**Statewide Central Navigation Call – Notes**

**March 26, 2020**

**Attendees -** *Please excuse typos and spelling errors. Attendees have the opportunity to introduce themselves via the chat, so please refer to the chat file for additional details. There were over 100 attendees on this call, not all are cataloged.*

Aaron Weaver, Project Everlast in Douglas County

Alyson Goedken, Nebraska Children

Andrea Curtis, DHHS Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program

Bev, York County Health Coalition Community Response

Brian Havlovick, Walmart Stores

Brittany Masters, Families 1st Partnership

Brooke Johnson - Kearney Area Disaster Recovery Group

Carmen Bradley--Sarpy County

Caroline Sabin : Families 1st Partnership

Caroline Sabin, Lincoln Co.

Carrie Rouillard and Yvonne Bickerstaff, Society of Care-Santee

Catherine Brown, Nebraska Children

Chris Schroeder -- Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

Darla Berger- DHHS

Darniece Amos, Community Support Specialist-Omaha Metro North

Deborah Dancer, Douglas County Community Response

Elci Warnell Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership (ENCAP)/ Lift UP Sarpy

Erin Sams, York County Health Coalition

Gary Harpster, Cass County Long Term Recovery Group

Greg Donovan, Society of Care

Heather Hansen - Norfolk Family Coalition.

Heidi Hausmann : We are working from home. Our office phones are cell phones, so we are still available via phone and email!

Heidi Hausmann, Norfolk Family Coalition

Jan Zurcher, East Central Long Term

Jason Feldhaus, Nebraska Children

Jeff Weaver, Sarpy Disaster Recovery

Jen Johnson, Douglas county Long term recovery group

Jen Thielen, Nebraska Children

JoAnn Gieselman- Growing Community Connections

Judi Sickler, Kearney Area

Kelsey Tourek, UNMC/MMI

Lea Ann Johnson-Kappes, Consultant NCFF--Fremont and Ne City

Lindsey Drake, The HUB, Lancaster County

Lisa Janssen, Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties

Lori Larsen - Heartland Disaster Recovery Group

Lynne Brehm-NCFF/Rooted in Relationships

Mariel Harding from 211/United Way of the Midlands

Marti Beard- NCFF/Communities for Kids

Mary O'Hare, Consultant

Mary Pinker, Nebraska Children

Nathan Busch, NCFF

Nichole Hetz, Gothenburg/Dawson County

Nikia Gunn-Abdulai

Phillip Burrell, PEO

Rachael Surmick, United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County

Rachel Kinney in Douglas County

Rosie Zweiback from MMI UNMC

SandyNation, Dakota County here.

Sara Riffel, Nebraska Children

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Sarah Ochoa from Community Action Partnership - Gering NE

Sarah Papa (Community & Family Partnership serving Colfax and Platte counties)

Schalisha Walker from Project Everlast- Omaha

Shelly Witt, DHHS

Shonna Werth/NCFF Communities for Kids

Stacy Scholten- NCFF

Steph Gardeman, Fremont Family Coaition

Stephanie Skeem- Nebraska Strong Recovery Project

Stephanie White, Douglas County LTRG, Valley Nebr.

Sudman - Cass County Long Term Recovery Group

Tera Kucera

Teresa O'Donnell, Crisis Counselor for Nebraska Strong Recovery Project

Tom Greenwald

Valerie Roth - Central Navigator, Hall County Community Collaborative

Veronica Kaufman, Heartland Disaster Recovery Group in Grand Island

Will Meinen from AVA Insights

Zach Nelson, Flood Recovery Consultant for Nebraska Children

**Check-in via Chat box**

* Greet each other by name, community, share changes in your Central Navigation process that others would need to know during this time (are you going in the office, transferring calls to cell phones to work from home, using only email, etc)
* Share any tips or encouragements for self-care during this time! 😊

**DHHS Updates in response to COVID 19 – Emily Kluver, Prevention Administrator**

Emily highlighted that people who were not previously eligible may now be eligible for DHHS economic assistance. She encouraged all to use Access Nebraska. As a heads up, the Access Nebraska call team is seeing a huge increase in calls (as expected); the call line is, however, still open. Also, some economic assistance programs have adjusted eligibility and other aspects (Emily is keeping the FAQ on Nebraska Children’s website updated with this information). Most importantly: Be aware that for families accessing TANF, SNAP, or Unemployment and other supports, there are exemptions being granted from work requirements. She also shared that DHHS has a utilities/crisis energy assistance program, which is important given the concern that bills are still piling up so want to make sure people who are eligible are applying for this; this may include people who have not previously been eligible. Also, She and her team are meeting with child welfare providers twice a week to keep communication lines open.

