



Butler Collaborative for Families

**General Membership Minutes**

**January 11, 2024, 10:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Monarch Place: Dedication Hall, 100 Brugh Avenue, Butler, PA 16001**

The mission of the Butler Collaborative for Families is to build a unified and integrated network of services by using a multiple-agency approach to break down barriers and strengthen the system of care for individuals and families of Butler County.

**I. Welcome:** BCF Co-Chairs Becky Clouse and Linda Thoma- Meeting was called to order at 10:07

**II. Review and approval of the November 9, 2023, BCF General Meeting minutes- M/S/A**

**III. Budget & Finance Committee Report:** BCF Treasurer was absent, an update will be given at the February meeting.

a. Restricted Funds: \$ Unrestricted Funds: \$ Total: \$

**IV. Featured Speaker:** Rebecca Maletto-Cornell is the Program Director/Manager for the **Foster Grandparent Program** of Southwestern PA, locally sponsored by Wesley Family Services.

- a. Created in 1965 as part of the Red Cross. Currently a partnership with Americorp.
- b. To qualify as a “foster grandparent” you need to be 55 or older and on a limited income. “Grandparents” are paid \$4/hour and these wages do not count against their supplemental income or possible housing allowances.
- c. Grandparents are assigned to non-profit child-based agencies/service providers. (ex: preschools, daycares, after-school programs, and private schools.)
- d. Grandparents give 1:1 support to children in the classrooms to help with redirecting, life skills, and basic academic support. They are an additional support to the paid staff in the classroom.
- e. Grandparents must work at least 15 hours a week.
- f. Data shows that there are improved skills and behaviors in the most high-risk category of children.
- g. Over 90% success rate with children receiving help from a grandparent.
- h. The elderly are also benefiting from the program by having a sense of purpose and calling in their life
  - i. Many are showing signs of improved mental and physical health by participating in this program
- i. Children are going home with needs being met and behaviors are improving at home, as well as at school.
  - i. Parents are seeing the benefits of the program and they are supporting the grandparent by trying to improve parenting skills at home. (ex: teaming together to teach better manners)
- j. Schools/agencies will interview the grandparent to make sure they are a good fit for their classroom. Volunteers will be trained through a rigorous program and cleared before starting in a classroom.
- k. The oldest “grandparent” to ever start was 92. She served until she was 102
- l. The Foster Grandparent agency is looking for both volunteers as well as agencies to host grandparents in Butler County. The area is lacking in both volunteers and opportunities to serve.

**V. Member Spotlight:** Ken Clowes is the Community Initiative Center Assistant at BC3 and the BCF Adult Representative: **Hope is Dope**

- a. Ken talked about the Hope is Dope program and the education piece that is important to those in recovery and their families.
- b. Ken talked about hope producing the same endorphins as opioids.
- c. Brains can adapt and change through support and education for someone in recovery.
- d. New classes are coming soon. There will be staff training to help learn the language of recovery, a recovery community class, and an intensive recovery class.

**VI. Subcommittee Reports**

**a. Marketing & Events Committee**

- i. No new updates

**b. Resource & Development Committee**

- i. Excel training via BC3, February 7 – Tricia Pritchard
- a. There are still spaces available in both the morning (basic) and afternoon (advanced) training. See BCF website or social media to sign up through BC3.
- ii. Gaps & Needs – Tricia Pritchard
- a. Continue to write gaps/needs on the large sheet of paper near the entrance.

**c. Career & Resource Fair, April 10 @ BC3, Founders Hall**

**VII. Partnering Collaboratives Updates:**

- a. Butler County Prevention Council (BCPC) – Amanda Feltenberger
  - i. We are in the process of scheduling a strategic planning meeting for late January/early February to establish our action plan for 2024. For more information, please contact Amanda at [AFeltenb@co.butler.pa.us](mailto:AFeltenb@co.butler.pa.us)
- b. Butler County Local Housing Options Team (LHOT) – Allyson Rose
  - i. 2024 Point in Time Count of individuals experiencing homelessness will be January 24<sup>th</sup> into January 25<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are needed. For more information, contact Allyson Rose at 724-284-5114.
- c. Butler County Early Care and Education Council (ECEC) – Julie Thumma
  - i. Julie asked for agencies/volunteers to send advocacy emails to state representatives regarding the lack/sparsity of childcare.
- d. Safe Kids – Jill McDonald
  - i. no update given

**VIII. 2024 BCF Membership Drive: Benefits of Membership**

- a. Get your 2024 memberships renewed. Gave example of discounted cost for the Excel class as an added benefit of being a member.

**IX. New Business**

- a. Pastor Joel shared that the summer rec program is looking for volunteers. The Mayor spoke to the clergy group and asked them to help spread the word about the need for volunteers to run the program. Email Mayor's office or speak to Joel for further information.
- b. VITA raised the income guidelines for their free tax prep to \$60,000 this year. They will start taking appointments 1/16/24. Call 211 option 1 to sign up. There are 5 locations in Butler County to serve individuals. If your agency would like to participate in the Vita/CCR resource fair at the Clearview Mall on January 31st, contact Phil at CCR to get a table.
- c. Community Options is hosting a 5K at Lake Arthur-see flyers for more details
- d. Kindergarten registration is open for Butler Area School District
- e. VISTA from SRU shared that "What's a kid to do" Winter edition (calendar of community events focused on children activities) is available as well as a "Winter Warrior" SDOH coloring book to help fight off "seasonal blues"
- f. Twilight Wish Fundraiser on February 22nd at the Back Alley of the 11th Frame. 5-8pm \$15 donation to get in.
- g. April 10th-Career/Resource Fair at BC3 There will be bussing from local school districts, a photographer to assist with headshots and many businesses will be doing on the spot job interviews.
- h. Butler County Bureau of Tourism shared that the 2024 Visitor Guide is now available.

**X. Gaps/Needs Identification**

**XI. Next General Meeting: February 8, 2024, at 10:00 am @ Monarch Place**

Amanda Feltenberger will address housing and homelessness in Butler County.

**XII. Adjournment 11:36 M/S/A**

**XIII. Networking with a Purpose – Collaboration and Information Sharing**

