**General Membership Meeting - Minutes**

**March 9, 2023 10:00 am - 11:30am**

**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.

1. Welcome
2. Review and approval of the February 2023 General Meeting Minutes

1st: Scott Dittman 2nd: Linda Thoma

1. Budget & Finance Committee Report – BCF Treasurer Janet Arida (presented by Ken Clowes)
	1. Restricted Funds: $5,900.18 Unrestricted Funds: $37,656.98 Total: $43,557.16
2. Brief Introductions – **Welcome Visitors**
3. **Featured Speaker: Danielle Schmidt, Executive Director, Butler County Child Advocacy Center (CAC)**
	1. Who we are and what we do: <https://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/>
		1. 6.6 million children in the nation are identified as experienced child abuse
		2. 2021 – 58 children in PA died from child abuse, 158 near fatalities
	2. Cases are reported to Childline, then sent to CYS (Children & Youth) and/or law enforcement, then sent to CAC to help with the investigation.
		1. Butler County had 397 Childline referrals last year
	3. The CAC is a child-friendly location where members of the multidisciplinary investigative team (MDIT), consisting of child welfare personnel, law enforcement officials, medical and mental professionals, prosecution and victim advocates meet to coordinate a response to allegations of child abuse, including child sexual abuse and child physical abuse.
	4. The CAC is designed to focus first on the needs of child victims and their non-offending caregivers throughout the investigation and intervention process. By doing so, the overall stress experienced by child victims is reduced and overall the quality of investigations are improved.
	5. The CAC connects child victims and their family members to services including medical examinations, community mental health services, victim advocacy and other services as determined necessary, on a case-by-case basis.
	6. Danielle and her team are eager to be in the community raising awareness about child sexual abuse, child abuse prevention, human trafficking and the critical work of the CAC and its agency partners. **If you have further questions or want to help, please contact Danielle at** **dschmidt@butlercountycac.org** **or 724-431-3689 x204**
	7. April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month
	8. Support the work of the CAC – 7th Annual Strike Out Child Abuse Bowling Event. Visit <https://www.butlercountycac.org/strikeoutchildabuse>
	9. Pinwheels for Prevention – Grow you pinwheel garden and show your support child abuse prevention and the work of the CAC. To order, contact CAC at 724-431-3689
	10. Letters of Love – You can share encouragement – send “happy mail” for a child to Letters of Love, 101 Mahood Road, Butler, PA 16001
	11. **Is there a way to support the CAC staff? Contact Danielle, but letters/notes of support and encouragement are always welcome!**

**IDENTIFIED GAP**

Parenting classes/parenting support – non-mental health related, open to the community, support groups, mentors; would an afterschool parent program be effective? Church involvement? Creating Connections?

**NETWORKING WITH A PURPOSE**

Is there a training that your organization might need, but maybe can’t afford? There may be others that need the same training. The BCF would like to help! We can be stronger together! Contact bcfcoordinator@gmail.com with your organizations training needs!

1. **Agency Spotlight: Bethany Christian Services**

 **Chynna Wilcox, Job Developer & Community Engagement Specialist Refugee Resettlement**

* 1. **Who is a refugee?** Someone who has fled their country on a fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or inclusion in a certain social group if they stay in their home countries.
	2. **Who are Bethany’s refugees?** 99% are from Afghanistan. The top five countries of origin for refugees settled through Bethany are 1. Democratic Republic of Congo, 2. Afghanistan, 3. Burma, 4. Syria, 5. Bhutan. Bethany resettled 750 Afghan refugees in 2021-2022.
	3. **Where are the refugees being resettled**? All in the city of Pittsburgh, anywhere that is affordable and on a bus line: Brookline, Brentwood, Squirrel Hill, etc..
	4. **What sort of things does Bethany help the refugees with**? All things required to start in a new place: housing, school enrollment, health insurance, ESL classes, family strengthening, employment and more (funding of $1,000 per person comes through the US government). The goal is self-sufficiency.
	5. **What drove Chynna to get involved**? Chynna majored in Spanish in college. She studied in Ecuador and intentionally befriended people crossing the border. Chynna stayed with a very wealthy family and was given a very different interpretation of the people leaving their home countries. She came to find out that all is not as it seemed and impressions are not always correct. Chynna wanted to learn more about the struggles and the processes. She has worked with Catholic Charities, Americorp. Chynna is passionate about the work that she does and the people that she serves.
	6. **How can a business/church/individual get involved or find out more about the work of Bethany Christian Services**? There are multiple ways to help: Community Sponsorships, donations, volunteer work (as little as 1 hour per week) according to skill set and interests, airport pickups, furniture donations, gift cards, basic needs, etc.
	7. **For more information or to learn how you can help**: contact Chynna Wilcox at cwilcox@bethany.org or (T) 724-940-2900 (M) 412-403-2693
1. Subcommittee Reports
	1. Marketing & Events Committee Report
		1. **Remote Area Medical (RAM)** Ad hoc. Clinic November 11 & 12, 2023 at Butler Intermediate Highschool. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! To volunteer, email Jean Bowen at jbowen@ccrinfo.org Ad hoc committee meets ½ hour prior to the BCF general meeting.
		2. **CELEBRATION OF COLLABORATION** Ad hoc to plan the Celebration Picnic. Picnic will be July 13, 2023. Email bcfcoordinator@gmail.com if you would like to help!
		3. **SAVE The DATE: May 8, 2023 Career & Resource Fair**, at BC3’s Founders Hall, 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. For more information, visit <https://www.butlerfamilies.com/events>
			1. Tables for this event are free to BCF members. Don’t have the coupon code, email bcfcoordinator@gmail.com
2. Partnering Collaborative Updates
	1. **Butler County Prevention Council (BCPC) – Amanda Feltenberger**

