Statewide Central Navigation Call
July 23rd, 2020

Zoom Connection Information:

<https://zoom.us/j/929504480>

Meeting ID: 929 504 480

One tap mobile

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Chat Box:

* Introduce yourself
* Questions/Answers throughout the call
* Non-profit survey questions (Coalition of Strong Nebraska)
	+ List name of organization and answers to the following questions:
		- * “Is your organization having difficulty providing services right now because of increased need?”
			* “What changes in your programs have you experienced due to the pandemic?”

Agenda:

* DHHS Updates – Emily Kluver, Matt Thomsen, Andrea Curtis
	+ Thankful for support and outreach provided for PEBT program. PEBT is a benefit Received 52,000 applications for children that did not include children already receiving SNAP. Dates will be shared that will list when families can expect to receive benefits. August 6th meeting will have a speaker on about Medicaid expansion. DHHS is estimating 90,000 people will be newly Medicaid eligible. Medicaid team would like to attend collaborative meetings to share information on the expansion. Community support specialists will be sharing collaborative meeting information with their Medicaid counterparts in order to align their attending their local collaborative meetings.
	+ Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program: Receives mix of funds from housing and urban development and state funding due to matching requirements. Due to COVID 19 they also receive CARES Act funding. Balance of State received $8.5 million. Can serve up to 50% of the median income with the additional funds, so about 200% of the poverty rate. Rapid Rehousing, Rental Assistance, Utility Assistance. Those applying go through a coordinated entry system that allows to prioritize cases to better serve individuals that most need the assistance. Homeless prevention services are also available- rental and utility assistance, security deposits, emergency shelters, childcare, diversion, case management. All doors lead home initiative spread out across Nebraska for referrals- flyers will be shared out. July 1 funds were released for rapid rehousing program. More information on how to become an Open-Door agency will also be shared.
	+ \*\*Note: Follow link to recordings and notes to access documents and resources shared on these calls.
	+ LIHEAP: Wednesday night they processed through supplemental payments for LIHEAP customers. $235 additional dollars for customers that need heating assistance and for those receiving cooling assistance. As long as household in within income guidelines, meet citizenship requirements can receive heating assistance. Typically, payments go directly to utility provider but in case there is no agreement with the household’s utility provider they will pay the individual directly. Also, in cases where utilities are factored into rent costs, they payments can go directly to landlords. These additional funds allow additional assistance to more vulnerable populations. Households that have anyone living that are 70 or older, and that have a health condition that is impacted/aggravated by extreme heat, or household member under age 6 and receive ADC qualify for cooling assistance. There were no requirements for requests or applications for funds, they were automatically allocated based on eligibility in their database. These funds will assist with past due balances, disconnections, suspensions, etc. Many providers have delayed disconnecting services due to the crisis but hearing more providers returning to regular disconnection of services as of August 1st. For emergency assistance funds households still have to meet LIHEAP eligibility criteria and have an immediate loss of home energy-shutoff notice, already disconnected, lack of service delivery (propane tanks in particular), anticipate removal from budget plans by energy provider. If households have an inability to pay utility services due to unexpected household expense or involuntary loss of income can be looked at for crisis assistance. Also have an ability to practice some discretion in deciding on providing assistance. Households can be helped with up to $500 or more depending on discretion. LIHEAP cooling season runs June 1st-August 31st. Also provide assistance for window air conditioners, repair and replacement assistance for central air and furnace, and weatherization programs for households up to 200% of the federal poverty level and up to $5,000 for costs associated to these needs.
		- Households can apply online or over the phone with ACCESSNebraska.
		- To refer individuals for LIHEAP contact ACCESSNebraska:
			* Toll Free: (800) 383-4278
			* Lincoln: (402) 323-3900
			* Omaha: (402) 595-1258
			* If navigator is working with families requesting assistance for utilities, they can contact ACCESSNebraska to check on if they receive assistance or approval process. Utility companies should have started received payments this past week and will continue to through the rest of the week to apply to household’s accounts.
	+ Community Services Block Grant received CARES Act Funds as well. 9 community action agencies across the state that were able to receive 90% of these funds to meet needs identified by community needs assessment. Submitted community action plans that highlights how funds will be utilized in each service area, are commonly utilized for food needs, utility and rent assistance, and possibly connectivity assistance. Additional funds have opened up ability to assist and serve households up to 200% of the federal poverty level.
* Barrier Busting/Solution Task Force Workgroups
	+ Connectivity/Communication – First Lady Susanne Shore
		- * July 23rd and August 6th at 3:30 every other Thursday
			* First started on how to provide resources around COVID in other languages.
			* Now looking at sustaining resources for communities on meeting the needs of non-English speakers. Want to hear what communities are needing such as materials, resources, tools, and what are they facing or utilizing to meet these needs. Contact Will Meinen for more information on how to attend these calls: will@avainsights.com
	+ Food Insecurity – Zach Nelson
		- July 29th at 2:00pm
		- Continues to be led by Chris Schroeder with NIMAH. Have been able to facilitate getting food out to communities needing food assistance. Also looking at long-term priorities around food security and facilitating calls. Will also be working with food banks to address this issue at the local level, specifically solutions around food delivery. Food Security Collaboration Document: <https://collablinks.us/FoodSecurity>
			* For more information: zach@republicinsights.com or jskala@nebraskachildren.org if you are interested in the food delivery options with food banks
	+ Undocumented Workforce and Housing – Leonor Fuhrer and Rachel Meier, NCFF
	+ Support for Youth and Families – Gay McTate
		- The next meeting of the Support for youth and family group is Thursday July 30th 8:30-10 email Gay at gmctate@cox.net for the link
	+ Housing Task Force and Funding Opportunities – Jason Feldhaus, NCFF
		- Meeting monthly now. Congratulations to communities that submitted applications for CARES Act funds. Many included housing solutions in those applications. The task force would like to offer further assistance for communities as those applications and approvals come out with any coordination efforts needed. Job description has been released for a landlord liaison. Developing MOU’s for communities and providers for shelter care and working on making those connections. Communities may receive information on hotels that are interested in partnering on housing opportunities locally for communities to make outreach and connections with. For further questions contact Nate or Jason. for anyone who is not involved as of yet in the housing task force, if you would like to be involved please email me at nsmith@nebraskachildren.org
* Youth Leadership/Lincoln Arneal: Working on new model for a few months as SIF Funds ended. There are currently leadership chapters across the CYI communities that were working to incorporate this new model before the COVID crisis hit. Designed to be more forward thinking for communities, and to help support long-term YL opportunities. Applications are coming out for communities that would like further support and interest in providing YL opportunities, communities will have until Sept. 1 to turn in applications and then chapters would start by Oct. 1 if approved. If you would like to see the YL manual, a great tool on what YL needs to succeed, please email Lincoln at larneal@nebraskachildren.org
	+ Training Opportunity: Microaggression Training by Dr. Ferial Pearson on August 13th from 2-4pm via Zoom. Free of cost. Research on impact of microaggressions, tools on how to address microaggressions, and how to keep open communication. To register go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/S3GZXXL>
* CARES Act Funding Updates – Jennifer Skala, NCFF
	+ Should have received email last week on applications either if approved or requests for more information. As of Monday, there should be further information on funding. NCFF would like to hear from communities on anything that wasn’t funded so that they can explore further options for communities.
	+ Use systems you have in place at this time. Will clarify if any further reports or forms will be needed for funding compliance.

