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**NORTHEAST EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL**

**Monday, January 23, 2023**

**5:30-7:00 p.m.**

**ZOOM Meeting**

**In Attendance:** Patty Buell, Jenny, B. Tetreault, Erin Rhault, Christine Rosati Randall, Jessica Duffy, Melissa Kennedy, Rhianna McCabe, Paula Graef, Ellen Jones, Lisa Girard, Cathy Lane, Kelly Robbins, Sally Sherman, Ali Lacey, Diane Cook, Melanie Smith Cerva, Kayla Burgess, Stephanie B, Emily Ross, Keely McAlister, Courtney Langlois, Shannon Haney, Stephanie Hughes, Sandra Assonowitz, Patty Bryant, Sara Gustovan, Robert Angeli

Guest Speakers: Julie Burgess – Access, Jennifer Buckley - SERAC

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Guest Speakers
3. NECC Updates- Regional Director
4. Regional Programming / Community Updates
5. School Readiness Meeting

**Guest Speaker:**

Jennifer Buckley – SERAC Regional Prevention Manager, they are non-profit work in 41 communities in Eastern CT. One of the regional behavioral health action agencies = prevention around suicide, gambling an mental health. Our website [www.searcct.org](http://www.searcct.org) . Jennifer reviews 21 for reason laws, and slides related to that. Reviews information on edibles and why they are unsafe and overdosing is common in adults and children, reviewed slide of products that look like chips and candy, but have THC in them. Reviews side effects and 3rd hand smoke from vapes. Reviews what parents can do, conversations are powerful. She shares lots of links to prevention resources. Perception of harm has changed since it can be medically used, but some people abuse it. Has resources on substances: <https://www.preventiontrainingcenter.org>. To contact Jen, email at [Jbuckley@seracct.org](mailto:Jbuckley@seracct.org)

* **Jen can do presentations with schools or agencies around this topic.**

Question: Patty B, do edibles look different across states (MA and CT). A: they can look a lot like real products, showing parents how similar they look.

Emma King from Access Agency – joined with Rhiannon McCabe. Update on Unite CT, a state emergency rental system that was funded by COVID relief foundation. Program has ended, but they are still paying out to claims that were already submitted. Access is serving as a housing resource center - if any families are having issues, they can reach out to ACCESS.

Resources are now going into the eviction prevention programs. People who run behind on rent and are going to eviction process, there are some additional dollars to help with legal representation, assist with resources who are in the eviction process. Some qualified individuals may be able to access up to $3,000 worth assistance during the mediation process (individuals already in the court system).

Access role in this is to be help a tenant get all the documents together into the computer to send to department of housing. These are only referral through court system. The 211 hotline is still the resource to start, it’s the pathway to assistance. More information to come. CT is now a right to counsel state, where everyone has a right to access legal services.

Question: How would like work with a family evicted and living in hotel: They need to call 211 to get started. If a family is paying for hotel (they are considered diverted), but if an agency is paying, they are considered homeless.

Cathy question: A pregnant women who is struggling to pay rent, about to be homeless - does being pregnant give them any priority? Answer: they need to reach out because “about to be” homeless can mean different things. Call sooner rather than later, do not wait till people are months behind. The more time to help is better, its tough for families to ask for help. Just like everyone else, we are short staffed (only 4 people), took over 450 calls last month alone.

Cold weather overnight shelter is open in Danielson is open, anyone who needs shelter 8 p.m.-8 a.m. – can call Access directly.

**Staff Updates from Kris & Chris:**

Parent Leadership Training:

Chris shared screen to show flyer for PEP (People Empowering People), we are starting another 10 week training, starting March 2nd, ending on May 12th – will be held in Putnam in person. We can have 12 parents in this class. We are asking that you share the flyer as we are recruiting for the next two weeks – Deadline is February 9th. Free dinner and childcare children ages 2 and up on site.

Mental Health Task Force:

Meeting coming up on Thursday, 26th, homeless and domestic violence – impact on children and learning. Flyer has been sent out, if you want to be added to our list serve for future meeting reminders, please email me.

Social Emotional Learning Kits: Programs serving children ages 2-8 in our 7 communities are eligible for the kit, we’ve given out over 35 kits to-date, we have 35 left, we are reaching out to daycares now as there are about that many who have not received kits yet. You can visit the website for more information: <http://www.neccouncil.org/resources/social-emotional-learning-kit-project/>

Sparkler:

Grant is ending in February, we launched in November and have had 152 enrolled in the app, 50 families got an activity bag for completing the ages and stages developmental screening.

Regional Resource Guide

Meet with printer today to review another round edits, will meet with committee again for final review. Will review at future meetings.

**Community Programs Sharing:**

**Lisa: TEEG**, On-going programs - Queer youth support group meeting 1-month, expressive art group in Putnam for teens (2x month), Post-Partum “Strong like a mother” support group. “Got Drama” in person every Tuesday at the Bradley. Hang time, starting in February – Wednesdays 2:15-4:00 p.m. at TEEG.

**Kelly – Parent Ambassador**, social media for the Council, Melissa started a group in Facebook we started “guides” – 3 guides Mental Health, support group and playgroups and local resources. Kinship Village is the name of the Facebook group.

**Kristen Hempel – EASTCONN**: Adult & community programs – keep the opportunities we offer up to date so you can inform any families you meet with. We have adult ed, high school completion, English language classes. Classes meet both in person and online (we can support ID needs with loan program) and can provide transportation also, as we know that is a barrier. Please reach out to me if any questions. We have programs for internet. We also have program – can complete high school and CAN at the same time. Same with co-enrollment and training with manufacturing. We have a vibrant youth program, interested in daycare and childcare fields – looking forward to collaboration on more trainings. Career Connect – employment and training, opportunity with all workforce boards – 1 point of entry, people can complete a short assessment and then be connected to training programs across the State. Also do citizenship preparation classes.

Questions: Patty B - the ELL classes, are they in Danielson office or in other communities? Kristen: If there are co-horts of students from other communities (need 5 students). Rene: Career Connect feedback – some people are afraid of application because of questions they ask (Social security, questions). Kristen: have people come into the office (American Job Center – Danielson and Willimantic) and there are other ways to help them think outside the box to identify skills and paths forward.

**Sandra A – NFN Day Kimball**: Will send updated flyer, Brooklyn Community Center is playground places. John, our fathering home visitor is doing circle of security at Putnam Public Library.

School Readiness Meeting - see separate notes in google drive for January: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/17S55xs-G_709mh1utG_s6nU1IryOGHAwzP-xGjx4pfs/edit?usp=sharing>

**UPCOMING COUNCIL ZOOMEETINGS for 2022/2023 SCHOOL YEAR:**

Monday's: March 13, May 1