

**EHDI Workgroup Meeting  
July 12, 2006  
Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Draft Minutes**

**Attendance:** Ruth Frierson, Jennifer Hutson, Dana Yarbrough, Pat Wiley, Debbie Pfeiffer, Debra Holloway, Casey Morehouse, Jackie Meeks, Pat Dewey

Minutes from the June 7 were reviewed. No changes were made.

**Announcements**

- Jennifer Hutson, Ann Hughes, and Missy Colley will be attending the Hands and Voices (H&V) Conference in Colorado, July 20 – 22, 2006, at Peaceful Valley Ranch.
- Jennifer Hutson has been talking with Missy Colley and others about starting a H&V chapter in Virginia.
- Jackie Meeks attended the recent International Alexander Graham Bell Conference. One session that she attended was on “Unbiased Early Intervention.” AG Bell has been strong in supporting educating families about all communication modalities, and they have been concerned that the first “messenger” that the family meets may be associated with an organization or agency and therefore may present with biases. Some states have found that putting that job in the hands of social workers (rather than hearing professionals or other parents) helps alleviate the biases transmitted. She shared the US Department of Education document, “Opening Doors” – an unbiased summary of communication choices and resources. (Pat Dewey emphasized the importance of a scripted contact, so that all choices are presented. Jennifer Hutson said that H&V spends time in training Family Guides on recognizing biases and trying to alleviate them in communicating with families. Ruth Frierson mentioned that sometimes social workers carry a stigma, and families may be hesitant to be involved with them.)
- Dana Yarbrough announced that the VA INFO conference is July 28 – 29 in Charlottesville. VA INFO will provide a hotel room and cover registration for parents to attend, and they will offer childcare. See [www.medhomeplus.org](http://www.medhomeplus.org) (click on VA INFO conference) for more information.
- Visual Phonics training will be offered in Winchester August 1, in Charlottesville August 2, and in Newport News August 4.
- Ann Hughes has set the Family Guide training for VA GBYS for Oct 13 and 14, 2006 (Friday and Saturday). It will be at the Sheraton Park South in Richmond.
- Casey Morehouse announced that the Governor signed a budget item appropriating 2.5 million dollars to begin a design the consolidation at Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind (VSDB) -Staunton. Dr. Darlene White recently resigned from her position as Superintendent of VSDBM-H in Hampton.
- Pat Dewey reported on her meeting with Joanne Boise, Director of the Division of Child and Adolescent Health, during which they discussed this project. Joanne Boise suggested that in order to build support for this program long-term, the

Family Guides could be trained enrollment for Medicaid and FAMIS. That would add the medical home and access to care aspects to the program. She stated that there must be strong documentation of program success beyond just family satisfaction. Measurement of whether or not they received Part C services faster, for example, could be used. She suggested other possible funding sources for this program once federal grant funding ends, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Virginia Healthcare Foundation. Finally, she stated that Care Connection for Children would be a good home for this project at some point, provided there was specific ongoing funding to support management.

- Ruth shared information from Minnesota on their GBYS program. They have had overwhelming support for the idea of GBYS from professionals and families. They reported that H&V International has been terrific and that they understand the differences that exist in states. Minnesota finds challenges in defining roles, managing a remote staff, and funding.

Jackie Meeks asked for a summary of how the group went from looking at Beginnings of to opting for the GBYS program as the model. The group recapped the issues that led to the change of thought (see past minutes).

#### **Update from Assignments**

- **Cover Letter** – The group reviewed the latest edits and made additional revisions. The revised letter will be sent out via email to the group.
- **Application Form** – Additional revisions were made. The revised application will be emailed to the group for final comments. The deadline for applying was set for September 1, 2006 to allow time for application review, interviewing, and to allow those chosen as much time as possible to arrange for time off/childcare to attend October training.

#### **Decisions**

- Applications will go out by July 24, 2006. Pat Dewey will send finalized letters and applications to workgroup members, who will then email them out to prospective applicants and interested parties. Anyone who needs a hard copy can contact Dana Yarbrough or Debra Holloway.
- Deadline for submitting applications is September 1, 2006.
- Applications will be reviewed by members of the workgroup at the Virginia EHDI Advisory Committee meeting on September 8, 2006. Those members of the workgroup who cannot be present at that meeting will review them individually.
- Telephone interviews will be scheduled and conducted during the week of September 11, 2006. Two people, at minimum, will conduct each interview. Conference calls will be used.
- A conference call among workgroup members is scheduled for September 22, 2006 at 2:00. Group members will be notified later of the number to call. Review of applicant interviews and a decision on choosing the Parent Guides will be made at that time.
- Acceptance letters will be mailed/emailed out by September 22, 2006.

- Once the VA GBYS program is up and running, this workgroup will act as an advisory committee to the person managing the activities.
- The sample budget distributed at the meeting today will be used to write the contract between the Partnership and the Virginia Department of Health for management of the program.
- Dana Yarbrough will work with Ann Hughes and the evaluator at the Partnership to begin to develop program evaluation tools, using examples from Wisconsin.

### **Homework**

- Pat Dewey will send minutes and next meeting date reminder to the workgroup by the end of the week.
- Dana Yarbrough will incorporate latest edits in both letter and application and send to the group; final input/edits will be due to Pat Dewey by July 17, 2006.
- Pat Dewey will make final changes to the documents, put the letter on VDH letterhead, and send the letter and application back out to group members in final form to distribute to listserves, parents, providers, etc. by July 21, 2006.
- Members should look at rubrics used by their agencies for use in reviewing applications and in interviewing and bring useful ones to our next meeting. Dana Yarbrough and Ann Hughes will work with evaluators at the Partnership to develop rubrics for use in rating applicants' applications and interviews.
- An acceptance letter will be developed at the next meeting.

### **Agenda for next meeting**

- Jennifer Hutson, Ann Hughes, and Missy Colley will present information that they get from the Hands and Voices conference; the application for establishing a H&V chapter in Virginia will be reviewed.
- The group will review any rubrics that are brought for use in rating applications and interviews and finalize interview questions.
- Ruth Frierson will provide an update on applications received.
- Ann Hughes will provide an update on plans for the October training.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on August 16, 2006, from 9:30-3:00, at the offices of the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Richmond.