**Nebraska Children COVID 19 Resource and Community FAQ sites – Mary Pinker**

**Community Response/CYI Toolkit – Mary Pinker/Sara Riffel**

Sites are:

* <https://www.nebraskachildren.org/covid-19-information-and-resources.html>
* <https://www.nebraskachildren.org/frequently-asked-questions-for-communities.html>

Mary shared that that this is a good place to find information. Nebraska Children is continuing to update these sites as much as possible. If you have questions that you’d like to see added to the FAQ, attendees are asked to put these in the chat box during the call or email Mary Pinker. Also send in answers, strategies, and updated information that pertains to the questions.

Mary Pinker and Sara Riffel talked about how they are working pull together some real, actionable information about strategies to manage work and work processes now that there is no or limited in-person contact. For example, now that people might need to access a general voice mailbox, how does that work? The priority right now are aspects tied to meeting immediate needs; however, they’ll come back around to examples like the one above after they get to the immediate need things in the next couple of weeks.

Sara and Mary asked if anyone if anyone has specific needs they are looking for in toolkit. Items in the toolkit right now include how to issue electronic payments to young people and families. (For example, Venmo offers a debit card where people can access cash from ATM.) These are strategies that can be taken and adapted so that they work for you. Again, let us know if there is anything specific that’s needed. We will try to help.

Mary share that the following are items are some about which there are questions, either from the char box from last week or emails to her so far:

- Computers for kids,

- School supplies for kids,

- Access to wifi (e.g. which providers are offering free, which are reduced cost, using flex funds to answer questions right now)

These are example where there are opportunities to learn together so others can benefit.

**Statewide Opportunity/Partnership around COVID-19 (Playbook) – Jennifer Skala**

Jenny thanked for all the conversations that have already taken place. The Playbook is opportunity brought to us by the Commissioner of Education and AVA Insights; hopefully, coordinators have had some introduction to The Playbook through a consultant or Nebraska Children staff person. Consultants, Nebraska Children staff people, AVA Insights are forming a team to support the gathering of information across several areas (see list below). The purpose of The Playbook is to gather the needs and identify true gaps so that resources can be provided to will these needs and gaps. For example, if any gaps were identified related to internet access and connectivity, we want to offer some flexible finding to meet individuals’ needs. We also want to use every possible resource available through Community Response (i.e., coaching, support services funds). There is also a desire to make sure that the use of The Playbook includes connecting all the public and private partners and the policies than are needed to support.

List of Playbook areas:

* Food
* Healthcare
* Childcare
* Connectivity/Technology
* Financial Resources
* Housing
* At-Risk populations
* Other

First Lady Susanne Shore and Anne Herman from AVA Insights also joined the conversation.

Anne shared that consultants and the regular Nebraska Children staff team will be the main points of contact in developing The Playbook. Thanks already to those who have checked in with us.

First Lady Shore underlined that she is here 100 percent for all community collaboratives. You’ve proven that you can solve problems within communities. We will get all the resources to you that we can. Thank you for all the work you are doing.

**Community Partner Sharing**

To shape Playbook conversations correctly from the beginning, community representative were asked to share what you see as the top 1-2 immediate priorities in your community.

