Welcome to Our New Governor

BY: STEPHANIE VRSNIK

Nevada PEP welcomes our new governor, Steve Sisolak, and we are eager to work with him and his leadership on behalf of Nevada’s children. In his first State of the State address delivered to the Nevada Senate and Assembly, he indicated his commitment to public education and finding real solutions to other children’s services in our state.

He has proposed a state budget that seeks to increase funding in K-12 education, increase the number Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, Mobile Crisis Units, and Autism Treatment Assistance Program. We are pleased with his mention of these programs and believe his plans are ambitious; yet they still must be approved by the 2019 Legislature.

With Nevada ranking 51st in the nation for children’s mental health and our low education rankings as well – a lot needs to be done to create an equitable environment for our children with disabilities and behavioral healthcare needs. We hope that parents, advocates and community members remain involved to improve our systems to ensure that the services are fully funded to meet the need of our children and families.
The Neighborhood Family Service Centers in Southern Nevada are an excellent community resource located throughout the Las Vegas valley; designed to assist families in getting the help that they need while utilizing nationally recognized System of Care practices. The Centers have mental health professionals who in many situations can assist children and families through difficult times. These Community-based, Family Driven & Youth Guided services are provided in some cases at no charge, contact a Center for more information. The Centers offer outpatient, individual and family oriented mental health services including Early Childhood Mental Health Services for children between birth and six years of age and Children’s Clinical Services for children ages six through seventeen. The Neighborhood Family Service Centers also house the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Wraparound in Nevada (WIN) program providing intensive community-based services for families who struggle with complex challenges and mental health needs. DCFS’s Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MCRT) can respond to the Centers, home, community and/or at school. MCRT can respond 24-hours 7 days a week with emergency professional coverage for families dealing with a behavioral or mental health crisis. You can find more information about Nevada’s System of Care and the Community-based, Family Driven & Youth Guided services provided by the Division of Child and Family Services at the Neighborhood Family Service Centers on their website at: http://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CMH/Community-Based-Outpatient-Services/

**Federal Highlight**

**FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT**

The Family First Prevention Services Act was signed into law on February 9, 2018 as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act. This Act includes historic reforms to help keep children safely within their families and avoid foster care when possible. The Family First Prevention Services Act includes funding to support evidence-based prevention efforts for mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment as well as in-home parent skill-based services. These services will be limited to not more than 12 months for children who are imminent risk of entering foster care, their parents and/or relatives and pregnant or parenting teens. The Act also calls for timely assessments and periodic reviews of children & youth with special needs who are placed in residential treatment programs to ensure their continued need for high level of care. Among other things, the Act also offers additional support for relative caregivers through Kinship Navigator programs, funds to be used for family reunification services for children in foster care and 15 months of family reunification services for children once they return home.

“Optimism is the faith that leads achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.”

– Helen Keller
Partnering With Your Child’s Provider  Mary Meeker, Executive Director Family Ties of Nevada

You can develop partnerships with your child’s doctors and other providers. These partnerships will help your child receive the best healthcare. Start with clear communication between you and providers. Be sure to share your cultural differences so that they do not become barriers to access and service.

The following tips will help you prepare for an office visit, talk with your child’s provider, and learn more after the visit.

- **Trust your Instincts**- Your knowledge of your child are critical to their medical care. Providers rely on the information you give.
- **Search for Providers that meet your needs**- Find providers that meet your family and child’s needs. Hospital websites often post a provider’s background and expertise online.
- **Look for ways that other family members can participate**- Try to have more than one parent or family member participate in key appointments. Two people will likely remember different information from the appointment.
- **Communicate openly with your child’s providers**- Communication should be open and honest. Make a list of questions, prioritize the questions.
- **Don’t be intimidated**- Sometimes you may feel hesitant when talking with health care providers because of their medical credentials. But you and your child also have special expertise. Your child’s provider can learn from you and your child.
- **Don’t give up**- If you have not found what you think your child needs, don’t give up. Many times “no” is the first response. But “no” can turn into “yes”. Get more documentation. Gather more information.

