

Taylor County Shared Services Meeting
District School Board Meeting Room
Aug 28, 2023, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Present:

Tonya Bell, Brandi Turner, Elizabeth Schmidt, Laura Blue, Gabrielle Aboki, Lisa Hill Boatwright, David Boatwright, Melissa Cephus, Jacob Clore, Yolanda Gillette-Carlson, Lorien Hershberger, Debbie Hill, Julia Flowers, and Sebastian Plank.

Agencies Represented: Healthy Start Coalition, Healthy Families Seven Rivers, Big Bend AHEC, ELC of Big Bend, Battlefront, Taylor County School District, Partnership for Strong Families (PFSF), Disc Village, Brehon Institute, and the Pregnancy Care Center.

Tonya Bell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone and advised that this week is Black Breastfeeding Week.

Elizabeth Schmidt from Healthy Start Coalition reiterated what Tonya said about National Breastfeeding Awareness Month is August and this week, specifically, is Black Breastfeeding Week. She also emphasized that breastfeeding support is offered for free for Healthy Start participants.

Lisa Hill Boatwright with Battlefront Education & Wellness provided T.E.A.M. Dad updates and said that she is also a Chairperson on the School Board Advisory Council.

Lorien Hershberger, volunteer for the Pregnancy Care Center stated that they have a mobile unit out in the community once a week. First Baptist Church is assisting by providing them a storage room for their supplies as well as a counseling room. The mobile unit can do sonograms. They need a Registered Nurse to read the sonograms.

Yolanda Gillette-Carlson with Big Bend AHEC advised that they offer tobacco free classes on the last Monday of each month from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. These classes can be done in person or virtually as well. Nicotine patches as well as gum can be provided free of charge. Pregnant Women need a doctor's note showing that they can take the medication without any complications. She also said that they provide assistance with navigating online Federal Health Insurance (formerly known as Obama Care). They also offer diabetes education and chronic health disease management.

Debbie Hill with the Brehon Institute said that they provide in home parenting and partnerships.

David Boatwright with Battlefront Education & Wellness spoke about the 5 enrollees currently with the T.E.A.M. Dad program. He is hosting an info session on September 19th at Cuccinelli's Pizza In Madison. They also have a new Facebook page. They are slow but steady trying to get more Dads in the program.

Brandi Turner with Healthy Families Seven Rivers stated that they offer free, community-based, voluntary home-visiting program designed to support and educate parents through the first years of their child's life. She also told us that a current part-time employee will be working with them full-time beginning 31 August.

Gabrielle Aboki with ELC Big Bend informed all that that do school readiness and can provide financial assistance with childcare. They are offering an Open House and Fall Festival on Sep 21st from 3 PM to 6 PM at 218 N. Clark Street, in Perry.

Melissa Cephus with the Taylor County School District advised that they are seeking donations of furniture, hygiene items, food services, and clothes in all sizes.

Jacob Clore of PFSF told everyone that they have had 17 children removed from their homes due to substance abuse in Taylor County. The money they provide for both Taylor and Madison County has been significantly reduced. We used to split \$5,000 but that amount was reduced to \$2,000, \$1,000 for each county. He also told us that they can allocate \$200 per family per year to assist with rent, electrical bills, and pack 'n plays, car seats, etc. He asked if we would like to keep

the \$1,000 for each county to go to individuals instead of families. Brandi Turner made a motion to keep the distribution to individuals. Lisa Hill Boatwright seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Sebastian Plank is a new hire at PFSF and he is a Recruitment Specialist. He said that there is a huge need for foster families. Sixty five children in Taylor County are receiving out of home care. He provides outreach and information sessions to help families become Partners for Families. Children need stability and normalcy in their lives.

The next Taylor County Shared Services meeting will be held Oct 23rd.

Notes taken by Laura Blue