* Food
* Healthcare
* Childcare
* Connectivity/Technology
* Financial Resources
* Housing
* At-Risk populations
* Other

**Blue Valley**

Collena Laschanzky

- Right now, the biggest need is food, rent, utilities, and diapers

- Seeing needs in the following populations: older youth and families

- Also seeing population of senior citizens with needs around with food delivery and managing isolation

- To address some of these needs, Blue Valley is working to connect young people with older people—for example, setting up phone check ins, and porch food delivery

- Hear concerns from the older population about the impact of putting off regular doctor’s appointments for too long; this is a source of worry

**Buffalo Co**

Denise Zwiener (and Community foundation and UW also on)

- Members of the community are working together to create a resource page for people to access information about food, housing, and other supports

- The Chamber of Commerce has done a great job. They are listing what hours restaurants are open/closed, listing what restaurants are doing takeout

- A fund has been established for people in the community; it provides several hundred dollars to people who need it. As of Monday, 158 checks had gone out the door

- Over 1,000 meals prepared and and distributed as of Wednesday

- Also working to bring the faith community together; rally a volunteer base through the faith community. There are needs like a veteran in Gibbon, NE needing food delivery.

- They have a survey going out soon; the intent of the survey is to gain basic understanding of the needs in the community

- Trying in general to understand what the situation is right now

**Community and Family Partnership – Platte and Colfax Co**

Sarah Papa and team

- Top concern is helping undocumented families

- Currently have a Flex Fund/Support Services Fund limit/cap. Trying to reevaluate where the limit lies under new circumstances.

- Also working to get the message out that there are Support Services Funds available

- Especially in Platte Co, not seeing uptick in the number of people accessing Community Response, but think it’s coming.

- It is a different story in Colfax Co. Referrals to Community Response are coming in from businesses, the food pantry. The food pantry is running low on resources.

- Also trying to push out the word through schools that they are a resource for families

**Douglas Co Community Response**

Deborah Dancer, Coordinator

- We have several things going on because have so many entities that work together.

- Trying to figure out best response to provide financial assistance, and fill out playbook

- Trying to have a clear document and common form with the local United Way in their efforts

- Bringing in parents for their help and perspective, making sure they are included

- So many different aspects…for example, the moratorium on evictions there is a lot of coming together in the co to make sure resources are coordinated and info gets out.

Nikia Gunn-Abdulai, Community Response Central Navigator

- Top priorities are: formula, pull ups, phones or laptops to communicate with coaches. The latter are important because most agencies have moved to virtual visits, phone calls, and/or text communication in place of in-person. Tring to find ways to help people stay in contact with case mangers.

Aaron Weaver, PEO

- Shortages of diapers, wipes,

- Trying to get mobile pantry (60 deliveries were made through the mobile pantry last week)

- Have heard concerns about being able to get needed medications

- While housing is always a need, there are a couple of people who have been released from jail and they are now homeless

- There is just the need to be around people and feel connected, addressing this with Facebook Lives (story time for children, cooking, etc.)

Phillip Burrell, PEO

- Also have had increases in requests for assistance through the supp services fund

- Want to help young people have solid housing, and connect young people to resources that can provide them assistance

**Families First Partnership (Lincoln Co**)

Caroline

- Greatest needs so far have been rent, utilities

- The Community Action is also doing some assistance but their limit is $200

- Haven’t heard back from schools and such about what if any needs there are related to food

- All food pantries are closed

- School is going to more limited schedule for food pickup

- On the housing side, many places that would normally take people in are not letting anyone else come in at the moment. There are not very many options for where people can go.

Cheery Co – missed this

Rachel Sissel

-Conversations mostly centered around early childhood and providers

-Schools trying to figure out food delivery to families

-They are working hard, very much in the planning stages

**Fremont Family Coalition (Dodge Co)**

Stephanie

- Biggest thing they are seeing still is that as giant influx of rent and utilities requests— 8-12 per day. People who work in food service are facing financial challenges because family restaurants are moving to take out only

- Schools started grab and go this week, sounds like this will keep going

- Schools announced Monday that they will be closed for rest of school year

- Food pantry seeing a number of people that they have not previously seen; there were 40 new families who have not accessed the pantry before.