Adapted from the National Center for Family/Professional Partnership- Family Voices, Inc.
Upcoming Events

LAS VEGAS/HENDERSON

City of Las Vegas, Adaptive Recreation 250 N. Eastern Ave., 89101 Through the city’s Adaptive Recreation Division, community-based therapeutic recreation services provide opportunities for individuals to become and to stay active in the community. Individuals of all ages and ability levels will find a variety of recreational activities to enrich their leisure time.
Contact: Elise Clausen 702.229.4903 or eclausen@lasvegasnevada.gov

Down Syndrome Organization of Southern Nevada Enlighten the public by promoting a positive understanding of Down syndrome in the community and be a source of support, information and education for families and individuals with Down syndrome 5300 Vegas Drive, 89108 Contact: 702.648.1990
tmoore@dgosn.org Web: www.dgosn.org

FEAT of Southern Nevada (Families for Early Autism Treatment) Provide support, encouragement, and guidance to parents and create an opportunity for them to benefit from contact with other parents with similar needs and concerns. 7055 Windy St. Ste. B Las Vegas, NV 89119 or call Jennifer Strobel 702.368.3328 Spanish: 702.403.6263 Email: info@featsonv.org or www.featsonv.org

Give Me a Break, Inc. (GAB) Provide leadership and vision in developing and implementing programs, which support, strengthen, and nurture families in Nevada, diligently working to ensure access to respite care opportunities. (702) 219-0394

Nevada PEP Family Support Group We meet the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7211 W Charleston Blvd. Contact Nevada PEP for schedule go to www.nvpep.org/training-calendar or call 702.388.8899

Nevada PEP Grupo de Apoyo Familiar Reunira el ultimo Miercos de cada mes, en 7211 West Charleston Blvd. Contacto Nevada PEP por el horario. www.nvpep.org/training-calendar 702.388.8899

Recreation and Experience Club (R.E.C.) Therapeutic Recreation and Inclusion Services provides support in the form of adaptive equipment, program modification, additional staff training, support staff, and other services to facilitate inclusion. Afternoon Youth and Adult recreation activities scheduled on the 9 month CCSD school calendar. 280 Water Street Henderson, NV 89015 Contact Sheri Cordray, Therapeutic Recreation Supervisor 702.267.4065

Renew Nevada Sports training and competition opportunities provide athletes of all ability levels the chance to play and be part of a team. Through sports, we are bringing special education and general education students on the same playing field, promoting acceptance and respect for all. 5670 Wynn Road, Suite H Las Vegas, NV 89118 702.474.0690 Email: info@nvhandsandvoices.org

Special Olympics Nevada Sports training and competition opportunities provide athletes of all ability levels the chance to play and be part of a team. Through sports, we are bringing special education and general education students on the same playing field, promoting acceptance and respect for all.

RENO/SPARKS

Applied Behavior Technologies (ABT) ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) In-home services provide your child or young adult with one on one ABA therapy to target social skills, independence and problem behaviors in a convenient setting for your family. We specialize in providing parents and other caregivers with the tools they need to be successful with their child in all settings. Free consultation 775.354.1380 5945 S. Los Altos Pkwy Suite 101, Sparks NV 89436 Email: tina@appliedbehaviorotechnologies.com

Asperger’s Support Group Group meeting the 1st Wednesday of the month at the Barnes&Noble in Reno from 6:30-7:45pm 5555 S Virginia St, Reno, NV 89052 Contact: John Maes 775.787.2904

City of Reno Parks & Recreation Adaptive and Inclusion Programs include; Paralympic Sport Reno, Dance for All, and Special Olympics. Contact April Wolfe at 775.334.2262 or Wolfea@reno.gov

Cerebral Palsy Parent Network Group of proud parents of kids with cerebral palsy and other developmental challenges who get together to share our life experiences 775.342.3205 cpparentnetwork@hotmail.com

