

**Taylor County Shared Services Meeting
District School Board Meeting Room
August 26, 2024, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM**

Present:

Donna Hagan, Tonya Bell, Brandi Turner, Elizabeth Schmidt, Cindy Hutto, Laura Blue, Victoria Taylor, Kelsey Johnson, Gabrielle Aboki, Kathy Bland, Lisa Hill Boatwright, David Boatwright, Melissa Cephus, Jacob Clore, Kristin Eppers, Beth Fuentes, Amy Liem, Kristie Lutz, Sandra Moore, Jabrika Morris, Michelle Moultrie-Grant, Sarah Phillips, Sebastian Plank, Janie Register, and Arneshia Stephens.

Agencies Represented: Healthy Start Coalition, Healthy Families Seven Rivers, Taylor County Health Department (TCHD), Early Learning Center of Big Bend, Battlefront, TEAM Dad, Partnership for Strong Families (PFSF), Big Bend AHEC, Florida Connecting Kids to Coverage, Disc Village, Early Head Start, Brehon Family Services, FDLRS Micco, Head Start, American Red Cross, and the Apalachee Center.

Tonya Bell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Kristie Lutz with the TCHD advised that they do Tobacco Cessation classes as well as Heart Health Monitoring in response to the needs survey that Jacob Clore sent out via email.

Sarah Phillips, also with the TCHD, told us that she is a child car seat care coordinator, and they are always glad to help with preventive measures for babies.

Brandi Turner, Healthy Families 7 Rivers, let everyone know that they hired two new Home Visitor employees, Kelsey Johnson and Eunice Green. Eunice is also bilingual.

Kathy Bland, American Red Cross, advised that they are ready to serve disaster needs. They are rallying volunteers to install free smoke alarms nationwide as part of the Sound the Alarm Events. They also offer Prepare with Pedro the Penguin, a 30 – 45 minute preparedness education program for students in Kindergarten to 2nd grade. The program teaches students how to be prepared for home fires or local hazards.

Gabrielle Aboki, ELC Big Bend, told everyone that they are currently full, but they always will take an application. They can also help find pre-k and assist families that are looking for childcare.

Melissa Cephus works with the Taylor County School District, as the Homeless Liaison with the schools. If a student needs backpacks and school supplies, just reach out to them. They would be glad to assist.

Janie Register with FDLRS works with families, students, and children 3 – 5 years old with disabilities. They are standing by to assist.

Michelle Moultrie-Grant is the new Executive Director of Brehon Family Services. They are working on several different events such as Project Safe and Healthy Baby's. They are having an event in November titled Boot's for Babies where they will have a silent auction and give back to the community.

Sandra Moore, Disc Village, explained that they are offering an Opioid Overdose Awareness event this Friday. They also can assist with Drugs and Alcohol.

David Boatwright, T.E.A.M Dad coach, spoke about their 16 week program for Dads. He recently went to Atlanta to attend a Fatherhood Conference. He found the conference very informative and plans to reach out to as many Dads as possible if they have a child 3 years old or younger.

Amy Liem, is a legal assistant with Connecting Kids to Coverage. She also assists people with obtaining food stamps. A lot of people did not understand that they would have to redo their Medicaid. There are ways to correct that, and she is standing by to assist.

Kristin Eppers works with Big Bend AHEC and they are planning a Breast Cancer event at the Perry hospital on Oct 9th. They will provide lunch, as well as mammograms and exams.

Elizabeth Schmidt, Program Manager at Healthy Start Coalition of JMT told everyone that they held a child safety event on June 7th. Thirty-two car seats, 13 Pack N Plays, and several strollers were given out at this event. There was a certified child car seat technician on hand to assist with teaching parents & family members how to properly install the car seat.

Jacob Clore of PFSF provided updates on the local children data. So far this year (January through August 16th there have been three children removed from their household in Taylor County. One removal was because of substance abuse in the household. Two other children were removed due to threatened harm. One child was released to a non-relative and the other two were released to relatives. Jacob spoke about the Council Budget. Brandi Turner motioned to use \$200 for Pack N Plays; Tonya Bell seconded; motion passed. Lisa Hill Boatwright motioned to use the remaining \$800 for individual assistant; Michelle Moultrie Grant seconded; motion was passed.

Sebastian Plank, also with PFSF, stated that there were 39 children in Taylor who need foster homes. There are only three authorized foster homes at this time. We need more foster homes.

Our guest speaker was Donna Hagan, Executive Director of the Healthy Start Coalition of Jefferson, Madison, and Taylor Counties, Inc. Donna presented the 2024 State of the Infant. There were 15 infant deaths in our counties between 2022 – 2024. There were also 197 low birth weight infants born to mothers in the counties between 2020 and 2022. The first root cause, obese mothers at time of pregnancy, Jefferson County had 33.9%. Madison County was the 8th highest with 41%. Taylor County was the 9th highest with 39.7%. Other root causes are substance exposure and other areas of preconception health: Environmental Exposures and Mental Health. What can be done to help? Complete the Florida Prenatal Screen with the patients; Complete a Connect referral for Home Visiting; Encourage your patients to attend a Preconception Health Workshop in their area; and Connect patients to a mental health professional. Together we can make a difference!

This was our last meeting for 2024. We look forward to seeing everyone in 2025!

Notes taken by Laura Blue