



Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) & School Transition Dialogue Summary April 16, 2009

On April 16, United Community Services (UCS) convened a meeting of representatives from the six Johnson County public school districts and PRTF providers in the Kansas City area who serve Johnson County children and youth. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss students' transition process between school and a PRTF. The goal was to identify the challenges facing students, schools, and PRTF providers, and consider strategies for improving the transition process.

What's working?

From PRTFs' perspective:

- Having a single point of contact within the school district.
- When school district participates in team meetings about student's discharge.
- When child has a current Individual Education Plan (IEP) that is provided to the PRTF.

From schools' perspective:

- When school district is notified by PRTF that student has been admitted.
- Advance notification of discharge meetings.
- When parent agrees during intake to inform school.

What are the biggest challenges?

From schools' and PRTFs' perspective:

- Lack of consistency in transition process and communication.
- Parents who are unwilling to release information (variety of reasons, such as desire to keep PRTF stay off the school records, concern about record of a pre-existing condition that may affect insurance, etc.).
- Parents need for protecting privacy of student and family.

From PRTFs' perspective:

- Getting school records (behavioral and disciplinary).
- Delayed receipt of high school transcripts, IEP (which maybe expired), behavior plans. This delays student's class placement upon admission to PRTF.

Ways to address challenges

- Written list of what PRTFs need from schools at admission, and timeframe in which they need it.
- Generate a contact list for each school building (not each district).
- Written list from each school building (or district if each building can not provide) of what they would like from the PRTF at time of discharge/transition back to school. Suggested list to include:
 - Aftercare plan
 - Risks, especially as related to school environment
 - Medications (note any changes) and side effects
 - What behaviors have been, or are being, targeted for change; behavior plans used and how implemented

- IEP (if there is one)
- Point of contact at the PRTF
- Implement a gradual transition back into school (several hours a day, rather than whole day), enhance communication (may require additional transportation, coordination).
- Implement “Positive Behavioral Supports.”
- Communication regarding IEPs, and collaboration between PRTFs and school districts.
- Plan PRTF discharge meetings as far out as possible so there is a better chance that a school representative is available to attend.
- Utilize conference calls for discharge planning and treatment reviews.
- If student does not have an IEP, district could consider sharing other plans such as Assistance Plan, Care Plan or General Education Checklist.
- PRTFs recommend to family that if student is not currently being served through Johnson County’s Family Focus program, that the family should seek community-based services through the Johnson County Mental Health Center.

What can be done within your system (school or PRTF) to improve the transition process?

(small group discussion)

Blue Valley School District

- Create a contact sheet with names and contact information for each school building (probably school psychologists). To ensure timely response, district requests an email be sent to contact person whenever a fax is sent with information or request for records, etc.
- Use IEPs (if available) at point of transition to clarify common language and terms among school staff and PRTF staff.
- Commit to bi-annual (or another agreed upon schedule) meetings between PRTF staff and school staff in order to build relationships between systems and processes.
- Utilize existing trainings, such as teacher in-service, to train and reinforce the need for significant discretion between psychologists and school staff regarding students’ status. Having such structures in place can then be conveyed to parents concerned about privacy/confidentiality, and adequacy of supports in the schools.
- Incorporate into the protocol, or structure of the exchange of information between schools and the PRTF, that a counselor or psychologist has additional relevant information to share verbally which can assist in initial planning at the PRTF, and ask PRTF contact to follow-up.

Shawnee Mission School District

- Develop a master contact list of one person per building.
- During teacher in-service emphasize the importance of respecting confidentiality of student information.

De Soto, Spring Hill, Gardner and Olathe School Districts

- Create a contact list within each district. In Olathe and Spring Hill districts there is one person already designated as a contact person.

PRTFs

- Either collectively, or individually, create a contact directory to share with the districts.
- PRTFs would see value, and would support when appropriate for the student, and as resources allow:
 - Student attendance at their home school during their final week or two prior to discharge on a part-time basis to ease transition
 - Home school staff observing student at the PRTF
 - PRTF staff observing student at home school
- Work with parents at admission to explain value in notifying the school of their student’s hospitalization.
- Continue to work with quick notification to school that their student was admitted.

- Create a list of what the PRTF needs from schools at admission (this will be a single list that all PRTFs agree to use).
- Regular dialogue meetings with each district (twice/year or as requested) either collectively (all PRTFs) or individually, per school district request.

Issues that schools would like PRTFs to address

- Ask where students go to school and reach out to those schools through “point of contact.” An educational liaison at the PRTF would be helpful. Ask what schools want student to be able to do upon return (for example, use a planner).
- Provide information about the aftercare plan so school personnel can reinforce the coping skills taught at the PRTF, support the student and be helpful in encouraging family to keep up with appointments.
- Provide information about student’s concerns and specific reason for hospitalization.
- Provide transfer of academic information – grades in courses and credit received.
- More timely call-backs from therapists.
- Would like to be contacted if there is a problem with the IEP that the PRTF receives, or if it expires while the child is in care.
- Would like therapists to understand how an IEP works. (The therapist can not determine that a child needs an IEP – it is an educational plan. If it is educational necessary, it is a lengthy process.)

Next steps and issue for further investigation

- School districts (or buildings) will designate a point of contact and provide this information to UCS (Marya Schott) by September 1.
- PRTFs will designate a point of contact and provide this information to Marillac (Mark Richards).
- UCS will work with Johnson County Mental Health and Marillac to coordinate follow-up (subsequent meetings, distributing and updating contact lists, and other work as needed).
- UCS will investigate lack of consistency in how buildings handle student’s prolonged absence while in a PRTF (some drop student from enrollment, others do not) and who is financially responsible for paying for educational costs of student while in a PRTF.
- UCS will explore the possibility of a similar meeting regarding students transitioning back to school from a prolonged incarceration in Johnson County Juvenile Detention Center.

*Attending - **Blue Valley School District:** Jan Davis, Cathy Kerr, Monica Krasovec, Dianne McKenzie, Carol Moll, Julie Seitter; **DeSoto School District:** Skylar Bellinger, Joe Kordalski, Lori Stithem; **Gardner Edgerton School District:** Jodi Watkinson; **Olathe School District:** Susi Hann; **Spring Hill School District:** Tom Lawson; **Shawnee Mission School District:** Ruth Casady, Annette Gonzales, Susan Hartman, Nancy Helvey, Vicki Hiatt, Diane Hinton, Mary Lea Kieffer, Christine Oliver, Mari Titus, Sandi Winnett, Becky Wiseman; **Johnson County Mental Health Center:** Chris DeWeese, Dawn Maack, Becky Reising, Janie Yannacito; **PRTFs:** **KVC** – Danielle Bartelli, Cassandra DeForest, Jason Hooper, Deb Young; **Marillac** – Mark Richards; **Ozanam** – Bob Whitten, Stephen Wyly; **Spofford** – Lisa Pearson; **TLC for Children & Families** – Sherrie Vaughn; **University of Kansas School of Special Education,** Richard Simpson; **United Community Services of Johnson County:** Valorie Carson, Karen Wulfkuhle.*

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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