
DAVID R. CRAIG
HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE



LORRAINE COSTELLO
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION



MARY F. CHANCE
DIRECTOR



**ELIZABETH S.
HENDRIX**
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

HARFORD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Harford County Ready by 21 Task Force Kick-Off Meeting - Tuesday, September 7, 2010 Group Discussion

How are we doing?

- **Overall impressions/comments:**

- Discussion around truancy vs. absence rate – need to clarify these definitions. What specific indicator is the state looking at?
- Define how we are evaluating current performance, how will we know if we are doing better?
- Use this as an opportunity to tie-in to Harford Community College's Reaccreditation Self-Study
- Identify services that already exist rather than recreating the wheel
 - Is there a clearinghouse of information? (after school, housing, etc.); how can we share this information broadly?
 - The Harford County Youth Commission is developing a listing of youth services on their website (<http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/youth/>). This will provide more in depth information than what is currently available in the Resource Guide. This site will also provide a listing of youth-oriented events.
- Tap into comprehensive County and state-wide data available online with outcomes for individuals served by outpatient clinics. Currently this information is only accessible by individual providers (for their own clinic) and the Office on Mental Health Core Service Agency.

- **Additional information that would be helpful:**

- Share information within this Task Force; educate one another on what our agencies do
- Who are the state contacts from the Children's Cabinet Ready by 21 Task Force?
- Data on programs that have been implemented to serve transition-age youth, such as the Joppatowne High School College Access Program

- Look at what other organizations are doing throughout the nation – environmental scan. Are there successful models that we can look at?

- Why are Carroll County's rates better than ours?

 - More information about data, are we capturing the same type of data as other counties?

 - Are we being funded at same level as other counties, is there are correlation between funding and outcomes?

- Data on the number of youth referred to a program but unable to be served due to age, space-limitations? (i.e. Baltimore County's Core Service Agency collects this data)

What are we good at?

- Overall, we are doing better at identifying needs

- Harford County is performing better than the state in almost all indicators

What are our barriers?

- Harford County's rate of substance abuse is above that of the state

- Harford County's rate of homelessness is higher than peer counties

- Lack of access and transportation to programming

- More parent involvement is needed to help youth take advantage of activities

- Funding

 - Activities can be cost prohibitive for families

 - Funding is needed to adequately fulfill initiatives

 - We need to reach out to the community for volunteers as funding is not sufficient to complete all required work through staff alone. Need to get community members invested in these initiatives and provide them with opportunities to get involved.

- Program Eligibility

 - Many programs/mental health services are inaccessible if you have private health insurance

 - Some programming is limited to youth who are in foster care

- Need to focus on independent living/life skills in addition to basic education

 - The Local School System's focus is on achievement – reality is that teachers are being held accountable to test scores. Can other agencies be partners in filling gaps in services such as life skills development?

- Youth are aging out of services
 - Many programs serve youth up until age 18 (can't refer youth 17 and older)
 - Mentoring services are often unavailable if the child is over 12 (Big Brothers Big Sisters matches cannot be formed after age 12, however existing matches continue past this age)
- There needs to be real world implementation of agency strategic plans
- Parents are limited in having the skills necessary to advocate for their child

Next steps/outcomes:

- How do we address needs specific to Harford County that may not be listed in the State's plan?
 - Asking that agencies go through the plan and bring relevant information to upcoming meetings
 - Think outside the box, be creative in terms of opportunities to partner, tap into existing resources
- Goals of this Task Force are to:
 1. Determine what this plan means to Harford County and how we can go about implementing it locally
 2. Create a tangible tool that the county can use (i.e. toolkit items, expansion of the Resource Guide)
 - One suggestion is to create a series of statements that stakeholders can periodically revisit during their daily work to keep the outcomes of this plan relevant
- The Harford Ready by 21 Task Force and its upcoming meetings are open to everyone, please invite others to attend or contact Laura McIntosh, lmcintosh@harfordcountymd.gov, 410-638-3166 who can personally make the invitation

Upcoming Schedule:

- Tuesday, October 5 - Education 8 -10:30am
- Tuesday, November 2 - Employment 8 -10:30am
- Tuesday, December 7 - Health 8 -10:30am
- Tuesday, January 4 - Housing 8 -10:30am
- Tuesday, February 1 - Task Force Recommendations 8 -10:30am

Future meetings will be held at Harford Community College, Chesapeake Center, Dining Room North*
****note meeting room change***