Down Syndrome Network of Northern Nevada Family Support Group Monthly meetings the first Tuesday of every month 5:45pm-7:30pm. At Nevada Early Intervention Services 1301 Cordone Ave. Suite 190. For more information call 775.501.0056 or email dsnninfo@gmail.com

Nevada Hands and Voices A statewide non-profit organization dedicated to supporting families and their children who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as the professionals who serve them. Contact Southern Nevada Region Contact: Beth Jones 702.3213291 (voice/text) Email: beth@nvhandsandvoice.org or visit www.nvhandsandvoices.org

Nevada PEP Family Support Group We meet the 4th Thursday of every month from 5:30-7:00pm, 4600 Kietzke Ln. Ste. I-202, Reno. For more information call 775.448.9950 or 800.216.5188

Special Olympics in Northern Nevada Sports training and competition opportunities provide athletes of all ability levels the chance to play and be part of a team. Through sports, we are bringing special education and general education students on the same playing field, promoting acceptance and respect for all.

JUSTin Hope Foundation (Families for Autism Spectrum Disorder and other neurodevelopment disorders) For more information call 775-453-9262 or visit Justinhope.org

The Solace Tree Works with children, teens and adults who are grieving a loss or struggling emotionally and mentally. Provides a safe and healthy outlet for their feelings and thoughts support group available. 775.324.7723 email info@solacetree.org or visit www.solacetree.org.

RURALS

Ron Woods Family Resource Center We create lasting community-wide cooperative effort between the private sector and governmental agencies to promote healthy family relationships through education and support services. We currently offer a vast array of services that range from basic needs assistance to parenting classes and after school programs. 2621 Northgate Ln. Ste. 62 Carson City, 89706. info@carson-family.org
What does “PEP” mean to me?

By: Lorraine Rader-Neal

Knowledge and specific information to address my child’s unique needs with the school system, in society and at home. PEP was instrumental in helping me identify what measures needed to be put in place to realize the best outcome for my child given the resources that are presently available. They recommended I approach each resource or service with a positive emphasis on collectively doing what would be best for my child.

P – Represents power to effect affirmative changes for my great-grandson that will empower him to navigate his future and distinguish his gifts and not his disabilities. His way of seeing things is unique and incredible which is evidenced in the pictures he takes of everything! He is articulate and enthusiastic about his exposure to a kaleidoscope of people, places, and adventures.

We need to understand how learning is different for those with disabilities; not wrong, just different. By identifying their individual needs, we can understand and support them with compassion and conviction. Enthusiastically, I go forward with PEP as my foundation and guide.

Family Story

As a 71 year old single great-grandmother of a 12 year old boy with disabilities, I was feeling ineffective and totally lost. I questioned, what can I do to help him find his potential given the challenges that have been placed before us? How will his impairments affect his mental, physical and social interactions with others? How can I uncover his weaknesses and strengths related to his conditions?

I asked his school counselor for referrals to resources that would help me find answers to my many probing questions; fortunately, PEP was one of the referrals. As I have come to appreciate, the letters that make up PEP have special meaning for me.

P – Represents the “Parents of Children with Disabilities” which makes up the PEP staff members. Each staff member I have had the opportunity to speak with is empathetic, knowledgeable, about what they do at PEP based on their own personal experience. I felt immediately at ease and comforted by the fact that each person I spoke with understood what I was going through.

E – Represents empowerment with the schools that teaches students to identify the signs of depression and suicide in themselves and their peers and encourages help-seeking behaviors. For details on the contest, visit the consortia website at www.cccmhc.org.

The Infrastructure and Coordination Workgroup has been working on the development of the 2019 Status Report and the upcoming 2020 10 Year Strategic Plan. The 2019 Status Report gives a view of the current status of service priorities that have been previously identified. The following priorities were reviewed:

1) Re-structure the public children’s behavior health financing and delivery system to ensure quality, accountability and positive outcomes for Clark County’s children and families. This recommendation received a current status of Minimal Progress.

