters.

Brenda started the meeting at 4:40 PM. Brenda introduced herself and introduced Danelle Gournaris, Deaf Mentor Family Program Coordinator from Lifetrack, Inc. Stepped in for the guest speaker who was ill. She will start her presentation later while we are waiting for others.

Minutes from last meeting were handed out for review and were accepted as is without changes.

MCDHH report –

- Nothing to report.
- Meeting is this Friday. At the next meeting will have more to share.
- Brenda noted that maybe we needed to take a note of that and adjust our meetings.

Regional report – No report from Rich.

East Central report – Not much to report. Busy but doing the same things.

ICC (I Can Connect) working with several customers. This is a new Federal program for customers with combined hearing and vision loss. For more information on National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution program, go the website at [www.icanconnect.org](http://www.icanconnect.org).

Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens (MADC) on Oct 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> –

- Diane will be participating as a participant, manning DHHS booth, and assisting with a role play at one of the workshops, Fraud Scams and Identify Theft: What You Need to Know to Protect Yourself.
- The conference will be held in Brooklyn Center, for more information go the website – [www.madcconference.org](http://www.madcconference.org)

Advisory Committee Membership:

- Just wanted to note that usually this is the last AC meeting for this year that will see the end to member's terms but we are lucky there will be no terms coming due but the following year will be a busy time talking to members and hope that you all will consider extending your term if you are eligible.
- But we will need a replacement for Brenda as a chairperson because her term is up as chairperson.

Discussion on changing the meetings –

- Rich misses because manager's meetings are the same time as well as the MCDHH meeting
- 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday work for people? Took a quick poll of members to see if that worked which everyone agreed would work.
- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> will be the next meeting. Consensus was to keep the same meeting location. Michelle will sign us up for the date and time to reserve the room.

Presentation – Danelle Gournaris

Deaf Mentor Family Program Coordinator from Lifetrack, Inc. - From St. Paul.

Purpose – Communication.

To teach ASL and focus on ages 0 – 6. Part of the early intervention for children.

- The program started at the Deaf Mentor Program started at the school of the deaf in Utah.
- The goal was to have the language development for hearing parents.
- Children of deaf parents are behind in language.
- The deaf mentor knows the ASL language and exposes the hearing parents to language structure.

Bilingual / Biculturalism – bi-bi model

Questions – Do they support Spanish as the second language also?

- The mentor themselves teaches ASL.
- The curriculum used Spanish also.
- When they have the deaf mentor come into the home ironically they learn English faster, because the structure is similar.
- Trying to accommodate Hmong and Somali also.
- We don't have the research to support what was just stated with English so we have work to do.

Mentors-

Have lots of training.

Before they go into the home they are trained how to use the curriculum.

Focuses on –

- culture
- visual communication
- technology

Deaf mentor goes to a one day training 9-5.

- When they are done they go to the clients homes.
- Meet at first for 2 hours. Meet once a week for 2 years.
- Encourages family to go to Deaf Events. For example signing Santa. The mentor goes with to help if they are nervous and introduces to them to others in the community.

How did this program start? –

- DHHS
- 2007 received a grant to cover 8 families
- Case load grew. Contracted to Lifetrack Resources in 2012, now serve 20 families and has a waiting list.
- 22 families are on the list for the deaf mentor program.
- Looking to hire more mentors.

We recently established a Hard of Hearing role model.

- Starts in Oct. Have 8 people.
- A good mix of individuals - 2 parents of HH children, one is HH themselves.
- Had a task force to discuss what was needed.
- Want a self-advocacy.
- Someone who identifies as HH and teach them to speak up for their own needs.

A hard of hearing individual is paired with another person to teach them what they are learned, for example –

- The use of technology. Hearing aids and FM systems.
- The role model also has training. Only about an hour. Quite a bit different than the other program. It is a pilot study may be modified to meet the needs of the individual family.

Right now the HH model is –

- 6 sessions.
- Focuses on Ages are 7-14.
- Currently looking into what can be expanded to accommodate birth to age 6.

#### Holiday party – (Diane)

- Signing Santa Claus. This year we are going to have a signing Santa again. Decided we are going to change the name to a Winter Wonderland Party or a similar name so that it will be more open to anyone older than kids as well as some adults with hearing loss.
- The date for the part is Dec 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Having issues finding a location to hold the event. Need 1 Santa and 2 elves KIS volunteered to help in those roles they are only available on the 21<sup>st</sup> that is why that date was chosen.
- Thoughts on other locations? Maybe a school? Or in a school's gym? But need a staff member of a school to reserve the room. Whitney? Remember you need to pay for the janitor of the school to clean. They won't allow us to clean it ourselves.
- The time of the party will be from 11-1, but we need an hour before to set up and after the party to clean up.
- Brenda offered to look into getting some funding but need the location.
- Right now we can do a flyer and just ask people to save the date.

#### Announcements and info from others?

##### Lifetrack finished a rebranding –

- Dropped the "Resources". It doesn't affect much except the website and the email addresses.
- New site is – Lifetrack-mn.org. But the old site and email addresses will work for a while.
- Just changed it in the middle of August.

Adjourn the meeting at 5:42.

Diane thanked Brenda for chairing the meeting and will be recruiting. So asked that other members to talk with her or she will be looking to them.