

**TIOGA COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
MH – ASA – OPWDD Subcommittee Meeting**

PENDING APPROVAL

February 4th, 2025

9:30 a.m.

Via: Hybrid

Member Attendance:	Sue Medina Nadia Constant Larissa Brower Tina Lounsbury Laura Smith Bob Williams John Crosby Kim Bailey	Vicki Fergus Shannon Westbrook Evelyn Vavra Gayle Pado Renee Nuzek
Guest Attendance:	Erica Robinson Karen Warfle Denise Brennan Tricia Tomm Emily Jackson Jennifer Payne	
Mental Hygiene Staff Attendance:	Lori Morgan, Director of Community Services Sarah Begeal, Deputy Director of Community Services Danielle Fabregas, Clinical Program Director Angelica Deyo-Cruz, Corporate Compliance Officer Sue Graves, Secretary to the Director	

Meeting called to order at: 9:35am

Topic: Review of the November 2024 Minutes

- MH Subcommittee – Approved with changes
- ASA Subcommittee – Approved as written
- OPWDD Subcommittee – Approved as written

Topic: Director's Report – Lori Morgan

Discussion: Updates:

- Resolution for an additional Social Worker approved by the Legislature
- Staffing
 - Dr. Bezirgianian retiring as of 2/10/25
 - Dr. Webster is the new Medical Director
 - New Psychiatrist started on 1/29/25
- Hea Hea
 - Open House held 1/31/25
 - Lori assisting on getting them up and running

Status: Informational – Complete

Topic: Deputy Director Report – Sarah Begeal

Discussion: Updates:

- Waverly Site
 - Received licensure from OASAS
 - Proving services for MH and ADS
 - Groups to start on 2/10/24
- Staffing
 - New clinician hired for Waverly
 - Potential Clinician for Owego in the background check process
 - Danielle Fabregas is the new Clinical Program Director
 - A lot of internal movement within the clinics

Status: Informational - Complete

Topic: Clinical Program Director Report – Danielle Fabregas

Discussion: Updates:

- Census
 - Mental Health – 582 admitted clients
 - Approximately 100 more than in 2024
 - ADS – 100 admitted clients, 30 continued care, 15 peer only
 - Highest number of clients in recent years

Status: Informational - Complete

Topic: Mental Health Report – Tina Lounsbury for Fran Bialy, Chair

Discussion: RSS Report – Larissa Brower

- SOS Team is very busy – 35 people being served in Tioga County
 - Hiring Case Managers for the team
- Housing census is high
 - Wait list for Supported Housing

Public Health – Sue Medina

- Credible Minds Website
 - Brief overview given
 - Local resources on site
 - Managing hot topics
 - March launch date
- 2025 Community Health Assessment process starting
 - Due by the end of 2025
- Tioga County Suicide Prevention Coalition
 - Meeting on 2/5/25 at 1:30 in the HHS Building

HeaHea – Nadia Constant

- HeaHea is a partial hospitalization for eating disorders
- Open House held on 1/31/25
- Officially open for business on 2/24/25
- OMH completed visit and PIP report completed
- Challenges navigated successfully
- Open for referrals & collaboration
- Many thanks for all the support received

Status: Informational - Complete

Other: Pennysaver Articles

- Tina to look at the awareness schedule to see what has been done previously for March

Status: Informational – Complete

Topic: ASA Report – Sue Medina for Kylie Holochak, Chair

Discussion: ASAP Coalition – Sue Medina

- Kylie Holochak & Kristin Russell are at CADCA in Washington, DC
- Black Balloon Day being organized
 - Doing window clings this year instead of balloons
- YES groups – activities around substance use
- CLYDE Surveys - Grades 8, 10, 12
 - Tompkins County surveying Candor grades 7-12
 - Possibly doing grades 7-12 for remaining schools
 - Surveys due in October

Trinity– Laura Smith

- In school programs & events
 - Social-Emotional programs
 - Teen Intervene programs
 - 16 in program – 11 have completed
 - Surveys
 - Too Good for Drugs program in classrooms
 - Too Good for Violence program in 14 classrooms
 - Also doing programs in Owego & Spencer Elementary
 - Black Balloon Day
 - Prevention Week
 - Red Ribbon Week
- Workplace Wellness & Trainings
 - Flyer attached
 - Will do trainings at workplaces as well
 - Lori would like to schedule training during the clinic's wellness day

