



Clay County Local Advisory Council for Children's Mental Health

Thursday, September 4th, 2025, 8:30 am – 10:00 am

Family Service Center, 715 11th St N. Room 4

"To promote an accessible, comprehensive and a unified children's mental health system within Clay County."

Members Present: Michelle Thordal, Clay County Social Services, Tanner, Solutions; Angie, Family Resource Center; Lacey, Clay CCSS; Joni, The Village; Kara, Prairie St. John's; Madeline, Access; Taryn, Access; Katie, Mobile Mental Health; Josh, West Central; Lukas, Restorative Justice; Michelle M., LMHC; Alissa, LMHC; Mary, DGF schools; Brittany, Solutions; Amy, Mrhd schools, Reagan, intern at Mrhd schools

Agenda:

Approval of May Meeting Minutes

- Motion: Mary
- Second: Michelle
 - o Motion passed

Treasurer's Report

Current Balance: \$5,021.58

New Business

- We have promotional swag – if you see an opportunity where we could lift up the LAC, please reach out to Michelle T for some swag.
 - o Michelle M offered to take some LAC swag to KidsFest next week
 - o Family nights
 - 3rd Thursday of every month from 5:30-7:00pm at the Career Academy – generally have 50-100 participants. Dinner is provided and some type of activity; they also open the food and clothing pantry for students & families. They have tables for outside providers to come and share information. They don't host Family Night in January and February but otherwise meet during the school year. December is their busiest one as they do a lot of holiday activities and they always need volunteers to help.
 - LAC discussed volunteering that evening and having a table with swag.

Review Bylaws

Article 1; Section 5:

- Discussion of Mission & Vision statements
 - Like the Mission statement but discussed reworking the Vision statement
 - “The goal of Local Advisory Councils (LACs) is to bring together diverse voices and lived experiences to help improve mental health services for Minnesotans.”

Article 2; Section 1:

- Discussed ways to foster greater involvement and recruitment of members and consumers
 - Suggestions/Ideas:
 - Add this question to the survey with contact information so we can reach out when someone indicates interest
 - Reminder of the \$50/meeting stipend for consumers
 - Members continuing to spread the word to others that they are always welcome
 - Hold a LAC meeting at a school to make it easy for youth in foster care to attend and caregivers
 - Record consumer or youth messages and play them at LAC meetings so we can hear their voices if they aren't able to attend meetings due to schedules/school/work.
- The group likes meeting monthly while taking a three-month break in the summer (June-Aug)
 - At the May meeting we could discuss doing something in September for suicide prevention & recovery month.
 - PSJ offered to host a meeting and tour of the facility in August in preparation for suicide prevention and recovery month (September).

Article 3

- Will continue with the survey and fine-tune it annually to meet the current needs/concerns of the community.
- Reviewed the Work Plan (attached to agenda)

Article 5

- Discussion of Officers and review of duties
 - Election of Officers at the October Council meeting
 - Michelle is open to the role of Secretary/Treasurer
 - Need nominations for Chair and Vice Chair

Article 6

- Annual Meeting
 - Discussed having October being our annual meeting
 - Use this meeting to elect officers
 - When funding is requested, we approve that during meetings throughout the year or through email vote if outside of a meeting and needing approval before the next meeting.

Agency/Consumer Reports

The Village: Starting a trauma informed Love and Logic parenting group on 10/7/25 for 6 weeks from 5:30-7:00pm. Hired a new Wraparound/Family Group Decision Making/ Family skills provider - Nora Abrahamson – we have immediate Wraparound availability! Also hired Drew Hill and Heather Kostohyrz who both will complete their graduate programs in December and start as full-time employees in January 2026.

Clay County Social Services: Currently hiring for a few positions in all three units due to some resignations, continue staff training in Motivational Interviewing, the team has been busy over the summer with an increase in trials.

Lakeland MHC: Case management has openings for new referrals, finished up summer programming successfully; with donated LAC funds they treated the kids to Clay Your Way, Thunder Road, cooking classes, art projects and other fun activities in the community. Dr. Dizon will be gone for 2 months starting in September and Dr. Nwachukwu will be gone for 1 month - medication refills may be slower during this time so please reach out to a case manager if a client needs meds quicker than they are hearing back from the medical team.

Clay County Juvenile Probation: both Lindsey and Crystal enjoyed being mentors again at the summer youth program. The Decision Points group was led this summer by Crystal and Matt – this group can be done with youth or adults, hoping to lead it again this Fall. The adult felony office has moved to the 1st floor of the courthouse, and the juvenile offices will move back to the Family Service Center on the second floor at the end of September.

Moorhead Schools: enrollment is down a little this year at 7,300 kids. SGR is very full with an average of 7 teachers for each grade. At the start of the year, they are seeing a higher number of kids with housing needs and living in their vehicles. The unaccompanied youth numbers are higher than average; seeing an increase in youth who don't have caregivers due to death or incarceration which results in higher needs and more supports. Leading a weekly independent living skills group this year. Family Healthcare is onsite with a nurse practitioner there Wednesday-Friday and a nurse available Mondays & Tuesdays. They also have a navigator who helps families enroll in insurance.

West Central Juvenile Center: making a promotional video for the new girl's program to talk about the female transitional living program that opened in May. Have a secure unit, a non-secure unit, and both male and female transition living programs (CLIPS). If you ever want to get a tour, reach out to Josh Swanson.

Solutions: anticipating having openings in children's case management soon, fully staffed, family skills position is open with a referral list of 8-10 families, saw an increase in homelessness in families this summer with limited to no resources.

Prairie St. Johns: the child and adolescent program runs all 12 months of the year, tours are always welcome, PSJ is on their third year with Learn Well and have 3 on-site teachers this year where youth receive 2 hours of education daily. Continue hosting monthly education series that are free for community providers and members. The fall conference registration is out for the November conference. Offer adult supportive housing for intensive outpatient (1/2-day treatment) for substance use disorder and mental health treatment.

Public Health: Terri recently retired! The Family Health program specifically works with pregnant moms and their babies up to 2 years old, have openings for more nurses, still taking referrals, the team can help be resources for connections for pregnant women.

Access: hired another children's care manager – Taryn.

Family Resource Center: have a parent advisory board that hosted an event on the stress of back to school, free event at the library in September, Ellie & The Village are providing resources to share with families. Available to do resource navigation for families, please reach out.

Youth Leadership Council: a member won the student leader of the year, many members graduated this past year, planning for foster care day on the hill.

Restorative Justice: work and referrals were busy over the summer, enjoyed helping at the summer youth program, completed training to help youth in the schools who want to stop smoking, Peter Ferguson was hired as a restorative practice facilitator for 20 hrs./week doing preventative work with kids & families.

Mobile Mental Health: There is a new supervisor of the team, Hannah Pajari (hpajari@LMHC.org). There have been low calls regarding children over the summer.

DGF Schools: continue to see a high need for housing with students and families.

Meeting called to order: 8:32am

Meeting adjourned at: 9:53am

Minutes submitted by: Joni Medenwald

Next meeting: October 2nd, 2025, 8:30am at Clay County Social Services Room 4.

Next meeting agenda items:

- Oct or Nov – discuss volunteering at the December Family Night at the Career Academy and having a LAC table with swag.
- Reworking the Vision statement
- Election of officers
 - o Looking for nominators for Chair and Co-chair
- Survey – possibly add a place for people to give their name/email if interested in joining the LAC as a professional or consumer.
- May 2026 – plan for Suicide Prevention month (September) before summer break

Link to MN LAC Guidebook: https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/lac-guidebook_tcm1053-386047.pdf