

**Island County Children's Commission
December 6, 2007 Meeting**

Minutes

Members Present: Rod Merrell, Paty Williams, Bess-Windecker-Nelson, Tomi Whalen, Sandy Ziemer, Carol Stillian, Margie Forbes, Kristina Saunsaucie, Cynthia Shelton, Peggy Dyer, Janice O'Mahony, Colleen Bowles, Don Cook, Mark Brown, Dave White

Members Not in Attendance: Kristin Lasher, Hillary Mellish, Kate Grossman, Patty Page, Fran McCarthy

Guest Presenter: Carrie McLachlan, MPA, Supervisor, Assessment & Healthy Communities, Island County Health Department

Staff: Dan N. Bond

This meeting opened at approximately 4:35 PM, with greetings and introductions around the table.

Staff offered a review of what was covered at the November meeting, and handed out the new/revised Children's Commission roster, asking members to please replace the one in their manuals with this new one. As members did not complete the "Treasure Hunt" exercise from the November meeting, there will be some aspect of the January Retreat that will accomplish the same thing – facilitating members getting to know one another.

The first and only agenda item for this meeting was a review of available data regarding the state of Island County's children. Carrie McLachlan presented an impressive array of data, via power point and through discussion, that she has compiled in her work with the Health Department. **This information was provided in handout form to members present, and will be mailed to those members not in attendance.**

Some highlights (indicative not exhaustive) from discussion include:

- We need to get Stanwood/Camano Healthy Youth Survey data.
- We need a good way to get at real drop-out numbers.
- Schools are a micro-cosm – we need to start earlier with prevention.
- Need more information on non-needy relative placement grants (DSHS).
- Can we get free/reduced lunch numbers?
- Insurance for couples/parents who are not married is a concern.
- We are seeing a decrease in prenatal care.
- Need to do better at maternal care – 1st trimester.
- Declining number of child care slots, while number of kids needing it are increasing.
- There are only 4 infant care slots available on So. Whidbey.

- Only 30 slots available for kids K-5th on So. Whidbey.
- Concerning rise in # of households with unlocked handguns in the home.
- ¼ of kids report being depressed.
- How should communities deal with the suicide issue – best practice/otherwise?
- Is there an Island County Child Fatality Review Board – find out.
- Clarify how numbers re: physical abuse of children are reported/portrayed.

Staff, at this point, asked members to take the data packets with them, “digest” the information, and rest assured that at a date in the near future, we will be using this information to make decisions re: our work.

Discussion turned to the January 5th Retreat (8:30 AM to 1:00 PM). **Attendance at this Retreat is essential**, as this Children’s Commission will be making key decisions about infra-structure and how business will be conducted. Such items as how decisions will be made; who will be the first Chair, Vice Chair, Executive Committee members; what you are expected to do; what you are empowered to do and how you will do those things will all be decided. This Retreat will be facilitated. Members are asked to review the Ordinance that is in their packets, as this speaks to expectations of County Government re: their work. Staff will be working with the Facilitator to create an agenda for the Retreat, which will be shared with members in advance for their input.

There was a request that, at this Retreat, we clarify the “governance” issue – that is to say, the relationship between the Community Health Advisory Board, the Board of Health, and this Children’s Commission. This will be done.

It was further suggested that each Children’s Commission member bring data re: infants, young children and youth that they may have access to, and that was not presented here, to the table. For instance, we did not review juvenile justice data at this meeting.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:30 PM.