Coroner – Bob Williams

- Legislature interviewing for a new Coroner tomorrow

- January had 15 cases

Emergency Services – Bob Williams

- Open House planned for 5/17/25
- LETC meeting on 3/5/25- open to membership
- TAM
 - Trainings taking place
 - School cases heard
 - Staff training to recognize when a case should be referred
 - State-County Assessment
 - Updating Plan
 - Due to State in June
 - Outreach program being put together

Status: Informational – Complete

Topic: OPWDD Report – John Crosby, Chair

Discussion: DDRO/DDSO – Vickie Fergus
Vickie's last meeting. Renee Nuzek replacing Vickie

- OMBUS Program
 - Navigational program explained briefly
 - Independent from OPWDD
 - Phone: 1-800-762-9290
 - Email: idd@cssny.org
 - Website: <https://www.cssny.org/programs/entry/iddo>
 - Open & ready to accept calls
- State of the State address
 - New proposals
 - Regional DBL clinics
 - 1 time cost funding
 - Goal is to improve health outcomes
 - Tax credits for those who hire individuals with disabilities
 - Modernization of the Institute of Basic Research (IBR)
 - \$75 million received
 - Transforming Willow Brook Schook into a center for learning

Achieve Report – Shannon Westbrook

- Day Hab & Day Hab Without Walls
 - Referrals being accepted for both programs
 - Purchasing a wheelchair van in 2025
 - Renovating main part of building (old workshop area)

FSS Report – Gayle Pado

- ADM – family reimbursement services
 - Open to family members caring for individuals
 - Access to services except Respite

- RFP released around Christmas
- Individuals being trained
- Clarifying policies, procedures & site protocols
- FSS looking for members

CCO Reports

Prime Care – Tricia Tomm

- Focusing on the clinical component high risk/high hospital users
- Two Case Manager vacancies in the Binghamton Office

ST Connects – Emily Jackson

- New structure in Binghamton office
 - Case Manager promoted to Supervisor
 - New Care Manager started on 2/3/25
- Focusing on social care networks
- Targeted outreach in Mental Health (Article 31) clinics

Lifeplan – Anne Seepersaud

- Community Resource Tool
 - Grant received to expand this tool
 - Heightening accessibility
 - See attached email with additional information
 - Article 16 outreach to obtain information
 - A lot of 2025 incentives

Racker Report – Gayle Pado

- Self-Direction program is opening with a waiting list
- Traditional Community Habilitation Services open for referrals
- Many events in February (see attachments)
- The new building in Owego is open
- Received accreditation from the Counsel on Quality & Leadership

Catholic Charities – Jennifer Payne

- Currently taking referrals

Self-Advocacy – Karen Warfle

- Shared the challenges non-verbal individuals face when trying to communicate with others. (report attached)
- Blue Envelope Program – Tioga County Sheriff's Department participates in

The "Blue Envelope Program" is an initiative designed to improve communication between law enforcement officers and drivers with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) by providing a discreet way for drivers to signal their condition during a traffic stop, typically by keeping important documents like their license and registration inside a blue envelope with instructions for officers on how to best interact with them; this helps to minimize anxiety and potential misunderstandings during an encounter.

Status: Informational - Complete

Other Discussion: Many expressed need for a list of the acronyms being used during the meetings as the three subcommittees are unfamiliar with each other's acronyms. A list will be in process.

Status: Informational - Complete

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:28am. The next meeting is Tuesday, March 4th, 2025, at 9:30am.

DRAFT



Are your Employees *Only* Coping? Provide Them with Tools to Thrive!

Team Awareness and Workplace Wellness: modules to strengthen your team!

IT'S EASY.

We provide easy-to-use and practical skills for identifying and reducing stress at home and work.

IT'S POSITIVE.

Participants learn how to use stress as a positive opportunity to develop resilience and thriving.

IT'S WIDELY USED.

The tools we provide are widely used in a range of businesses and have achieved positive outcomes.

IT'S EVIDENCE-BASED.

Tools we will share are grounded in solid research.

IT'S ADAPTABLE.

Courses are offered in 60- to 120-minute segments. They are modular and are tailored to meet your needs.

