

April 24, 1995

MEMO

To: Cathy and Cheryl

From: Jerralynn



Tomorrow we are scheduled to meet at 9:00, with Leon, to discuss the integration of Head Start/Client Services. After talking to each of you today, I understand that the two of you have not yet met to discuss what is working, what isn't and the findings from the HHS Review. I don't want a committee to replace the planning co-ordination that needs to occur between your two departments. Instead of our committee meeting, I would like for the two of you to get together to take a look at issues that need to be addressed and who else should be involved. There are a number of issues that are between the two of you, but also issues that should involve Sharon, Judy and Carla. At this time, it doesn't seem appropriate to involve me and Leon.

I will have a place on the MAT agenda to report on your meeting and any changes that are being considered.

CC Leon

*JN-
For our
Mtg. on
Monday -
I have
Copies, etc.
(w)*

Gaps in Head Start Social Services

I have been asked to describe the gaps in the Head Start social services component given the integration between the Client Services and Child Development Departments. Before doing so I feel the need to point out the strengths of the integration and collaboration that we have been working on.

Attached to this list is a comprehensive summary of the 1995 Head Start Review findings.

Strengths:

- That a family applies to Head Start and that the Family Strengths Assessment is done by the Family Services Specialists, the people who will be working with them.
- Ability to integrate Head Start application process into Client Services has shifted workload from Head Start.
- That FSS's work with and have access to the computerized information and referral system.
- Development and refinement of the intake and assessment procedure as an integral part of the WCCAO Client Data Base.
- Development of a Head Start Social Services Training Manual which is being revised in part by the Head Start Social Services planning committee composed of center coordinators, lead teachers, and family services specialists. Committee is working on establishing minimum standards and clarifying roles for the various positions.
- Bilingual Family Service Specialists in both ends of the county.
- Development of a community resource list of most frequently requested agency numbers to give to parents and staff and training by the I and R Specialist.

Gaps:

- Close cooperation with existing community resources including:
 - advocating with agencies for individual families
 - Helping Head Start parents work with neighborhood and community groups.
 - Ensuring better cooperation, coordination, and information sharing with community agencies.

- Calling attention to the inadequacies of existing community services and assisting in improving the available services, or bringing in new services.
- Procedure for establishing a role of advocacy and spokesperson for Head Start families.
- Complexity of supervision: Difficult for Carla to take time to get out to sites to observe FSSs interactions with teachers.
- Difficulty/inability to ensure that there is integration and coordination between teaching staff and family service specialists: monitoring of teacher files and FSS's files to ensure that follow-up on identified needs is happening.
- Head Start teachers need on-going social services training. Due to expansion, 15 out of 18 lead teachers have taught for three years or less in the program.
- Need ongoing development in the component in the area of recruitment and program advocacy
- Need to have a person coordinate parenting education in Head Start.

March 28, 1995

To: Carla

From: Sharon

Re: Review findings of Social Services Component

Out of Compliance

#123 there shall be follow-up to assure delivery of needed assistance.

- 13 of the 17 files reviewed indicated identified needs. Five had no written evidence of follow-up and in 6 other files it was not clear if all needed services were received.
- Lead Teachers keep one file and FSSs keep one file for each child. Some files would show concerns from LT and yet FSS file would state no concerns for same child on same date.
- **CAUSES:** Separate files that are not routinely monitored. Lack of component integration at both service delivery and supervisory level. Emphasis is on following up on basic and concrete needs rather than on more abstract needs, i.e., family dysfunction, destructive relationships, adult focused goals.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS:** Use one form for Case Reviews that is on NCR paper so all staff who are figuring out what needs follow-up operate from the same document. make sure that form includes what is needed, who is responsible, and when it will be done or reevaluated for effectiveness. FS Mgr. continue new file review system and meeting with FSSs.

#126 Records shall be established, maintained, and kept confidential

- One staff person does not routinely lock her file cabinet that contains child/family records and another staff person does not have a file cabinet that can be locked.
- **CAUSES:** Ineffective coordination between Head Start and Client Services Department Managers and ineffective monitoring of staff for compliance to agency policy and procedures.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS:** Get a locking file cabinet, if verbal reminders to staff are ineffective, use other disciplinary steps as outlined by agency personnel policies.