Community Sharing: How is, or how can, Community Response support youth, families, and schools during re-opening and the back to school transition?

* Meetings have proven to offer confidence that communities are doing the work and accessing the tools and resources available.
* Just a reminder to community coordinators/CNs: UNMC is finishing the data inserts for the CWB 12 month report. If you have sent your report to your UNMC evaluation point of contact, they will be inserting the data into your report (along with the summaries of the focus groups from June) and will be returning the reports to coordinators by end of day tomorrow. Thank you all!
* Coaches are working with parents to do mask training with their children to ease the transition when school reopens here in a few weeks.
* Collena/SE Nebraska Collaborative: YL group is continuing to partner with food banks and drive thru food drives to provide additional information and resources. Food drives have given a perspective on the increasing needs in communities, there is a sense that this will be continuing for quite some time.
* Douglas County Community Response (DCCR) is gearing up for a site visit from multiple states (virtually) and will work with multiple community collaborations within several sectors to promote child and family well-being. Tomorrow, we will host our quarterly collaborative meeting. I have to hop off. Have a great weekend.
* JoAnn/Sandy: Our Collaborative worked with Nebraska Ethanol to provide hand sanitizer to local non-profits and the schools. We have also been working with the schools to provide food boxes to families and individuals in need. Also have been providing family engagement opportunities at different drives, most recently with topics around reading and back to school.
* Sara/Platte/Colfax: Providing family engagement activities and encouraged families to reach out to educators to thank and encourage them for providing the activities. Have sent CR flyers through summer food programs, food drives, and pantries. They will continue to use this method of reaching out to provide information on resources.
* Buffalo County: Overall, there seems to be more stability with food insecurity efforts and starting to focus more on systems work around housing. An emergency housing task force has defined a list of housing issues they are currently facing and plan to get that list to Nathan to help align with other supports and ideas across the state. Currently working on CYI applications and seeing some new exciting innovative ideas in the community to support youth, etc. Food insecurity pieces are getting more stable with Cash Wa receiving the Farm to Table USDA contract. Have volunteers assisting two days a week to process individual food boxes for North and South Dakota and Nebraska. Great to see so many community members and organizations coming together to help those across North Central US. Are in conversations with the Health Department to look into an effort to get standard COVID-19 education information out to the community. COVID-19 numbers are increasing in Buffalo County.
* Douglas County: Some of the youth serving agencies in Douglas county like Girls, Inc and others are working with the schools to see how they can help with serving those children on those days they can’t be in school- are gathering more details and will share them as they learn more and see how Douglas county CR can be helpful
* Needs for back to school supplies are expected to increase drastically this year. Encouraged to explore funding opportunities to meet this need especially through CR.
* Rachel/Project Everlast: Thinking ahead on the possibility if/when students are pulled out of the schools and looking at problem solving ahead of these possible situations.
* Region 6 is offering some supports for educators - with zoom sessions- don’t know if any other regions are offering this
* Cathy Minnick/Central Plains: Have recently had many requests for thermometers as schools and businesses make plans to reopen and are working on a plan to help with this. If anyone has any resources for these, could you please let Cathy know: cminnick@central-plains.org. Getting requests from those other than daycare providers.
* Have heard from School Leaders the need for support for school personnel who are possibly fearful about returning. Remember the care giver/educators in the reopening process as well. This can also include our states childcare providers.

All notes, audio, and chat box recordings are posted at <https://www.nebraskachildren.org/frequently-asked-questions-for-communities.html>

Next Call: Thursday, August 6, 2020  10am

 Meetings moving to every other week.