We Offer:

Small Business Owner Dialogue/Assessment (500 employees or less): One-on-one conversation (60 minutes) with small business owner/CEO/President or designee to explore what types of health promotion and well-being services might be best for you and those who work with/for you. Topic areas include business philosophy, policies and training, insurance/workers compensation/EAP, health and productivity, owner perceptions and stress, time management, owner perception of meaningful work, and interested areas for future training.

The Ripple Effect of Well-Being: This workshop is foundational to workplace wellness concepts. The primary objective is to recognize and act on the importance of support and interconnections between yourself, others, the workplace, and community. Participants will be fully engaged in discussions and activities during this 90–120-minute workshop. This is ideal for employee groups, supervisors/managers, and community/groups.

Resilience to Thriving: This workshop focuses on multi-dimensions of stress including warning signs of stress, lifestyle and coping-style strengths and the SECRET for using stress as a positive resource for resilience and thriving. This 60–90-minute workshop is ideal for employee groups, supervisors/managers, and community/groups.

Empowered Health Consciousness: This workshop is designed to build health consciousness across multiple dimensions of wellness and teaches participants the strategies to increase their commitment towards health behavior. This 120-minute workshop is ideal for employee groups, supervisors/managers, and community/groups.

Contact Us Today!

Monroe County: Valerie Way vway@depaul.org or Jennifer Faringer jfaringer@depaul.org

Livingston, Chemung & Tioga Counties: Rachel Pena rpena@casa-trinity.org

Steuben County: Stacey Wing stacey.wing@dor.org

[Team Awareness Workplace Wellness | NCADD Rochester \(ncadd-ra.org\)](#)



In partnership with:



Graves, Susan

From: Seepersaud, Anne <Anne.Seepersaud@lifeplanccony.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 12:57 PM
To: Graves, Susan; Morgan, Lori
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Monthly Combined Subcommittee Meetings

Thank you for hosting our meeting this morning. Please share this information with the committee.

Community Resource Tool at LIFEPlan CCO: [Community Resource Tool - LIFEPlan CCO NY](#)

Please complete the Accessibility Survey for clinics to be added to our new tool that will be the Disability Services NY Directory: [DISABILITY SERVICES NY PROVIDER DIRECTORY - LIFEPlan CCO NY](#)

Presence Developmental Services offers in-person counseling and other clinical services for individuals throughout NYS. Sarah Matt, LMSW provides counseling to individuals in Tioga Co: [About Us](#)

The Article 16 Clinic through the Broome DDSO offers a variety of clinical services, including psychiatry and counseling for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Please contact Karen Casey, Clinic Treatment Coordinator for more information at 607-729-1295 ext 126 or karen.d.casey@opwdd.ny.gov

Arc Chemung Schuyler offers clinical services, including psychiatry, in four counties, and the closest location is in Elmira. Judy Jarosch, Intake Coordinator can assist with getting started and she can be reached at 607-734-6151 ext 154 or JaroschJA@arcofcs.org
[Clinical Supports :: The Arc of Chemung - Schuyler](#)

Mozaic offers clinical services, including psychiatry and they utilize telehealth. Mozaic's clinics are located in Cayuga and Seneca Cos. They do offer counseling at their satellite clinic in Tompkins (Challenge Workforce Solutions). Please contact Jennifer Goodwin, Clinic Director at 315-856-8257 or Jennifer.Goodman@mozaic.org

Thank you,
Anne Seepersaud
Director of Provider Relations
LIFEPlan CCO NY
1249 Upper Front Street
Binghamton, NY 13905
Direct Line & Fax (607) 214-0618

[Sign Up for Provider Relations E-newsletters: LIFEPlan CCO NY \(list-manage.com\)](#)

Visit us at lifeplanccony.com

Adaptive BOOK

CLUB

Mondays 6:30-7:30pm

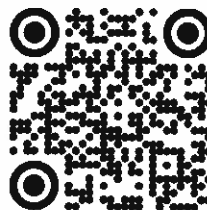
882 NY-13, Cortland, NY 13045 & Zoom

LendingLibrary@racker.org

Join us as we explore the world of books
& how they can be adapted for all to enjoy.
Book club is an excellent way to experience new topics
together and make friends.