#131 Preparing and making available a community resource list to Head Start staff and families.

- All parents do not receive a list; none of the 5 staff at centers who were asked were able to identify the updated monthly resource list that is distributed to centers.
- **CAUSES:** Parents were told about the telephone I and R line, program did not identify that procedure was inadequate until self assessment last month.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS:** have the CAP I and R person meet with each center staff, have the list translated into Spanish, Add at least a one sentence statement bout how to access help in Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, etc., require that all centers distribute the list on future home visits following the training.

Major Strengths

- completion of FSA's reviewed (20 files).
- A significant amount of information is collected about parent needs and concerns.

- Parents interviewed were greatly satisfied with services that their child received at Head Start.
- Several mentioned the donated items that children received at Christmas and the work with Spanish language families.
- Client Svcs. Manager has developed a Training Manual.
- use of community activities to bring resources to families: shoe donations, party items, Christmas gifts.
- Excellent use and sharing of bilingual staff for written and oral translations. Continued expansion of efforts to offer materials such as newsletters in Spanish.
- Lots of written information to parents with the program and center newsletters.
- Commitment and caring of staff in working with families.
- Ability to access other CAP program activities such as computerized information and referral program, housing and energy assistance.
- Family Svc. Mgr. is involved in community groups.
- Program monthly training sessions is an excellent way to provide training needed for Lead Teachers and Center Coordinators on social services issues.
- Administration commitment to 1 on 1's.
- Regular case review meetings with Lead Teachers and FSS's and CC's help to bring the various "pieces" each staff member has in order to "see the whole picture" and do better planning.

Weaknesses

- Monitoring of compliance; tracking to ensure all centers are doing the minimum requirements; providing systems and technical assistance for centers to meet and exceed those established minimums; and Manager reports are not fully in place.
- Need to continue to clarify and strengthen job roles and responsibilities for all staff with responsibilities for social services component. (Mgrs., Client Svcs. staff, FSS's, CC's, LT's.
- Concern expressed by parents and staff as well as monthly reports indicate that there is a low level of parent involvement in center and community activities.
- FSS's routinely work on meeting family's basic needs and ensuring physical and dental exams are completed. However, there are more complicated issues noted in child files where there was either no documentation of FSS follow-up, lack of understanding about appropriate referrals or inadequate response to level of need either provided or documented.
- The Client Svc. Manager who supervises the FSS's does not review the entire file (FSS and teacher file)
- There is not enough coordination between FS Manager and Client Svc. Mgr.
- Job description indicates that FSS facilitates family goal setting and coordinates services with other service providers. However file review did not show evidence of those activities and interviews with staff indicated a lot of confusion about who is responsible and how to coordinate service delivery.
- In the area of social services delivery, the current design has resulted in this component being somewhat fragmented with 3 positions (FSS, CC, LT) sharing the responsibilities to ensure families receive needed services.

Overall Recommendations

- Reevaluate current organizational design and operation with FSSs in the Client Services department and management responsibility primarily under the head Start department manager who also manages 5 other component areas. If current structure is maintained reviewer recommends there be more organizational supports for coordination between the two managers that could include:
 - FS Mgr. attend weekly CAT meetings
 - Minutes be taken at CAT and distributed to attendees and anyone absent
 - FS Mgr. and CS Mgr. work as a team to write the Social Services training manual
 - FS Mgr. have input on FSS annual evaluations and training plan
 - CS Mgr. needs to have classroom file as well as FSS file when reviewing/monitoring employees work
 - CS Mgr. should be included in Head Start Admin and/or SMAC meetings on some kind of regular basis. She should get copies of meeting minutes.
 - CS Mgr. should attend Head Start training committee days as well as FSSs. They could even be used as trainers for some of the workshop sessions for LTs and Ccs
 - FS Mgr. and CS Mgr. should meet at least annually/quarterly?? together with their supervisors and Executive Director to evaluate how the collaboration is working and make any needed changes to enhance cooperation and effective results.

Perhaps at our next meeting we should review the recommendations and figure out how we want to work toward changing or improving some of the systems etc. We also said we would review the FSS job description.