

# **Regional Community, Agency, and School Alliance (RCASA) Minutes-January 17, 2018**

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

## **2. Presentations**

**Kari Schultz, C-SPOA Coordinator**  
**Niagara County Department of Mental Health**  
**[Kari.schultz@niagaracounty.com](mailto:Kari.schultz@niagaracounty.com)**  
**438-3071**

Kari spoke about Children's Single Point of Access (C-SPOA) and the wide range of services that are available. Her detailed PowerPoint presentation is attached to this email. C-SPOA is available for families and service providers seeking help for a child. C-SPOA will then determine the appropriate services. The goal is to prevent hospitalization. If schools or agencies are unsure about a referral, contact Kari for advice.

Children ages 5-20 with Serious Emotional Disabilities (SED) and an extended impairment in Self-Care, Family Life, Social Relationships, Self-Direction/Self-Control, and/or Learning Ability, (severe in 1 area or moderate in 2) can be referred. For others that do not have this diagnosis, C-SPOA can make recommendations for appropriate services or may be able to assist with obtaining a diagnosis. In some situations, children may also receive OPWDD services as there may not be a billing conflict with OPWDD.

Services range from residential programs, community based services, to support services and care management services. Refer to the power point for details.

Niagara County Department of Mental Health operates 24 hour Crises Services with a call center and a mobile outreach team. In addition, Hospital Diversion services, Forensic Case Management, and Assisted Outpatient Treatment (Kendra's Law) programs are available. The Adult Mental Health and Substance Abuse Clinic offers walk in hours in Niagara Falls and Lockport.

Myrla Gibbon-Doxey is the contact person for Adult-SPOA, [Myrla.doxey@niagaracounty.com](mailto:Myrla.doxey@niagaracounty.com), 439-7527. A-SPOA has care management as well as varying levels of residential services.

C-SPOA and A-SPOA (for adults) applications can be found online at [www.niagaracounty.com](http://www.niagaracounty.com), under Mental Health Services, Child Single Point of Access.

**Alan Venesky, The Summit Center**  
**avenesky@thesummitcenter.org, 799-8153.**

Alan spoke about two programs; Project SEARCH and PACE (Pre-Vocation and Community Experience). Both offer unpaid training with the goal of assisting the individual in obtaining competitive employment.

Project SEARCH is a collaborative with The Summit Center, Erie 1 BOCES, and Aspire. It is designed for students who are ACCES-VR and/or OPWDD eligible. Students can attend this program full time, in lieu of attending their last year of school. The program is held at Beechwood Continuing Care in Getzville. Classes focus on employability skills and include 3 internship experiences. Job coach support is also a component of the program.

PACE is held at SUNY at Buffalo's North Campus in collaboration with Campus Dining. This 12 month structured pre-vocational program is for those who have completed school, are OPWDD eligible, and expect to transition to supported employment upon completion. Training in several areas of Dining Services is available and job coach support is provided. Individuals need to find their own transportation, mobility training is available.

### **3. Announcements/sharing of information**

- a. **Elizabeth Loughran-Amorese, Erie 1 BOCES RSE TASC** provided a hand out that details the superintendent's determination option for a local diploma for students with a disability. At the parent's request, students who have not passed the regent's exam but have passed the course can seek the determination by completing the CDOS requirements. This is for 2017-18 and 2018-19.
- b. **Bonnie Kane, Niagara Falls City Schools**, spoke about the Niagara County Poverty Conference to be held at Niagara University on March 7, 2018. A second event, Project Connect Niagara will be held in July for individuals who are living in homelessness or are at risk for homelessness.  
<https://levesqueinstitute.niagara.edu/impact/renu-niagara/poverty-conference/>
- c. **Kim Wagner, Niagara Falls Memorial** is working with CDOS students at NF High School. She announced plans for several students age 18+ to have paid internships at Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital.
- d. **Ann Gillet, ON BOCES**, reported that Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day is May 24 at Niagara Falls Convention Center.

NYS Department of Labor has a Youth Portal that links youth ages 14 to 17 and 18-24 with numerous resources that help them explore the future and

prepare for careers. There is also a section for parents.  
<https://www.labor.ny.gov/youth/>

**4. Transition Conference**-Save the Date flyers were sent to HS teachers and counselors this month. The flyer is also posted on the ON BOCES website, under special ed, RCASA. Conference flyers will be distributed in March. The conference date is Monday May 14<sup>th</sup>.

**5. Resource Directory** is done! It is available on the ON BOCES website and was sent via email to RCASA. Copies were also distributed to CSE representatives.

**Meeting dates for 2017-18 school year:**

**March 21**

Collegiate Consortium of WNY and  
Natalie Beilein-Indigo Project, part 1

**May 16**

Topic-OPWDD updates and  
Natalie Beilein-Indigo Project-part 2