A primary goal of the BCF for Child Abuse Prevention Month (April) is to ask BCPC embers to provide information about Blue Sunday to an area house of worship and ask for their commitment to participate in the National Day of Prayer, as well as share relevant information with their congregation that day.  Blue Sunday is always the last Sunday of April so this year it will be held on April 30, 2023. Below is a link to the website that can be shared with churches. They can choose to use as many or as few of the resources as they want. Included in the website are some free resources that any church/organization can use which include information sheets and videos. And if they choose, they can register as an official participant in Blue Sunday and that will give them access to additional resources, including bulletin inserts**.**

[**https://www.bluesunday.org/blue-sunday-day-of-prayer**](https://www.bluesunday.org/blue-sunday-day-of-prayer)

* + 1. Front Porch Project: free workshops focuses not on what paid professionals can do, but what each of us as individual community members can do to create healthy communities that protect children. To host a workshop or for more information, contact Amanda Feltenberger at afeltenb@co.butler.pa.us

To get involved or to learn more or to join BCPC, contact Amanda Feltenberger at afeltenb@co.butler.pa.us. **Next Meeting is March 16, 2023 @ 10:00 am, Amanda’s office.**

* 1. **Butler County Local Housing Options Team (LHOT) – Allyson Rose**

The 2023 Unsheltered Point in Time Count was one of the largest outreach efforts that has been completed in several years thanks to all the volunteers. Four teams canvassed much of the county and were able to identify 2 unsheltered individuals sleeping in their vehicles.   They did not accept shelter that morning.  Street Outreach is a great opportunity to provide outreach, education and increased awareness about individuals who are without a home and what resources are available them in our community. A similar outreach is being planned for this Summer – more information to come if you would like to join an outreach team! LHOT meets on the first Tuesday of each month at Community Alliance Church at 9:00 am. For more information, contact Allyson Rose at arose@co.butler.pa.us

* 1. **Butler County Early Care and Education Council (ECEC) – Julie Thumma**

Week of the Young Child: Friday, April 28th from 2 - 7 pm, Butler Farm Show Exhibit Halls, Butler PA

(Event will be held in conjunction with “Book Fest”, also taking place this day to benefit several local libraries)

Contact Julie Thumma to find out how you can help! jthumma@lifesteps.net or 724-283-1010 x 310

**CALL TO ACTION**

Dr. Brian White, Butler Area School District, Superintendent is requesting letters of support and endorsement for the Pittsburgh Gateways initiative to re-purpose the empty building that was formerly the Butler Middle School and prior to that the Butler Junior High School on East North Street in downtown Butler. Watch your email from bcfcoordinator@gmail.com for letter templates (dated 3/9/2023). Please note: letters of support should be emailed to Don Evans with Pittsburgh Gateways at: devans@pghgateways.org

**GOOD TO KNOW**

**Kindergarten Registration** – Calling all 5 year olds! It’s time to register! Watch the BCF E-newsletter for flyer and the special QR code

**A Luncheon for Literacy** – presented by the Butler PM Rotary to benefit the Adult Literacy Program @ BC3. Sunday, April 16, 2023 @ BC3’s Founder’s Hall. Doors open at noon, luncheon served at 1:00pm. For tickets, visit [www.butlerroatary.org](http://www.butlerroatary.org)

**Nonprofit Academy Awards Dinner and Gala** – Monday, April 24, 2023 @ SRU’s Robert M. Smith Ballroom. Event registration: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-nonprofit-academy-awards-gala-tickets](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-nonprofit-academy-awards-gala-tickets-569891218977?aff=ebdssbeac)

1. Next General Meeting: **April 13, 2023, 10:00 am – 11:30 am, Monarch Place**

**Featured Speaker: Lisa Gill, Butler County Drug & Alcohol, Prevention Specialist**

**Agency Spotlight: Scott “Howie” Dittman, EVIG**

1. Adjournment

1st: Scott Dittman 2nd: Cindy MacTaggart

1. Agency networking, collaboration, and information sharing.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Thoma

Acting BCF Secretary