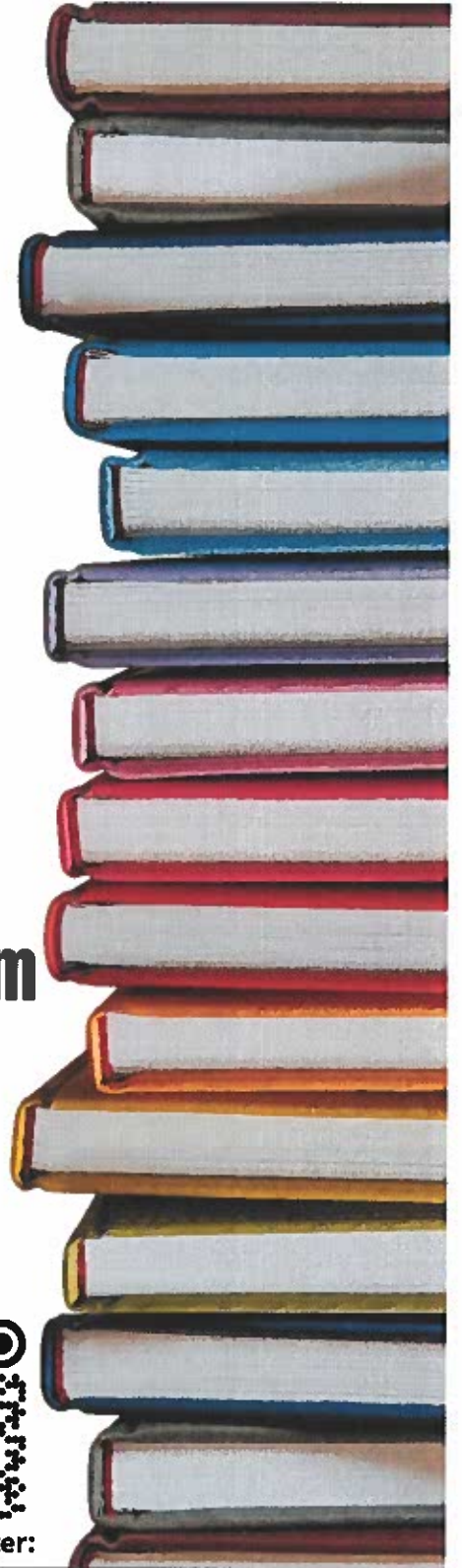


- *OPWDD Diagnosis
- *FSS Eligible
- *Enrolled in the Lending Library



Scan to Register:

This program is made possible through Family Support Services
grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities



**Racker Early
Childhood Speaker
Series Presents:**

Countdown to Kindergarten



What to expect during the transition from Preschool Special Education (CPSE) to School-Age Special Education Services (CSE).

**Wednesday, February 12th, 2025
5:00-7:30 PM***

**Watch Presentation at Home
5:30-7:30 PM**

OR

Join Us at each Preschool!

5:00 Family Dinner

**5:30 Presentation
and Movie (for Kids)**

To Register:

**contact Emily Eames
at emilye1@racker.org or 607-529-0319**

or register online:

**[https://forms.office.com/
r/T2GLeTWpkG](https://forms.office.com/r/T2GLeTWpkG)**



**Scan QR Code for
Registration Form**



PARENT NETWORK
CAREGIVER GROUP

CAREGIVERS OF THOSE WITH DEVELOPEMENTAL
DISABILITIES (OF ALL AGES) ARE INVITED TO JOIN
THIS MONTHLY PEER-DRIVEN GROUP,
WHERE YOU CAN MEET OTHER CAREGIVERS, SHARE
RESOURCES, OFFER ADVICE, & FIND KINDNESS.

COME ONCE, COME OFTEN,
STAY FOR A MINUTE OR STAY FOR MANY.