- There is not a concern yet that pantries might close; pantries are well-stocked because of anticipated a large needed if there was flooding this spring

- Anticipating an increase in case management services

- Haven’t had a ton of new CR families and case management services so far, did add a few case managers; Life House has trained all shelter case managers on how to do Support Service Fund applications

- Still working on how to best support the older pop – meals while social distancing, for example

- Working on partnering with restaurants, maybe supplying vouchers to people so that they can access food via restaurants/fast food (a new idea, just mentioned yesterday)

- Partered in 2019 though schools to do a diaper bank and had a lot of diapers left over from flood recovery effort but now wondering how stock will be replenished once it runs out

**Growing Community Connections**

Joanne and Sandy

- Right now, the biggest requests are around utilities and food

- Haven’t seen huge increase in referrals but think they are coming

- All pantries have converted to drive through. Food is boxed, clients drive through and get a box, so not coming into the cars and into a building.

- Schools still proving grab and go breakfast and lunch; believe this will go through end of May 2020

- There is a food pantry happening tonight –information posted on Voices for Food FB page – 31 shares and 18,000 views

- Coaches doing hardly any face to face, mostly phone

- Most at risk is the undocumented community and the immigrant community. Even under normal circumstances, resources for the undocumented population are limited. Complicating things, at the end of February, legislation passed that suggests that, for those in the immigrant community, use of SNAP etc. would negatively impact their ability to get citizenship eventually; with this, people are reluctant to use SNAP, etc.

- Heartland’s physical office is closed; however, still seeing new clients, all is telehealth

- United Way of Siouxland trying to bring together partners, make a list of resources. United Way has at least 50 partners each week to share needs and resources. Yesterday shared that Gospel Mission shelter has closed for season (i.e. normal seasonal closure) and the city has opened two hotels in town to give people a hone.

- Childcare limited to 10 – tying to keep this is a place for children of people who work in hospitals or are first responders. Talked to Tyson yesterday because people are not able to come to work because need to be at home to care for children

- A lot of churches are reaching out to the elderly to lessen the burden of isolation

**Hall Co Community Collaborative**

Valerie Roth

- Have had a big influx in applications this week. In lobby or available online. Doing interviews over the phone.

- Biggest needs are utilities and rent, even though there is a moratorium on eviction, don’t want people left with huge bill after

- In terms of food, shifting grant resources to better service this need with Heartland and their role. Have been calling food pantries and asking about their needs; one pantry is out of food almost. Working with grantors to figure something out with food. Know financial assistance will help, but at same time grocery stores are having hard time keeping stocks up. Looking for ideas about how to do a food drive so as to restock pantry shelves while also not totally depleting supply of things like canned food at the grocery store

-The collaborative’s birth-11 and behavioral health subcommittee are doing great job

- Possibly preparing for day cares to be closed

- Heartland UW and CHI St Francis have grant funds that can be used to help families out financially

- Right now there is big community effort

- United Way has FB page matching extra stuff in house with what needs are

- Please let Valerie her know if your community is doing a food drive w/out depleting resources in grocery store

**Lift Up Sarpy (Sarpy Co)**

Carmen and Elci

- One of biggest things in Bellevue area is the city of Bellevue has steeped in to help with pantry down at ENCAP.. the city has stepped in to provide food for families in that area

- Abundance of calls for rent…one of the things the Central Navigator she is asking for anyone who applies for assistance with rent is to also specifically ask what the status is with utilities. Had a conversation with main utilities companies in the areas. They are helping ENCAP get receipts once payment made.

- All trying to collaborate to leverage funds, working with diff churches esp. St. Vincent de Paul and meeting weekly to divide and conquer

Papillion – missed it

-Diaper pantry in Papillion/Sarpy County. No wipes, but they are getting donations of pull-ups

- Seeing uptick in domestic violence cases where needing emergency housing…are there any orgs they could partner with to fill this need?

Jeff Weaver – Long Term Recovery Group

- Board met this week, he will be sending out email to flood relief team about how have revamped for COVID-19 response. They are looking to bring other case managers on, while staying true to their mission about responding to floods. See this as a long-term problem– not two weeks or a month.

**Lancaster**

Lisa

- Families not knowing what is most current and having misinformation is an issue

- Referrals to Central Navigation have slowed down, so doing active outreach to current and past families

- Families are struggling with unemployment or reduced hours

- Food situation is ok, esp if connected with Lincoln Public Schools

- One fam in particular said they had been through harder times and they will get through and the rest of the world is finally learning they can do this too!

