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**NORTHEAST EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL**

**Monday, Spetember 19, 2022**

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

**ZOOM Meeting**

**In Attendance:** Lisa Andrews, Bob Angeli, Sandra Assonowicz, Jill Bourbou, Louise Brouder, Kayla Burgess, Patty Buell, Patty Bryant, Kristine Cicchetti, Sam Drobiak, Shannon Haney, Diane Gozemba, Mandy Jarvis, Jenny Jamroz, MaryEllen Jones, Melissa Kenndy, Justine Laporte, Courtney Langlois, Keely MacAlister, Tammy Miner, Heather Nickerson, Laurence Prentiss, Christine Rosati Randall, Kelley Robbins, Sally Sherman, Melinda Smith, Melanie Smith-Cerva, Emily Ross, Bryan Snyder, Austin Tanner, Ashly Vallandingham, Mark Weaver

Guest Speakers: Heather Spada, 211 United Way

**Agenda:**

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

**Guest Speaker:**

United Way is a program coordinator/program manager. Work on projects involving mental health and public awareness. Enhance youth mental health awareness, developed Gizmo's Guide to mental health.

Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health Guide takes an upstream approach to supporting youth's mental health and wellness. It is data-driven and evidence-informed. The Guide seeks to introduce mental health and wellness and how to care for one's mental health in a non-threatening way that encourages the self-identification of warning signs and when to apply the use of internal and external healthy coping strategies to help reduce risk. It introduces the characteristics of trusted adults, who may be one, how to practice talking with a trusted adult, and promotes proactive communication. It allows youth to create a personal mental health plan (of action) that they can use daily and in a time of need to help them avert the crisis.

The Guide's message is child-friendly and is presented by Gizmo, a 3.5 Miki dog who lives in Manchester, CT. He is a K-9 First Responder and Therapy Dog mascot for the Connecticut Suicide Prevention Campaign: 1 Word, 1 Voice, 1 Life…Be the One to Start the Conversation. Their website is <http://www.preventsuicidect.org/>

Heather reviewed the PowerPoint presentation (see attached). Gizmo trusted adult section of the website, "12 days of Mental Health," – can use their graphics and tag lines for social media posts.

**Staff Updates:**

Outreach:

Both Staff and Parent Ambassadors have been working hard to meet families and connect to resources

* Attended seven school open hours
* Attended Community Days:

Celebrate Killingly, Celebrate Sterling, Plainfield Family day, YMCA Health Kids Day, and Upcoming: Thompson Community Day. We've given over 276 fee books, 172 emails have been captured.

Sparker:

* We received an $18,000 grant from now through February to conduct outreach to families, get them to sign up to use the Sparkler app to track a child's development, and use the Ages and Stages questionnaire.
* Staff hours and stipends for our PAs to do this work.
* Funding for $10 gift cards for families who sign up.

Please keep an eye out for more information on this and how you can share it with your families.

Cook Center – Mental Health Family Night

The event is on September 28,th, from 8:00-9:00 p.m. (EST); people must register before getting the zoom link. It will say 7:00 p.m. when you register because it's Central time. We are asking any schools or agencies to post their Medallion that links to parentguidance.org

Leadership Grant Award: Applied for another grant, will know October-November – Spring Session if we get it

Strategic Planning Parent Survey: Finalizing a survey to share with parents to get parent feedback to make sure our future work continues to meet the needs of our children and families in our region. We ask that when you see that survey come out, you share it with families in your programs/schools

Mental Health Task Force:

We will be re-convening the MHTF in October. However, the SEL Kit project is moving along. We will finalize the last pieces and send out a signup for programs to request a kit. Information on this project can be found here: <http://www.neccouncil.org/resources/social-emotional-learning-kit-project/>

Regional Resource Guide

* Met with our sub-committee several times over the last few months to review the survey and gather feedback.
* Next Step is to meet with printer to start working on edits
* Goal is to have more printed by January

**Community Programs Sharing:**

**Jill: TEEG**, introduces Lisa Andrews, a new staff working on Hand to Hand program. On Spetember 28th, they are holding a beyond temper tantrums 5-7, dinner and presentions. For kids 12-18, started a LGBTQ+ support group, virtual Monday's from 4:30-5:30 p.m. However, older or younger will not be turned away. Any questions, feel free to reach out to Jill Bourbeau

Shannon: Putnam FRC – hosting a picky eating workshop 5:30-7:30 in two days, light dinner and childcare, open to all communities. There is still space. Shannon will forward flyer to Kris to post.

Monica: DCF wanted to share continuing work on supporting families by partnering with community providers and seeing uptick with opiate usage and fentanyl. We have a renewed focus on permanency time frames, 12 months to be back with family or a permanent plan. Should expect a lot more conversation around this.

Question: CRR is there information in the Regional Guide on human trafficking or sexual exploration with kids?

**UPCOMING COUNCIL ZOOM MEETINGS for 2022/2023 SCHOOL YEAR:**

Monday's: September 19, November 7, January 23, March 13, May 1