1ST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH
5:00-6:30PM VIA ZOOM

TO SIGN UP: CONTACT (607) 529-0224 OR
LYNDSEYP@RACKER.ORG





Family Board Game Night

An adaptive board game night where we will learn about adapting rules to address feelings of anxiety or struggles with engagement to encourage family unity and situational flexibility all while practicing fine motor skills. Light refreshments will be served

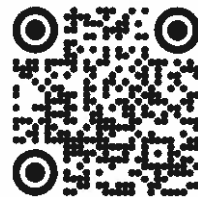


Wednesdays 5-7pm
3226 Wilkins Road Ithaca, NY 14850



- *OPWDD Diagnosis
- *FSS Eligible
- *Enrolled in the Lending Library

Scan to Register:



This program is made possible through Family Support Services grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities

Racker 

2025 CAMP FUNDING FORUM



Join us on ZOOM to learn more about how
Family Support Services can help pay for camps

February
6th
5-6pm

February
10th
2-3pm

Learn how to access up to \$3,000 in
camp funding from the Office for People
with Developmental Disabilities.

Who Should Attend?

- Camps
- Interested Families
- Care Managers

Note: Self-Directed Families should ask Broker about camp funding

For more Information, contact: FamilyFunds@racker.org



For all
ages!



Register Now:



Graves, Susan

From: FERGUS, VICKIE (OPWDD) <VICKIE.FERGUS@opwdd.ny.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 9:56 AM
To: Graves, Susan
Cc: Nurek, Renee M (OPWDD)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ombus Program

Hi Susan,

Please send this information out to the group. Thank you 😊

To contact the new Ombuds program for assistance, please call 1-800-762-9290 or email idd@cssny.org. For more information about the program, visit <https://www.cssny.org/programs/entry/iddo>.

Vickie L. Fergus, LCSW-R/Treatment Team Leader

Regional Front Door Unit Lead

Regional Field Office 2- Service Access, Program Implementation, Stakeholder Support (SPS)

NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

Address: 249 Glenwood Road (4E)

Binghamton, NY 13905

OFFICE: (607) 217-6610 **EMAIL:** vickie.fergus@opwdd.ny.gov

OPWDD Info Line-To Access the Front Door: 866-946-9733

www.opwdd.ny.gov

<https://opwdd.ny.gov/career-opportunities>



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PWDD Self-Advocacy Report, 2/5/2025

Thank you. First, I apologize in advance, if what I report is not new to you or has been addressed successfully within your agencies and organizations. And if it has, I invite you to share with the rest what you have implemented.

Effective and accessible communication is considered by many – including ASHA, ISAAC, and the NAACA – as a human right.

As the various members of the committees represented today at this combined meeting are working toward improving health care and mental health care of Tioga County residents, I encourage you to remember, or to take into consideration, the communication and social-emotional needs of those with limited speaking ability, more commonly referred to as “non-verbal.”

I use the term limited speaking ability, because language or verbal expression can include vocalizations, body language, gestures, signs, symbols, or other forms of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

I applaud the T.C. Sheriff’s office for participating in the Blue Envelope Program.

Consider the current ability of a person with limited or no speech to communicate their needs, feelings, location and level of physical pain or discomfort, or the fact that they’re struggling.

One solution is to employ the services of a Speech-Language Pathologist or collegiate speech clinics, such as the ones at Ithaca College or Binghamton University, that have faculty and graduate students who have experience with Alternative and Augmentative Communication and are able to do assessments, help people learn how to use or increase their effectiveness in using AAC.

Also consider communication boards or devices when taking people to medical appts. If a hospital visit or stay is necessary, consider requesting the assistance of an on-staff SLP. Agencies should provide person-specific training for their direct support professionals and staff. Family members often can provide this training for those that work with their particular individual. But for those who don’t have family involved or perhaps have new guardians who have limited or no experience with how the person communicates, then the need is even greater to provide this support.

I think, in general, the consideration of communication needs is something that tends to fall off the radar or its importance is forgotten for young adults as they transition out of school and to the next stage of life, whether it be work, day programs, or community integration – especially for those with the concurrent diagnosis of intellectual or developmental disability – as they face new challenges with new or reduced supports, along with the social-emotional changes that are a natural part of this season of life.

I would like to conclude with a question, and it's not meant to be rhetorical.

QUESTION: Are there counselors, psychologists, or psychiatrists in our area who have experience counselling people who use AAC or who have significant communication needs?

NOTES:

Thank you for listening. That's the end of the self-advocacy report.

Respectfully submitted,

-Karen Warfle

AAC = Augmentative and Alternative Communication

ASHA = American Speech, Language & Hearing Association

ISAAC = International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication

NAACA = North American Alliance for Communication Access

SLP = Speech-Language Pathologist