Lindsey

- Not seeing a huge number of Support Services forms come in, think they will pick up…there are a lot of young people in food industry who have lost jobs, so encourage to apply for unemployment as well as other jobs like HyVee

- Also encouraging people to stay current on utilities bills

- Created care packages for council members who were having hard time getting diapers, wipes and provided info about other agencies that could do diapers. Also gave gift cards for grocery stores etc. so can focus on take care of themselves as well as (for those who are parents) their children

- People go to pantry and get maybe a gallon of milk or a loaf of bread – supplies seem limited

**Norfolk Family Coalition (Madison)**

Heidi

- Biggest concern right now is childcare. Esp. providers. Have so many providers – 90 in home and 20 child care centers. So figuring how to support all the providers in a fair way.

- Other issue is financial resources. There are a lot of people needing help and expect this number will go up. Hard to create a sustainability plan (usually a common practice with Community Response in Norfolk) when circumstances are as they are.

- How to support elderly, people without children when these usually are not eligible under their policy is a question

- The food pantry still running, lots of food options – this has been beneficial

Heather

- Our smaller grocery stores are doing delivery to nursing homes. More a financial issue for older population

**Panhandle Partnership**

Faith

- There have been no upticks in the older youth that Deb has seen

- Seeing CR requests for utilities, and food supplies, toilet paper, Kleenex

- Talked with other folks that have pop that aren’t in their usual Community Response or Connected Youth (older youth) population. This “other” group includes the homeless pop. Landlords not sure about new tenants now, so housing people is a challenge.

- Free internet for school age youth from one provider

- Pantry is doing drive up

- Some folks have always worked on a cash basis, so that’s hard right now

- Has been heart warming – have been a couple if informal “sidewalk pantries” that are getting more awareness. Were there before now getting used

**Sandhills**

Cathy

- The newest thing is schools going to online only starting March 30 so connectivity for kids is going to be difficult. About 10 percent of kids no internet access in homes. Hot spots in empty Costco building, church. Bandwidth—even on a normal evening there is not enough bandwidth and now with everyone home and more being done online it is difficult. Just difficult to connect to this call. Another big problem is childcare...used to be another at schools but it is closed.

- Mental health is going to be a big prob. People stopping sessions because struggling to pay bills.

- Is being felt very strongly by elderly who are less tech savvy

- Rent and utilities assistance has always been a need, and anticipate it being an even larger concern. But maybe because they are further out/more rural out haven’t seen some impacts yet

- Ranchers who are used to going to store an hour a way stock up for a few weeks is the norm, but finding they can’t do this now

- No homeless shelters (same as before)

- Some counties don’t have a store

- Because people live far away anyway, hard to get to a school for meal

- Good news is that isolated to begin with, so in this sense not much change!! 😊

**Tribal communities/Society of Care**

Greg

-Hearing a lot of anxiety, special concern with food insecurity

-In Santee there was a special effort on suicide education/prevention campaign

**York**

Erin

-Weekly community briefing Zooms – Health Dept, Education, County reps, all mayors and village board, non-profits, ministerial alliance, community members, Economic Development, Chamber

-Food resources stable, schools providing meals

-Bradshaw area ran out of meals, had to do a double delivery out of Henderson

-York Schools starting drop off sites for those without transportation to make it to school

-Individual donation drives – fabric stores promoting mask patterns and supplies, ACE Hardware, Hospital, and Chamber doing a joint drive. Basic Needs is doing a food/supply gift card drive so as not to deplete supplies at the grocery stores right now.

-Has started Excel file on resources that looks like playbook – will be transitioning to Playbook format

-No increase in CR referrals yet, helps that no one has tested positive for COVID 19, so people are still able to get to resources

-Do have a concern for DHHS workers who are doing abuse/neglect cases. We know they are short on masks, gloves, and disinfectant wipes

Next Steps: Responding with Emergency Funds through CR

-Additional emergency resources will be directed and provided to local CR communities. Mary, Sara, and others will be available for support and tools to help mobilize CR partners and fill gaps in communities.

Next Meeting:  Thursday, April 2nd, 10am