2) Provide mobile crises intervention and stabilization services to Clark County youths in crisis. This recommendation received a current status of Some Progress.

3) Expand access to family peer support services for the families of Clark County’s children at risk for long-term institutional placement. This recommendation received a current status of No Progress.

4) Develop partnerships between schools and behavioral health providers to implement school-based and school-linked interventions for children identified with behavioral health care needs. This recommendation received a current status of minimal progress.

Included in the Status Report are recommendations for improvements to the System of Care including implementation of a model of integrated local system management of all publicly funded children’s behavioral health services in Clark County; Providing stable funding for DCFS to maintain an evidenced-based mobile crises intervention program in Clark County; Expansion of funding for family peer support; and recommend the Nevada Office of Suicide Prevention in cooperation with the Clark County School District conduct a comprehensive survey of public, charter and private schools to determine the degree to which mental health and/or suicide prevention screening has been implemented. For further information and a full copy of the 2019 Status Report please visit www.cccmhc.org.

Youth M.O.V.E. Nevada Update

By: Ryley Harris

Youth M.O.V.E. (Motivating Others Through Voices of Experience) Nevada has continued to meet on a monthly basis in both the Las Vegas and Reno Nevada PEP locations. Youth M.O.V.E. Nevada is a youth led organization that unites the voice and causes of youth and advocates for systems and policy change. At the close of 2018, members from Youth M.O.V.E. Nevada participated in the Nevada Student Leadership Transition Summit. The summit focused on improving transition planning for students with learning differences. It was exciting to be a part of the summit and to have the opportunity to interact with youth who are getting ready to transition from high school.

Youth M.O.V.E. Nevada members have been collaborating with the Nevada Institute for Children’s Research & Policy. Our members have been offering their perspective and feedback as a valuable asset to the NICRP in the form of surveys and questionnaires. The survey information will be used to inform the Clark County Children’s Mental Health Consortium’s next Ten year Plan for Improvement. We have also been jointly planning awareness events and leadership opportunities for our members by presenting at panels and trainings for our community partners! To find out more information about YMNV you can contact our Reno or Las Vegas office or check out our website at www.nvpep.org/youth-move and don’t forget to follow us on social media! Facebook: facebook.com/youthmovenv Instagram: @YouthMOVEnv Twitter: @YouthMOVEnv
Nevada’s children with behavioral health needs share many of the same characteristics and challenges of children with behavioral health needs across the U.S. The most recent national studies have confirmed that between 13-20 percent of American children aged 5-18 years have experienced a behavioral health disorder within the past year, and over 1 in 5 adolescents have suffered severe impairment as a result of these disorders. By the time U.S. children reach adulthood, approximately one-half have experienced a behavioral health need at some point in their young lives. Underscoring the notion that mental disorders begin early in life, these studies have found that symptoms of anxiety disorders began by age 6, behavior disorders (such as ADHD or conduct disorder) by age 11, mood disorders by age 13, and substance use disorders by age 15. The percentage of teenagers living with mental disorders is even higher than the most frequent major medical conditions of adolescence.

We encourage you to come and be a voice for the children and youth in our community. For more information please contact wccmhcconsortium@gmail.com

Regional Behavioral Health Policy Boards

There are four Regional Behavioral Health Policy Boards that were established in 2017 by Assembly Bill 366. The Rural Region covers Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln, Pershing and White Pine Counties. The Northern Regional Board covers Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Mineral and Storey Counties. Washoe Regional Board covers Washoe County and the Southern Regional Board covers Clark, Nye and Esmeralda Counties. Following appointments of required members, each of the four Regional Behavioral Health Policy Boards began meeting in 2018.

