



## MEETING NOTES

### Region 1 Family Council Meeting

Location: Zoom

Date & Time: February 28, 2024 7:00pm-8:00pm

Council Members Present: Meyonna Minner, Sara Ogden, Jamie Yording, Zhanela Church, Jayme Davis, Brittany Berry, and Danielle Jackson.

#### **7:00pm: Welcome/Introductions/Community Agreements (5 minutes)**

Notes: Brittany welcomed everyone, reviewed the agenda and plan for the evening, and reviewed community agreements as a group.

#### **7:05pm: Icebreaker Discussion (15 minutes)**

Notes: Brittany requested the group share their personal/family/children/work celebrations, big or small. The group discussed their celebrations as a group. Two council members celebrated their schooling updates as they work toward their teaching credentials, one celebrated the completion of 2 of 3 months of her partner's deployment, and others contributed to the conversation celebrating milestones with their children.

#### **7:20pm: Mental Health Landscape and Data (35 minutes)**

Notes:

##### **Mental Health Services for Children: Challenges and Solutions**

Brittany Peterson led a discussion about the mental and behavioral health services in Region 1. The team reviewed the current landscape, which includes four hospitals, 14 pediatricians, 91 physicians, and several nonprofits. However, Jayme D. expressed concern about the availability of mental health providers, noting that it's difficult to get an appointment for students in need and the extensive wait times for children and families. Zhanela echoed that difficulty with the group. The team plans to verify the number of community mental health centers at their next meeting. The conversation also highlighted the challenges faced by children in their region, particularly in terms of healthcare services. The impact of insurance coverage on healthcare access was also recognized.

##### **Nonprofits, Referral, and Waitlists: Family Challenges**

Brittany Peterson discussed the identification of 25 to 30 nonprofits that support families and children, a list she plans to share with the Family Council for review and potential additions. The discussion also revolved around the referral process for mental or behavioral health



services, with Brittany highlighting the long waiting times, which averaged 4 to 6 months from referral to service. The issue of waitlists and its effects on families, particularly those with children in need of services, was also raised. The lack of interim services during the waiting period and the challenges faced by families in accessing services were acknowledged and highlighted by Zhanela C., with Brittany and Bridget planning to explore the issue further in an upcoming meeting with Blessing. Brittany also touched on the pediatrician-to-child ratio and the challenges faced by families in accessing services.

### **Referrals and Diagnosis Challenges**

Danielle J. raised concerns about the challenges families face in getting their children with autism referred for screening and the subsequent steps. The discussion highlighted the need for patience in waiting for diagnosis and the challenges associated with long waiting times and the limited number of sessions. Brittany and the team discussed the process of securing referrals for services and the experiences of those who have utilized these services. They identified that referrals often come from pediatricians or schools, but there were also instances of self-referral. The team also explored the challenges associated with the healthcare system to secure appropriate care and services.

### **7:55pm: Next Steps/Announcements**

Notes: Brittany shared several announcements including a survey, upcoming guest speaker, Conscious Discipline seminar, and an upcoming tea party hosted by Brittany K. Brittany also invited council members to reflect on their gratitude for things money can't buy to close out the meeting together.

Next Meeting:

Date: March 10, 2024

Time: 3:00pm-4:30pm