Greater NE Community Response Call Notes

June 17th, 2020

10:00-11:30am

This meeting is limited to CR community Coordinators and Central Navigators in greater Nebraska and is a time to discuss specifics around CR in your area and learn from one another and/or problem-solve and innovate together.

All calls will be recorded, and notes, recordings, and chat box transcription will be posted to the FAQ site: <https://www.nebraskachildren.org/frequently-asked-questions-for-communities.html>

Agenda:

* Housing Updates and Strategies- Jason Feldhaus, NCFF
  + CN Call last week showed interest in housing strategies and updates, because of those conversation NCFF will be looking on how to develop feedback loop with communities.
    - Feedback loop: Would like to reinvest time and energy into housing feedback loop to be able to develop goals for future investments and advocacy. Task force may be of value to support these housing conversations. Jason would like to create a platform or venue to develop conversations at community levels and with NCFF. Email Jason for suggestions or comments: jfeldhaus@nebraskachildren.org
  + ENHAP meetings hosted by DHHS for housing. Working with housing advocates across the state as they look at COVID funds coming as well as the needs from flood relief.
  + Flood Recovery and Housing Redevelopment; Dept of Economic Development will be releasing plans to receive public comment for disaster funds from housing flood dollars. Some areas have been identified to receive those funds that was decided from the amount of damage received during floods.
  + Looking at affordable housing plans, working as a liaison with NIFAH to develop plans such a landlord mitigation funds that would assist to cover for extreme damages for up to $2-3,000.
  + Also looking at developing homeless housing/affordable housing with NIFAH to offer more affordable housing. There aren’t many incentives in Nebraska to provide affordable housing. Encouraging exploring incentives for communities and cities to increase their density. Also looking at how to develop tax credits, and first homeowners financing opportunities.
  + Hoping to see a tie in on how landlords can report good tenants, on time payments, etc to credit bureaus to assist tenants towards building good credit.
  + “Housing apocalypse”: Across the country we have an extreme problem with individuals being unable to make April, May, even June, July housing payments. Over 40% of individuals reported to be at risk are persons of color which factors into issues with race equity.
  + Housing advocates across the state working to identify issues with utilities as well and working with utility companies.
  + Evictions were suggested to be put on hold for some time due to current circumstances but no official order. There were multiple eviction orders either filed or enforced. Looking at possible solutions. Governor did announce $20 million dollars from CARES Act, $11 million of those funds were designated towards housing. These will look at providing support for individuals that come through CR.
  + NCFF utilizes reports from continuum of care to project what this crisis will bring forward in housing needs.
  + Douglas County will be looking at utilizing $20 million towards housing, no details have been given as of this morning as to what or how that will look like.
  + Communities prioritizing housing needs can reach out to NCFF to receive updated housing reports such as housing studies.
  + Grand Island had access to public funding to help enhance utilization of public dollars for hotel/motel vouchers.
  + CARES Act will offer $100,000 towards hotel/motel vouchers. Communities encouraged to offer this opportunity for those needing this resource.
  + Jason working with State level COC’s to show the effectiveness of the community partnerships existing to tackle housing issues.
  + $500.000 will also be designated towards assisting with Legal Aid, specifically those cases related to evictions. Working to establish an efficient way to provide a smooth referral towards connecting individuals to Legal Aid. They are ramping up to tackle eviction cases.
  + Utility services were allocated $450,000 from CARES Act to assist, there are some limits though to how those dollars will flow.
  + The fund amounts are those that were requested by NCFF for the proposal but have not received clarification on the specific dollars approved. These dollars will be doing direct contracts with providers to allow those dollars to flow, these dollars will not flow through NCFF. Playbooks were the main factors in developing this proposal. NCFF will be sure to connect with communities to offer support on process of how to utilize and receive those funds.
  + Requests for breakdown of funds have been received but there is a wait to hear back on details on what the funds will be look like as well as requirements, etc. Encouraged that communities continue to utilize playbooks to begin prioritizing community needs.
  + There have been discussions on well-being of housing, (maintaining safe, well-maintained rental housing) but no policy has been written at state level. Have seen movement behind developing policies but nothing that has been written formally or passed. This would be a good opportunity for communities to rally together to advocate for change. There is a need to see a broader grass roots voice from communities around housing: access to affordable housing, safe/well maintained housing, etc. Many communities are seeing housing as an economic development issue rather than a human rights issue.
  + Communities have shared using “Workforce Housing” rather than saying low-income/affordable housing. Identifying the need for further discussions on the local level such as education on how housing and economic development plays into community well-being. For example, Fremont has been integrating CR into Housing group.
  + Would like to have Nebraska Economic Development as well as Community Action Partnerships present to offer opportunities for conversations. Would like to evaluate and see housing studies that would reflect on topics such as: what price ranges are most needed for families in communities based on income. Encouraging exploring and contacting Jason for those communities that are ready to take next steps/action on developing those conversations.
  + Coordinators don’t need to feel that they have be the person to join any task force but rather look at your board, collaborative for a person that may already be a good fit.

* Marketing and Outreach strategies- Maria Navas, NCFF
  + Maria has been the “brain” behind the blogs, social media, marketing etc at NCFF.
  + Looking at how to share more about the great work that is happening across the collaborative, either events, etc.
    - Community spotlight opportunities to be developed
    - One of Maria’s goals is to gather community’s success stories. Open to suggestions. Looking at once a month to incorporate 1-3 community success stories in the e-newsletter. Also sharing updates from collaboratives FB pages.
    - Maria will reach out to community’s once a month to ask for updates or things to showcase. Add Maria to email lists that go out or share via google docs or calendar invites.
      * Tip: Press releases can easily be converted to blog posts, social media posts.
    - Requests: Help in training opportunities such as how to write a press release or other professional development opportunities.

* Respite Providers/Networks
  + What are the available options to community prevention systems as far as respite providers? A specific scenario, COVID + parent that may be hospitalized and has no one to care for her children, preferring an option that will not involve DHHS involvement.
    - An Area Agency on Aging has a list of respite providers that will provide to anyone who asks as well as they have a case manager who can help families connect to a respite person.
    - North Platte: Families Together program has seen a faith-based partnership developed in the community that assists families that have need for care for their children temporarily at no cost to the parent. Churches and church members that volunteer support the program. Lincoln has a manager of this program, Berean Church funds this program.
    - Growing Communities/Dakota: Bethany Christian Services provides a similar service.
    - Families that care for children as temporary guardian they may be eligible for benefits such as SNAP, ADC, etc.
    - Cedars Youth Services in Lincoln may be able to offer temporary voluntary respite/placement and possibly support youth/families, possibly can support counties outside of Lancaster. A case rate may be established with parent.

* Contract Management meetings: Looking at August as a timeframe via Zoom.

* Coordinator/Navigator Transitions and Coverage & CR Referrals and Central Navigation Capacity: Looking at having a deeper conversation to be incorporated onto next call, 2 weeks.

* Other specific questions
  + Tomorrow, Thursday, there is a CN call at 10am.