The four Regional Behavioral Health Policy Boards are responsible for submitting an annual report to the Commission on Public and Behavioral Health on the epidemiologic profiles of substance use and abuse, problem gambling and suicide as well as relevant behavioral health prevalence data for their region and health priorities for their region. Each board also have the mandate to draft one legislative measure which relates to the counties that comprise the Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board engagement. The Washoe County Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board engaged in stakeholder surveys, presentations and review of previous reports to determine their needs. They found insufficient affordable housing, general shortage of providers, low reimbursement rates for Medicaid, cuts to services at Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, and a need for a continuum of care. Recommendations were made for legislation that supports a Crises Stabilization Unit in Washoe County, enhancement to affordable housing, NNAAMHS to have an Assisted Outpatient Treatment Program, and focus on programs for consumers that are “super users” of the system. Washoe County RBHPB bill draft request for 2019 focuses on Crises Stabilization.

BY: JACQUELINE HARRIS, MA, MFT, LADC

The Northern Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board engaged in a variety of methods to gather data on their region including presentations to the board, community surveys and review of existing behavioral health reports. The Northern RBHPB established priorities for updates to NRS 433A updating the “legal hold” process as well as funding necessary resources in their region such as Mobile Outreach Safety Teams (MOST) and Crises Intervention Teams (CIT). The Northern RBHPB’s bill draft request for 2019 focused on NRS 433A – Legal Hold Process.

The Rural RBHPB focused on the importance of infrastructure in their report. The Rural region also discussed lack of technical assistance, lack of consideration for regional characteristics and erratic funding distribution. Concerns about the lack of community diversion and crisis stabilization in the system of care was addressed. The Rural RBHPB bill draft request will focus on a pilot program to address the behavioral health crisis response needs within the region.

The Southern RBHPB gathered information on community needs through in-person presentations, a community survey and review of previous behavior health reports. The Southern board determined that crisis intervention & transitional services, workforce development, program development and data management & application were top priorities. The Southern RBHPB is requesting modification of NRS 433 2-7 to re-align the counties that comprise the Southern Board, adding Lincoln County. Amendments to 433 recommended also request flexibility of board membership, clarification of meeting times, and allocation of a full-time coordinator to help each board carry out the duties that are outlined. Further information on all of the Regional Behavioral Health Policy Boards can be found at http://dpbh.nv.gov/Boards/RBHPB/Board_Meetings/Meetings/
The Rural Children’s Mental Health Consortium (Rural Children’s Mental Health Consortium) is driven by a vision which includes a “System of Care” approach to serving youth and their families with an overarching focus on prevention and intervention. The intent of prevention and intervention programs is to move to a proactive system. Engaging individuals, before the development of serious emotional disturbance or to alleviate the need for extended mental health treatment, by facilitating access to services and supports at the earliest signs of mental health concerns. These principles influence and are infused into the consortium’s ideas, efforts, and work in order to develop, support and improve behavioral health throughout Rural Nevada.

In 2019 The Rural Children’s Mental Health Consortium will continue to focus on the following seven goals:

1. Address Work Force Development to Provide Mental Health Professionals to Rural Nevada
2. Promote Appropriate Mental Health Providers to Public Schools
3. Support a System of Care Designed for Nevada’s Rural Region
4. Promote Adequate Technology to Support the Use of Telehealth Services in Nevada’s Rural Regions
5. Create a Rural Children’s Mobile Crisis Response Team (RMCRT)
6. Promote Prevention and Intervention: Addressing Behavioral Health Issues Early
7. Increase Transitional Support to Youth Receiving Treatment in Inpatient & Residential Treatment Centers,

Especially Those Out-of-State through increase local service array. These goals are based on a set of values and principles which promote a System of Care that is community-based, family driven, youth guided and culturally competent.

The following list of activities will be initiated during 2019 to support both the attainment of the goals as well as the further development of the Consortium.

- Consolidate statewide data and make it accessible to the public.
- Continue developing relationship with Juvenile Justice.
- Provide information to members and partners for advocacy.
- Explore the possibility of a planning retreat.
- Begin development 2020 Long-Term Strategic Plan.
- Track and respond appropriately to proposed legislation that impacts children’s behavioral health.
- Replicate the Community Discussion event in other rural communities.
- Ensure representation from the rural communities.
- Compile and develop resource lists across rural communities.

