

**Butler County  
Child & Family Development Task Force  
May 21, 2008**

**VISION STATEMENT**

The Butler County Child and Family Development Task Force, with community support, ensure quality, available, and affordable childcare, early childhood education, children's health services and family support for all children in Butler County.

**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees (10 total):** Audra Kenneson, Smart Start; Susan Harsh, Bright Beginnings; Brooke Thomas-Fekken, Smart Start/Bright Beginnings; Teresa Thompson, BCC; Gayle Shelton, Smart Start/Bright Beginnings; Kris Nicholson, KACCRRRA; Marcy Cone, Child Start; Kathy Gann, Children's Mercy; Jamie Downs, Butler County Health Department; Luann McFadden, Bright Beginnings

**Introductions & Announcements:** Audra welcomed the group and everyone introduced themselves. Jamie announced that the Health Department created a cookbook that is given free to WIC recipients. The recipes in the book utilize fruits and vegetables. Anyone can purchase the book for \$3.00. Audra handed out copies of this month's *Rainbows' Reader*.

**Guest Presenters:**

- **Susan Harsh – Infant/Toddler Services:** Susan handed out pamphlets for Bright Beginnings. She explained that Bright Beginnings is the provider for *tiny-k* services (Part C/Birth – 3) in Butler County. She provided some background about those services. Services are provided in the least restrictive environment, the providers “go where the child is.” There are currently more than 70 children receiving services from Bright Beginnings staff members. They see more children each year, but funding has remained the same from year to year. There are 15 networks now following the “Coaching Model” to provide services. Coaching is a practice that is strengths based. It provides one consistent person who sees the family and talks with the whole team to work on the IFSP. If anyone would like to contact Susan to learn more about Infant/Toddler Services, she can be reached at 316.320.1342 or [sharsh@rui.org](mailto:sharsh@rui.org).
- **Kathy Gann – Children's Mercy:** When Health Wave separated from SRS (11 years ago), First Guard had the contract to provide insurance to Health Wave recipients. That contract expired in 2006. At that time Children's Mercy had provided this service in Missouri and applied to provide in Kansas to the eastern 2/3 of the state. Now there is a choice for Health Wave recipients in the eastern 2/3 of Kansas: Unicare (a for profit organization) or Children's Mercy (a not for profit organization). When a family applies for Health Wave, the state determines eligibility and then sends a letter about the choice of providers. Each family is encouraged to contact their providers before making their choice of provider. Kathy distributed brochures explaining their coverage, the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation program, and the First Touch program (for expectant mothers and their babies). Children's Mercy receives funds from the state and from Children's Mercy hospital. Last year, when a profit was made, the money was put back into the communities it serves (Food Bank programs, hospital services, etc.). Children's Mercy also provides free presentations to classrooms of young children about hand washing, dental care, nutrition, exercise, and beverages. If anyone would like to contact Kathy, she can be reached at 316.573.8383 or [kgann@fhp.org](mailto:kgann@fhp.org).

**Building Local Bridges for Social and Emotional Development:** On May 19, Audra Kenneson, Susan Harsh, Luann McFadden, Brooke Thomas-Fekken, and Shelly Sawyers went to Salina to

represent Butler County. The purpose of the meeting was to address strategic planning for providing seamless social and emotional development services to the children and families we serve. Audra shared the lists of strengths, challenges, allies, and missing partners that were identified by the team at the meeting and asked the Task Force for feedback and additions to the list. Should there be another meeting of this nature, Task Force members would, again, be encouraged to attend.

**Continuous Improvement Plan:** Susan Harsh provided information on the grant written for Part C Services. She explained that there are entrance and exit surveys done with the families who receive services. She noted that there were no parent complaints lodged with the state regarding Butler County Part C Services. She stated that they improved on areas from last year and they also served more children than the year before. However, since funding remained the same they had a “funding cut” because they were serving more children with the same total amount of money as before; thus, funding per child was less.

### **Group Work & Discussion on Strategic Plan:**

- Letterhead Options: Two options for our Task Force letterhead were given to us by RUI Marketing. We voted and one was chosen. Audra will contact the marketing department and let them know of our choice. The Task Force asked Audra to thank the department for their hard work.
- Executive Summary Card: Audra reported that she met with RUI Marketing to go over the recommended changes on the Executive Summary Card. They should be printed soon and ready to hand out when we go to do our talks with the community in the fall.
- Website Post card & Press Release: Audra handed out post cards that will be distributed to advertise the updated website. These postcards will be sent out the first of June. We will also provide stacks of them to the health department, Bright Beginnings staff, etc. Audra also showed the Task Force the press release about the website.
- Upcoming Trainings & Press Release: There will be three free trainings provided by Smart Start this summer; each of the classes will be held on a Saturday. In June, the topic will be Literacy and will be held at BCC of El Dorado. In July, the topic will be Conscious Discipline and will be held at the First Baptist Church in Augusta. In August, the topic will be Positive Behavior Supports and will be held at Mid-CAP in Augusta. Those trainings are listed on the website, Audra will be sending a mailing to providers the last week of May, and a press release will be sent to area newspapers. Jamie noted that she would be holding a June training about nutrition. Audra will be sure to find out specifics and add that training to the website.
- Business Leader Choices: Audra reminded the group about the list of business leaders that were discussed in our brainstorming last month. The list has been pared down and we will begin gathering contact information and moving forward with that goal.
- Power Point Discussion: The work on the power point/presentation continues. We will discuss brain development, the services currently being provided in the community, and what we need from our allies in the business sector.

**Next Meeting:** Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, June 18, 2008 from 11 – 1 pm Bradford Memorial Library in El Dorado. Please bring your own lunch. Sue Sommers will provide us with information about EduCare and BCC’s Early Childhood Program.

*Note: If you or someone you know would like to be added to the mailing list for the Butler County Child & Family Development Task Force, please email Audra Kenneson at [akenneson@rui.org](mailto:akenneson@rui.org)*