

Youth and Family Coalition

12.8.2025

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Virtual

Meeting called by: Val Jones

Note taker: Maria Arreola

Attendees:

Starleen Maharaj Lewis, Michelle Mullen, Val Jones, Reed Mierzeski Grace, Dawn Scott, Caitlin Wheeler, Christina Jackson, Jenne Alderks, Melissa Craw, Heather Huntington, Megan Axley, Abby Mayers, Gina Chirchella, Gay Lynn Beighton, Joseph Ulrigg, Bobbie Racine, Andee Martinez, Grace Foden, Becky George, Jesse Carter, James Beck, Sugely Sanchez, Tamara Neely, Marcus Fred, Samuel Gabriel, Steve Pedro, Kelly Perez, Bryn Praise, Michael Scott, Gloria Hart, Brittany Bryant, Angela Fraser-Powell, Devon Minahan, Eustace Thatcher, DeAnn Adams, Kara Key, Megan Sarver, Thomas Shelby, Rachel Zakopyko, Jackson Kwame, Flora Dahlia. Tamara Neely, Gloria Hart, Brittany Bryant, Kara Key, Mary Paul, John Davidson, Lauren Woodbeck, Darren Williams, Ana De Los Rios, Michel Holland, Lisa Woolman, Jackson Kwame, Thomas Shelby, Sammy Diago, Cara Elzie, Harley Cruz, Abby Mayers, Jake Peterson, Jordan Samantha, Smith Mike, Fas Cliff, Louis Loveth, Ben Harry

Introductions, Announcements and Updates

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge, with humility, that the land of the North Sound region today is the territory of People of the Salish Sea. Their presence is imbued in the waterways, shorelines, valleys, and mountains of the traditional homelands of the Coast Salish People, since time immemorial.

- Starleen highlighted YFC's purpose
 - YFC is a Regional Family Youth System Partner Round Table create platforms for families, youth, and system partners to collaborate, listen, and incorporate the voices of the community into decision-making at the local, regional, and state levels.
 - Reed spoke on the YFC Group Agreements
 - Respect, "I" Statements, Confidentiality, Share Space, Acknowledge Impact, Different Perspectives.

Supporting Career Development of Transition Age Youth and Young Adults

3:00 – 4:00

Michelle Mullen

ACTION: Action/Decision () Discussion (x) For Information Only ()

- National effort that aims to improve the supports for youth and young adults ages 14-30 with serious mental health conditions to successfully complete their schooling and training and move into rewarding work lives.
- When youth enroll in SSI before the age of 18, they remain on the disability rolls for an average of 27 years. Application to SSI nearly eliminates employment pursuits.
- Service needs for youth adults with SMHC
 - Integrating the role of friends, “family”, and near providers
 - Coordinating, advocating, and integrating multiple system’s efforts to maximize system opportunities for career development
 - Support developmentally typical and normative pathways
- Examples of a suite of services
 - Employment and education support
 - Skill development to promote goal development and attainment
 - Connection to community-based resources to reduce number of unmet needs to increase support
 - Goal directed behavior
 - Time and task management
 - Memory
 - Attention
 - Problem solving
 - Cognitive Flexibility
- Executive Function Domains
 - Planning: Plotting sequence of steps to achieve goal
 - Difficulty meeting assignment deadlines
 - Reasoning: thinking through information in a logical way
 - Poor writing structure, difficulty with problem solving
 - Attention control: choosing how one directs attention
 - Staring off into space, repeating questions, unfinished assignments
 - Working memory: holding and processing information
 - “What was the point I was trying to make?”
 - As performance decreases stress increases which leads to missed assignments, classes, and unfinished papers
 - Students with underdeveloped EF skills and strategies struggle to keep up with constant demands of student life.
- Focused Academic Skills Training (FAST)
 - A manualized compensatory cognitive recommendation intervention
 - 12, 1 hour one on one skill and strategy coaching sessions that focusses on teaching EF skills
 - Seeks to develop durable habits
 - Structured sessions
 - Examples of some skill strategy
 - Use of timers/reminders
 - Set-shifting vs multi-tasking
 - Calendaring

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To-Do lists - Goal setting |
| — H(Helping) Y(Youth on the) P(Path to) E(Employment) HYPE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed to prevent poverty and disability identity - Focuses on increasing persistence and reducing disruptions by refining executive functioning skills - Highlighted values and principles are being solution focused age typical and helpful. Having career oriented services, purposeful service coordination, personalized financial planning and rapid goal pursuit. |
| — Contact information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Michelle.mullen@umassmed.edu - For HYPE of FSST Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HYPE@umassmed.edu - https://www.umassmed.edu/hype - iSPARC https://umassmed.edu/isparc - Transition ACR https://umassmed.edu/transitionsACR/ |

| WISe Data Team | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 4:15– 5:00 | Val, Dawn and Megan |
| ACTION: Action/Decision () Discussion () For Information Only (x) | |
| Overview: | |
| Discussion Points: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Val announced the opportunity to join the YFC WISe data team — The first meeting will be January 12, 2026 — Multiple meetings are offered. Contact Val if interested in attending val_jones@nsbhaso.org — Megan and Dawn briefly reviewed the WISe data on the WISe website. — In January there will be a more in depth presentation on the WISe data. | |

| Youth Priorities: School Funding | |
|---|-------------|
| 15min | Reed |
| ACTION: Action/Decision (X) Discussion () For Information Only (x) | |
| Overview: Changes to Meeting length and Compensation for Youth and Families | |
| Discussion Points: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spoke on the shortage of funding that is affecting county schools. - Programs that are integral for youth behavioral health in schools are being cut. - The schools are switching to a trimester system. The case load of classrooms will be shorter and heavier. We are currently at a semester that allows a longer period of time in class. - The class blocks will be shorter and would go to six classes a day and all the classes will be everyday and will not operate on the A/B system. - This is for Whatcom County schools. - The school board is making these decisions. | |
| Conclusion/Outcomes | |
| Spoke of the potential changes in Whatcom county schools | |

| Meeting Frequency | |
|--|------------|
| 15min | Val |
| ACTION: Action/Decision (X) Discussion () For Information Only (x) | |
| Overview: Changes to Meeting length and Compensation for Youth and Families | |
| Discussion Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was proposed to have meeting length to be 90 minutes. - Gift card eligibility individuals need to identify as a youth or family member of a youth that has faced behavioral health challenges. Need to live or work in the North Sound region and not be paid by another organization. - It was determined to start with a \$25 gift card for ongoing compensation for youth and families that meet eligibility. | |
| Conclusion/Outcomes | |
| Determined a compensation amount. Will work on making the meetings length to 90 minutes. | |

| Evaluations | |
|---|--|
| 15min | |
| ACTION: Action/Decision () Discussion () For Information Only (x) | |
| Overview: Link was sent to the committee | |
| Discussion Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluations link sent to committee | |
| Conclusion/Outcomes | |
| Committee will complete the online evaluation | |