The Rural Children’s Mental Health Consortium meets once a month. We encourage all families that live in the rural Nevada communities to attend these meetings and have their voices be heard. Contact DCFS at 775-684-4400 for more information.

“Best Wishes to Our Friend, Charlene Frost” by: Magdalena Ruiz, CPSP

We wish the best of luck to our friend and colleague, Charlene (Char) Frost. Char started with Nevada PEP on October 25, 2010. Her position was as the Statewide Family Network Director, responsible for supporting Nevada PEP Family Specialists and engaging in systems advocacy activities. Char has had an amazing influence on services for families and youth involved in the System of Care. Char always represented the strengths and needs of Nevada at national conferences and was an outstanding trainer in the System of Care. Char always represented the strengths and needs of Nevada at national conferences and was an outstanding trainer in the System of Care.

Char served on many committees including the Behavioral Health Planning and Advisory Committee, Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities, the Clark County Children’s Mental Health Consortium, Nevada Children’s Behavioral Health Consortium and as co-chair of the Southern Nevada Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board. She always brought her sharp wisdom, strong advocacy, and the parent perspective to all these committees, orienting the members to the National Family Voice and Choice philosophy. Char has left Nevada PEP to take a position at the Nevada Legislature. Although Char’s work does not include systems advocacy; we know that in her personal time she will continue as a strong leader and outspoken advocate for Nevada’s children, youth and families! Thank you Char for your dedicated service to Nevada PEP and you have made a difference for the children and families of Nevada! We wish you all the best!!!

Question: What is a Functional Behavior Assessment?

Answer: Sometimes a student struggles with challenging behaviors in school and it impedes their ability to learn. A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) is a process to gather data/information that will help to identify challenging behaviors and provide information on why behaviors are happening, or the function of the behavior. The FBA will also help to determine the frequency and when behaviors are occurring, as well as what is possibly reinforcing the negative behaviors. A FBA includes observations in different school settings like structured (classroom) and unstructured (playground, lunch, passing period). These observations, along with parent and teacher input, can help to identify supports like positive reinforcements and accommodations that will help decrease challenging behaviors. Parents should be a part of the process and are able to ask questions and contribute to the functional behavior assessment. For more information contact Nevada PEP.
Mission Statement
To increase the opportunities for home, community, and school success for children with disabilities, including those who are at risk or who have serious emotional disturbances, their families and their service providers, through education, encouragement and empowerment activities.

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Volunteer Opportunities
Nevada PEP is fortunate to have so many amazing volunteers statewide. We appreciate the constant outpouring of generosity and genuine spirit of giving and we are always looking to grow our extended family of volunteers. We welcome you to visit our web site to complete an online submission form, call today, or come into our offices to begin the process. Volunteers are essential to our organization.

Whether they are folding training flyers or maintaining a table at an information fair, we value their commitment to PEP. Projects are individually matched to the volunteer’s skills, interests and preferences, so there are plenty of tasks for everyone. We look forward to getting to know you as a VIP volunteer at Nevada PEP.

See you soon, Diane Lombardo

United Way of Southern Nevada
Designated gift # 2192

United Way of Northern Nevada & the Sierra
Designated gift # 27052

MGM Mirage Voice Foundation
Designated gift # 120885

Combined Federal Campaign #29441

Nevada PEP is a participating agency for:

7211 W. Charleston Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89117

Please make checks payable to: Nevada PEP

Annual Membership Information
Annual membership dues are $25.00 per family, organization or professional.

Please provide the following information

NAME

PROFESSION

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE

Email

CHILD’S NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

☐ I am a parent/caregiver.
☐ I am a professional working with children.
☐ I am a concerned member of the community.
☐ Enclosed is a tax deductible donation in the amount of $___________ to help support the efforts of Nevada PEP.
☐ I would like to be a member of Nevada PEP, please waive the annual dues.
☐ I would like to volunteer.
☐ I would like to receive the monthly E-POST.

Your donation to Nevada P.E.P., Inc. may be tax deductible, please consult your tax advisor. #88-0301113

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