

Madison Shared Services Meeting
March 29, 2023, 9:30 AM
Madison County Extension Office

Present: Tonya Bell, Donna Hagan, Lizz Schmidt, Cindy Hutto, Laura Blue, Gabrielle Aboki, Lisa Hill Boatwright, Kamia Brown, Deborah Buie, Emily Calvin, Jacob Clore, Camye Edwards, Tamara Johnson, Janice Hawkins, Laura Long, Merv Mattair, Bibi Ramos, Leila Rykard, Denise Shorter, Lori Swafford, Robert Walker, and Tori Woods.

Agencies Represented: Healthy Start Coalition, Healthy Families Seven Rivers, Brehon Institute, Three Rivers Legal Services, Florida Department of Health, Partnership for Strong Families, Big Bend Cares, Battlefront Education & Wellness, Sunshine Health, Madison County Health Department, Early Learning Coalition Big Bend, FDLRS NEFEC, Boyz to Kings, Women Empowering Each Other, NWF Health Network and Early Learning Coalition Big Bend.

Tonya Bell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Leila ‘Betsy’ Rykard, Florida Department of Health, spoke about a free Heart Health Ambassador Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program that they are hosting on April 6 at 3 PM at the FDOH Jefferson County. She also advised of another class called “Spring into Wellness”, April 14, 10 AM – 12 PM, at Taylor Massage. They offer free cholesterol, glucose, and blood pressure screenings. April is National Minority Health Month. April 20th and again on May 18th they are hosting Heart Health Ambassador Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Class from 2 – 4 PM at the Greenville Public Library. On May 12th they will be offering free heart health screenings for cholesterol, blood pressure and glucose from 2 – 4 PM at the Greenville Public Library.

Kamia Brown with Sunshine Health advised that their focus is on Madison. They provide healthcare related to Moms.

Cumi Allem, Florida Department of Health, thanked everyone for their support during the March 4th Community Baby Shower. She advised that there is a Minority Health Event on April 1st in Greenville at the Haffye Hays park in Greenville. Every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 11 AM they have classes for women who have delivered their babies.

Camye Edwards, Big Bend Cares, reported that they have received a grant that provides free HIV tests. This test can be done in the privacy of your own home. Two tests should be given to individuals. The first test is the baseline and the next test should be done at 3 months. There is an agency brochure that goes with the test that advises them of support if the tests are reactive.

Emily Calvin of Three Rivers Legal reported that they offer free legal services to the 3rd Judicial Circuit. They are trying to set up driver’s license reinstatement classes. Three Rivers Legal can come to meet clients in Madison County but their main office is in Lake City.

Merv Mattair, Director of Boyz to Kings, advised that they have been operational since 2009 and they serve young men age 6 to 17 years old. He meets with them 4 days a week. There is a mandatory parents class once a month. He rereported that the program is currently in 11 community schools.

Lisa Hill Boatwright with Battlefront Education & Wellness is partnering with Healthy Start Coalition of JMT and Boyz to Kings to promote our new Fatherhood Program. The kickoff event for this is the Fatherhood Flag Football game on April 22nd at 4 PM, after Down Home Days. A ‘hype’ video encouraging fathers to participate in the Fatherhood Program is in the works and Case Managers are ready to go.

Robert Walker of the Early Learning Center (ELC) Big Bend advised that they offer voluntary child care referrals and they also help with domestic violence as well as the homeless shelter. ELC Big Bend offers assistance obtaining food stamps and Medicaid. There is plenty of funding available for assistance.

Gabrielle Oboki with the ELC Big Bend said that they serve 7 counties and they are presenting a free virtual community resource fair titled “Sky’s the Limit” on April 11 from 6 – 7:30 PM that educates people about housing resources, child care services, medical assistance, and career opportunities.

Janice Hawkins, Sunshine Health, reported that they have a community resource database and they work with social services to assist people.

Jacob Clore with Partnership for Strong Families advised that there has been one child removal from their home in Madison due to substance abuse this year. They are recruiting for foster and adoptive parents and will offer virtual classes for these people. There are 38 youth waiting for foster/adoption in Madison and Taylor County. May is National Foster Care Month. Madison/Jefferson have a combined budget of \$5,000. Cumi Allen motioned to use the remaining \$500 remaining to allocate for rent assistance, utilities, etc. to use by May 31st. It was seconded by Robert Walker. The motion passed.

Donna Hagan, Executive Director with Healthy Start Coalition JMT, advised that Tonya Bell is a certified car seat technician and can assist with child car seats. Cumi Allen has the same certification as well.

Denise Shorter. Women Empowering Each Other, reported that they are expanding services to Madison & Taylor counties and can assist with diapers, wipes, and mental health workshops. In September there will be a community diaper shower in Leon County. Women have to be in their 3rd trimester of pregnancy to receive a care package at the shower. More details will be provided at a later date. Diapers for emergency situations are provided free of charge.

Bibi Ramos with Northwest Florida Health Network informed that they provide child welfare services as well as mental health and substance abuse services.

Next Meeting is May 24th, 2023.

Notes taken by Laura Blue