Connecting St. Lawrence County Youth Services
Tuesday, March 9, 2021, 2:00 P.M. Via Zoom

Attendance

- Amber Sullivan, Amy Richardson, Ann Garno, Ashlee-Downing Duke, Caitlin Potter, Danielle Lennox, Ellen Hurlbut, Jackie Card, Jodi Faucher, Kat Manierre, Kathy Behrens, Kristin Colarusso-Martin, Kristin Demeter, Lane Perl, Laurie Booth-Trudo, Linda Griffin, Malissa Hale, Nichelle Burnett, Robert Smith, Robin Hagey-Phillips, Sheen Smith, Tamara Hill, Tim Patrick, Wanda Collins, Alexa Backus, and Rebekah Zuhlsdorf.

Introduction

- Alexa Backus, Youth Bureau, Director
  - The goal is to have quarterly meetings no longer than 45-60 Minutes
  - Asking participants to be active for a productive meeting; cameras on
  - To learn valuable information and to share with other programs and initiatives

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Speakers

- **Jackie Card, Cornell Cooperative Extension**
  - North Wind program has launched its first scholarship fund for Farm Day Camp.
    - The goal is to reach $750 to offer scholarships to students that otherwise would not be able to attend.
    - This would allow 4 students to attend 1 week each, with money left over for some partial scholarships.
  - Donations are tax-deductible and all the information can be found on the website. Stlawrence.cce.cornell.edu
  - A small committee will be formed that will choose the scholarship recipients and then the student will choose which week of camp they want to attend.
  - Registration opened Friday and is 50% filled already.
    - Farm Day Camp starts July 5th and runs to August 20th.
    - For ages 5 -12, Monday thru Friday at 8 am - 5 pm
    - $190.00/week. Available spots for 40 students/week
  - Anyone who is interested in applying for a scholarship can contact Jackie directly, jtc292@cornell.edu
  - 4H- Showmanship program
    - 4-week specialty camp for ages 8 - 12
    - Which will end with the kids showing an animal at the fair. If there is not a fair this summer they hope to arrange something at the farm so the

students can still demonstrate to their parents, and other campers, what they have learned about showing an animal.
- 12 students can attend this camp and 10 have already signed up.

- **Ashlee Downing-Duke-St. Lawrence University Associate Director-Student Activities & Leadership (Volunteer Services & Community Partnerships)**
  - The People Project reached out to staff looking for ways to better support the local youth that are struggling.
- Formed The Buddy Project.
  - Hoping to launch a Website and Facebook Page by the end of the week
  - The planning group consists of members from SUNY Canton, SUNY Potsdam, St. Lawrence University, The People Project, Youth Bureau, and other local organizations. They have been meeting since October.
    - The goal is to have college students offer helpful resources to youth and make the resources available to the local communities.
  - **3 main goals-**
    - Online mentoring or tutoring.
      - There will be a link for parents to register their child, they will fill it out based on the subject their child needs assistance with.
      - A college student who can help within that field will be assigned to them and assist them.
      - Can be anything from tutoring, yoga, or Spanish lessons.
      - They will have a weekly check-in with the college student.
    - Family support group
      - Holding monthly virtual check-in meetings to support one another and discuss how we can help each other.
    - Project boxes
      - Based on feedback from teachers, they were interested in activities that can be completed away from the computer screen.
      - An activity box will be sent to the child to complete a fun project without technology.
      - Currently, they have enough funds to launch the program but are looking for a grant or a consistent source of funding for this program to keep running.
  - All programs are FREE and open for all ages K-12.
  - When ready, the registration links & flyers will be shared on the google drive.

Youth Bureau News

- June 2020, 8-10 high school students joined the Youth Advisory Board
  - They participate in monthly Youth Committee Meetings
- Fall 2020 mask initiative

- - Local students submitted mask designs, YAB members voted and the winning design was printed on over 16,000 masks which were dispersed to every student in St. Lawrence County.
- This year, the youth members want to focus on improving the environment
  - A Senior, at Heuvelton Central, is putting together a PowerPoint workshop presentation.
  - He will present this workshop on Earth Day, April 22.
  - The main topic is how to reduce your carbon footprint, providing tips and strategies to not only students but also parents and homeowners.
- Trash Dash April 24th and 25th
  - To maintain social distancing we are asking families and closest friends to go around their local area and pick up trash.
  - A Member of the Youth Committee is developing a logo.
  - There will be an online registration link.
  - Will provide a few different locations to bring collected trash and have it weighed. Making this a competitive event and possibly having 2 or 3 top prizes. Winners will be awarded a monetary donation to give back to a local non-profit or business that is environmentally friendly.

Goals of Connecting SLC Youth Services

- Director, Alexa Backus, new to the position (last March) communicated how difficult it's been getting to know organizations, programs, and individuals working with local youth. Many have also provided feedback about not always knowing about the great things going on or replicating programs.
- To Establish collaboration amongst providers in the county.
- Come together and streamline programs for youth, and be comfortable and confident that we all know what is being offered. To increase referrals between organizations, programs, and professionals.
- A shareable Google Drive was created to have access to everyone's contact information, details, website links, social media handles, upcoming programs, meetings, and flyers
- There will be a running document that allows you to post what is coming up throughout the month.
- In hopes of reaching parents, providers and families more effectively
- Will maintain a community calendar of events and create a monthly newsletter.
- Feedback from Kristin Colarusso-Martin on streamlining calendar or events.
  - Massena has been running Community Cafes-one in January and February.
    - A series of facilitated discussions to get feedback from community members, teachers, administrators, and community partners.
    - They held one during the day and one in the evening to make it more available, they had 30 participate in total.

- ○ Feedback: Participants want to know what they could do with their children during Covid. Great frustration that there is not a central location where parents or teachers can go to find information about upcoming events.
  - ○ They expressed wanting a central calendar or newsletter available to community members to inform them of all activities.
- To have a St. Lawrence County calendar of events to focus on youth and families. PLEASE Share your events on our Google Drive and the Youth Bureau will streamline it.
- Youth Bureau will try to have the first newsletter/calendar of events available for April

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Feedback

- Request **_to have events published_** to local news, channel 7 shares local community events and stories
- **_Shared calendar/newsletter_** about activities and events for families
- **_Refer youth_** to the programming offered by other providers
- **_Diversity/Inclusion training_** to support all of our youth
- **_Communication_** has always been a challenge so any way we can all be on the same page
- **_A text thread_** offering classes each week that families can sign up for
- Discussing **_how to make virtual event participation successful_**
- **_Making connections with others_** to share programming
- **_Easy access_** for community resources

Reminders

- Upload your contact information in our shared Google Drive
- Upload meeting information, announcements, and flyers on the second tab
- Please invite others _(anyone and everyone who touches the lives of children & youth in St. Lawrence County)_ to join. Email Abackus@stlawco.org
- Complete broadband survey
- Think about your team name for the April Trash Dash :)

Next Meeting

- Tuesday, May 11, 2021, 2:00 P.M. Via Zoom
  - ○ Summer Edition