

**Mental Health Connection  
Communications Committee Minutes  
Wednesday, June 30, 2010, 8:30-10 a.m.  
The Parenting Center**

**Attendees:**

Sean Allen, Joan Barcellona, Kay Barkin, Carol Cook, Susan Fine, Barbara Lamsens, Matt Robison, Jamie Souders, Patsy Thomas, Drenda Witt

Barbara Lamsens called the meeting to order and led the group in introductions.

***Bridging the Gap Marketing***

Patsy explained Bridging the Gap is an annual symposium that focuses on evidence-based practices, the science of implementation, policy issues and transformational change. Each year, Mental Health Connection has sent both a Save-the-Date card and a registration brochure by mail. The 2010 Bridging the Gap Symposium will be held November 8 and 9, and the registration brochure will be sent shortly after Labor Day. The Committee discussed whether email notices could take the place of the Save-the-Date card. Carol said she used to send a postcard for an event but changed to email. The response has been the same or larger.

***Recommendations:***

- Use email notifications instead of a Save-the-Date card.
- Send a separate, simple email with only the save-the-date information.
- Include Bridging the Gap information in the newsletter with a link to the Symposium Web page.

***Newsletter***

Patsy said she often receives requests for Mental Health Connection to distribute information, including job openings. The Committee decided a Job Bank would support the mission of Mental Health Connection since the organization works to promote access to services. It was decided that a weekly email to members posting announcements and job openings would not be feasible because it is time-intensive and staff resources are limited. A Web page would be less time-intensive and, over time, people would learn to go to the page for information on job openings.

***Recommendations:***

Create a Job Bank page on the Mental Health Connection Web site.

- Only members and sponsors can post openings on the Web page.
- Jobs will be posted for the timeframe requested by the posting agency or a maximum of 30 days.
- Those who want to post jobs must include the job title, the hiring organization, a link to a job description, and contact information for questions and resumes.

This recommendation will be sent to the Membership Committee for further discussion.

### ***Marketing in Palo Pinto and Parker Counties***

Key problems in these counties include stigma, fathers refusing services after mothers accept, and a reluctance to accept services from a Fort Worth-based organization. Carol said the best way to reach parents is through pediatricians and family practice physicians. She has seen these physicians beginning to become more aware of mental health issues among younger children. She also suggested going to physicians' offices to initiate contact and conduct assessments for young children. She provides mobile mental health assessments in physician offices. She also said physicians are using the term "behavioral issues" instead of "mental illness." Drenda and Barbara suggested using local phone numbers and less slick materials. Both expressed concern that "Fort Worth" is a primary phrase in the family brochure. The quotes should be replaced by individuals in each community, and separate pieces should be developed for each county. Carol uses her cell phone number on all the materials she distributes, and that has worked well for her in Parker County. Drenda also pointed out that stock photos are useful, but they do not look like the people we are trying to address. The backgrounds are too clean and the children look too happy to have mental health or behavioral problems. She suggested using graphics instead, and a conversation was held about using pictures drawn by children for Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. However, no releases were signed. It was suggested that Hand in Hand have children at area school readiness fairs draw pictures and have their parents sign releases at the same time. Joan discussed ECI materials that do a good job of relating to the community they are in. Drenda pointed out that some projects do not need brochures, depending on the audience and objectives. The committee suggested using flyers with key words, bulleted points and local telephone numbers instead of the brochures. The brochures have too much information in them, and people simply will not sit and read that much. Susan suggested using a real family's story that addresses early denial and successful participation in wraparound. Committee members agreed to look over some publications before they are printed

### ***Recommendations:***

- Add ECI to the committee.
- Kay will send flyers that have been developed to Committee members so they can determine whether the flyers address the issues that were discussed.
- Kay will send materials to the Committee for comments and suggestions.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held Thursday, August 19, at 8:30 a.m. at The Parenting Center.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10 a.m.