

WAHKIAKUM COMMUNITY NETWORK

Wahkiakum Networking Cafe'

June 2, 2008 6:00 – 9:00 PM

River Street Meeting Room

ATTENDING –

Chris Holmes	Wahkiakum Health & Human Services
Erin Wilson	Wahkiakum Drug Crimes Steering Committee
Lisa Ridout	Wahkiakum School District
Colleen Theisen	Department of Social & Health Services
Susan Schillios	St. James Family Center/Charlotte House
Kassy Burdick	Heritage Bible Church
Carole Lewis	Wahkiakum Community Network
Blair Brady	Wahkiakum County
Tammy Peterson	Wahkiakum Community Network
Lia Sealund	Wahkiakum Community Network

PURPOSE OF NETWORKING CAFE –

The purpose of the Wahkiakum Networking Cafe' is to increase networking among service organizations of the community. The benefit to the community to participate in the Wahkiakum Networking Café is to bring these organizations together to increase collaboration, to increase awareness of local efforts, to reduce duplication of services and increase sustainability and capacity. By implementing the Wahkiakum Networking Café, Wahkiakum Community Network will accomplish several outcomes including satisfying the Washington State Review of Community Efforts (RCW 70.190.110); Goal Two of the federal Drug Free Community Grant (strengthen coalition collaboration to prevent and reduce substance abuse In Wahkiakum County); and achieve the mission of Community Mobilization (to effectively address the problem of substance abuse and violence by promoting: collaboration, cooperation, communication, commitment, and cultural competency).

OPENING – Chris Holmes facilitated the event; Chris called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Participants enjoyed a working dinner with time provided to encourage informal networking.

SOLUTIONS/CHALLENGE NETWORKING

The goal of tonight's event was to reflect on formats of past Networking Cafes and decide what is working – are we doing the right work, and are we doing the work right to achieve the goals of the Networking Cafe? Time was taken to review past evaluation feedback, review formats of past written reports from participants, and examine how we can re-align the event to make it more beneficial to all the participants, while still achieving the outcomes sought by Wahkiakum Community Network. Based on past evaluations and feedback, challenges were presented to the group for brainstorming. Several solutions were developed to realign the format of future Networking Cafés.

Challenges Presented:

1. A majority of participants recommend the event be held every six months, as appose to every three months. The most common reason for this suggestion is

the challenge of providing a report every three months. Not a lot of things change within that period of time; plus this meeting is in addition to all the other reporting and administration obligations required of the service providers.

- There were several participants that recommended against pushing the Networking Café back to every six months:
 - If a participant is absent, it will be a year before that service is presented again if it is every six months
 - If the service provider is presented a challenge, it will be too long in-between events to get feedback from other service providers
- 2. Participants have expressed that, because of so many reports fit into such a short period of at each café, it is causing the event to run late, as well as not give each service provider the time necessary to present their services adequately. Past survey results reflect participants are not in favor of having the event longer than two hours; this presents the challenge of time management.

Solution: After extensive discussion, it was agreed that the event remain at every three months to keep continuity, but the report requirement be staggered so not every service provider is presenting reports every three months. This will solve the challenge of time management, reducing multiple reporting, and it will allow a more in-depth discussion around each service presented. It is recommended that the services presented get clustered by like-services to allow the service providers a chance to build support networks, based on services that inter-link together often. It was found that many of the services are inter-dependent of each other. Clustering them together may allow a stronger networking opportunity. It is recommended that future café's have three clusters:

September: Family Retention

- a. Family Preservation and Support Services
- b. Readiness to Learn
- c. Crisis Residential Care
- d. Foster Care
- e. Employment Services

December: Intervention/Prevention Services

- f. Consolidated Juvenile Services
- g. Violence Prevention
- h. Community-Police Partnerships
- i. Victims Assistance

March: Community and School Services

- j. Community Mobilization
- k. Childcare
- l. Early Intervention & Educational Services
- m. Drug & Alcohol Abuse Prevention & Early Intervention in Schools

June: Evaluation, Review of Successes, and Brainstorming

While it is noted several services can fit in multiple categories, clustering services as such will allow a more centralized focus for each café, less reports and more

depth, and eliminate the stress that each service provider faces to provide written reports on a quarterly basis. Clustering would only require the report on a rotating, annual basis. At the same time, by continuing to hold the café on a *quarterly* basis, more time will be provided to all service providers for challenge sessions, to ensure that *all service providers* attending the event have the sufficient time necessary to provide updates on past challenges and present current challenges for discussion and brainstorming.

Reducing the reporting requirement of the Networking Café to annual reports may increase the participation level to provide written reports. Written reports allow the Network to answer the important question, “Are we doing the work *right*?” To answer that question, several pieces of information are necessary in service provider reports. Proposed is the format for annual service provider reports; each cluster is assigned a Networking Café annually. Each service provider within the cluster is to present an in depth report with the following elements in their report:

- *What are the identified goals of the service’s provided, as intended by the legislature?*
- *What is the current status of the families, children and the community as it relates to the goals of the services provide? This addresses the question “Are we doing the work right?”*
- *How is the service provider collaborating with other agencies within the community and state to achieve its goals? What agencies do you collaborate with?*
- *What options are available, or that you would like to see in place, to address specific barriers to success or to make improvements?*
- *What are your current successes?*
- *What are your current challenges you would like to present to the Networking Café?*

Written reports are crucial to the Network’s ability to present successes and challenges to the legislature, and communicate local needs to funders to improve sustainability and articulate the successes of the community as a whole.

3. It has been expressed that there is a critical need more Wahkiakum Community Network board members to be in attendance at the Networking Cafes, in addition to the service providers. The role of the board members is a unique one. One element of the Networking Café is to provide the opportunity to gather parent and citizen perspective – to answer the question, “Are we doing the *right* work?” By increasing board member participation, it will allow the service providers to hear from representatives of the community, to increase feedback to the service provider whether they are providing the right services needed for the families and youth of Wahkiakum County. By increasing board member participation in Networking Cafes, it will increase collaboration between service providers and local agencies, parents and youth to allow a more consistent feedback loop.

The next Wahkiakum Networking Café will be held September 8, 2008 from 6:00 – 8:00 PM at the River Street Meeting Room with dinner served at 6:00 PM.

The meeting was concluded at 8:30 PM. Minutes provided by Lia Sealund, Director