

**Alameda County
TBS Stakeholder's
Family Feedback Forum**

Eden Children's Center
2045 Fairmont Drive
San Leandro, CA 94578
August 19, 2009
4:00 – 6:00

Agenda

- 4:00 – 4:10** **Gathering**
- 4:10 – 4:30** **Introductions and Pizza – Sara Wood-Kraft, Alameda County TBS**
- 4:30 – 5:45** **4 Key TBS Questions**
- A. Divide into 3 groups**
 - a. Families and Youth**
 - b. Service Providers**
 - c. Administrators**

 - B. Groups review, discuss, and report to large group regarding Question 2: Benefits of TBS**
 - a. Improvements in lives of youth**
 - b. Improvements in lives of caregivers/families**

 - C. Groups review, discuss, and report to large group regarding Questions 1 and 3: Access and Alternatives to TBS: what's helpful, what's hard**

 - D. Groups review, discuss, and report to large group regarding Question 4: Making TBS easier to get**
- 5:45 – 6:00: Large group review and summarize, additional comments**

Thank you very much for attending, and thanks to Alameda County Mental Health Services Act staff for providing the pizza!

**Alameda County Behavioral Health Care
Report to the Department of Mental Health**

Date of TBS Meeting: August 19, 2009

Type of Meeting: County Stakeholder's Learning Conversation

Attendees:

Sara Wood-Kraft, TBS Coordinator
Cris Kinney, TBS Director, Fred Finch Youth Center
Nancy Fey, Seneca Center TBS
Amy Morris, TBS Program Manager, Lincoln Child Center
Amber Fretwell, TBS Supervisor, Seneca Center
J, age 14, Client, Lincoln Child Center
T, age 9, Client, Lincoln Child Center
Mary, parent, Lincoln Child Center
D, age 17, Client, Seneca Center
C, age 10, Fred Finch Youth Center
F, age 9, sibling, Fred Finch Youth Center
A, mom, Fred Finch Youth Center
D, age 5, Seneca Center
S, mom, Seneca Center
S, grandmother, Seneca Center
Chloe Whittlesey, TBS coach, Lincoln Child Center
Brian Shames, TBS coach, Lincoln Child Center
Elyse Ganapol, TBS coach, Fred Finch Youth Center
Joy Wong, TBS coach, Fred Finch Youth Center
Tiana Jones-Bey, TBS coach, Seneca Center
Amanda Gibbons, TBS coach, Seneca Center

1. Are the children and youth in the county who are Emily Q class members and who would benefit from TBS, getting TBS?

Response:

Following the suggested talking points regarding barriers to service, the group felt that at times lack of information and confusion about eligibility are barriers to service. They felt that in the past, wait lists and delays had been a bigger problem but that currently the system is responsive to referrals. They wished that TBS were available to other youth who do not meet criteria. They also felt that in the past there had been age-related barriers to service, but with the expansion downwards to the 0-5 population and upwards to the Transitional Age Youth groups this is no longer a concern. They felt that language, culture, gender, and age are not barriers to service at this time. Generally, they suggested that service would be enhanced by increased information to providers and agencies in contact with eligible youth.

2. Are the children and youth who get TBS experiencing the intended benefits?

Response:

This was answered with a resounding yes. The group was aware that all TBS recipients were not represented, but during this discussion the most active participants were the children and family members. There was universal agreement with the talking points list of possible specific benefits, with special focus on increased self-management skills, coping ability, and improved relationships at home. Many recipients talked about the relief of "getting on the same page" with schools, family members, and service providers. Reduced need for placement, help in the home where the problem is, and access to useful 'tools for living' were also highly endorsed.

3. What alternatives to TBS are being provided in the county?

Response:

The group was able to identify a number of services but felt that none were exact TBS alternatives. Among the options: MST behavioral services in the Juvenile Justice Center (considered comparable but available to limited group); School-based behavioral interventions (insufficient parent involvement); Intensive in-home services (not behavioral); and community-based programs (less focused on behavioral change).
Treatment team meetings and therapist-coach collaboration combined with in-home service and work with caregivers seemed to define TBS to this group.

4. What can be done to improve the use of TBS and/or alternative behavioral support services in the county?

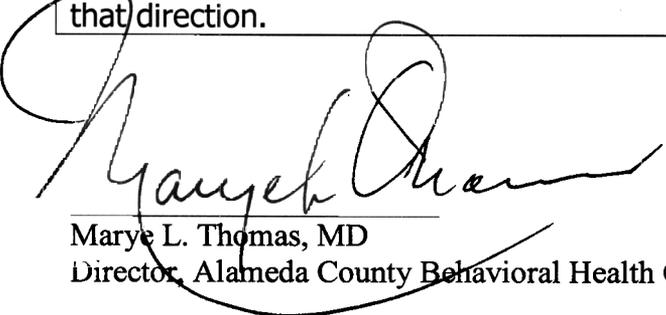
Response:

Improved interagency collaboration and cooperation
Earlier access to services (younger ages).
More user-friendly language in describing service.
Better discharge planning for youth leaving hospital or stepping down.
Decreased stigma for services youth receive 'in public.'
Increased publicity about TBS to schools and other agencies.

Additional Comments:

Optional

This was our first Stakeholder meeting, which was attended by family members and service providers. Attached please find the meeting invitation and agenda. Our second Stakeholder meeting will include therapists, social workers, probation and other officers of the Court, educators and others interested parties, and will especially continue to explore barriers to service and ways to improve the delivery of TBS. Our hope in the first meeting was to be able to hear directly from youth and families, in a comfortable and confidential setting, about their experiences with TBS. We had a range of youth from residential, group home, and family settings and between age 5 and 17. We requested youth and families to speak very plainly about their frustrations and disappointments, because our goal is to improve service. The clearest message (even from the family of the 5-year-old) was that it would have been good to start services earlier. As we expand services in Alameda County, we will continue outreach that informs systems where youth might be identified earlier, and we will anticipate that the Decision-Maker meetings will also facilitate our expansion in that direction.



Marye L. Thomas, MD

Director, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services Agency