Governor and Mrs. Jay Nixon Visit eitas

Governor Jay Nixon, DMH Director Keith Schafer and eitas Executive Director, Jake Jacobs met with two Jackson County families on January 28th at the eitas administrative offices to discuss the Partnership for Hope waiver, a new state program that is having a positive impact on the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Gov. Nixon joined Mary and Keith Kinart, and their son Austin; and Diana and Kenneth Spare, and their daughter Lucy to discuss the home and community-based services the Partnership for Hope has made available to them. Through this new program, families will receive services sooner than previously possible. Prior to Partnership for Hope, demand for home and community based services had resulted in a large backlog of Missouri families waiting for help. Many families have waited years before receiving needed services as funding has only been available to individuals in crisis.

Through the Partnership for Hope, 470 individuals will receive up to $12,000 in services per year. County SB40 boards are contributing $1.5 million annually for the program, which is matched by $1.5 million in state funds to draw down $5.2 million from the federal government. The number of individuals served in each county will depend on the financial commitment given by the county’s SB40 board. County boards will determine which individuals within their county will receive services. In Jackson County, 90 families will receive services.

Because of the Partnership for Hope program, Lucy Spare will be eligible for supported-employment services. Lucy has a diagnosis of mild retardation and Down’s syndrome, but she is vibrant, a fast learner and is very capable of mastering new skills. Her parents want her to spend as much time as possible out of the house, either working or volunteering. Lucy’s family is in the process of reviewing and hiring an assistant who will assist her in learning new job skills and explore new work opportunities.

Austin Kinart, who is diagnosed with Asperger’s syndrome, will receive personal assistance and off-site day habilitation services through the program. Austin is enrolled and doing well in the THRIVE Program at University of Central Missouri. His parents, both whom work, worry about what he will do during winter and summer breaks. Austin needs support in public and social settings. A personal assistant will help increase Austin’s social skills, help expand his social network, and help him be more successful in school.

We at eitas are proud to acknowledge that our own Executive Director, Jake Jacobs was among the SB 40 directors who developed the Partnership for Hope waiver concept and promoted it to DMH. A request to Medicaid to expand the program to an additional 500 individuals was filed in December of 2010. The expansion was approved in February 2011.
New Eitas Facility

As many of you already know, eitas has expanded in services and in size to accommodate our growing Service Coordination department. In the fall of 2009 we acquired a new building at 8511 Hillcrest Road, the three story office building across the street from our Training Center at 8508 Hillcrest.

During the early months of 2010 the third floor of our new building was renovated and the Administration staff joined the Service Coordination staff consisting of two teams that were already occupying rented space on the second floor. The third team of service coordinators was recently added and now all have relocated to the renovated third floor space, leaving room for expansion on the second floor for additional service coordination teams in the future.

Our building at 8508 Hillcrest will remain as our Training Center, with expanded course offerings.

The new facility is perfect for our services and future growth. As soon as the weather turns warmer we will be planning an Open House.

New Faces

Kathy Marlatt

It has been almost a year since Kathy Marlatt joined us as our new Deputy Director in April of 2010. Many of you know Kathy as she has been in service to those with developmental disabilities for many years. She served for almost ten years as the Executive Director at Special Neighbors and then more recently spent 14 years at KCRO as the Quality Enhancement Team Supervisor.

Kathy’s primary responsibilities at eitas include overseeing the Service Coordination department, Training department and office support staff. She acts as liaison with local providers and serves as Executive Director in Jake Jacobs’ absence.

Amanda George

Amanda joined our staff in August of 2010 as our new Training Supervisor. Amanda has an international reputation in person-centered training, teamwork initiatives, and service coordination. Prior to joining eitas as a staff member we used her talents for training of our staff, Board and providers. Amanda also managed our “Let’s Be Healthy” program, and continues to do so. Amanda works with our Training Coordinator, Rita Trotter, in the planning and scheduling of training classes.

Kathy Marlatt
Deputy Director

Amanda George
Training Supervisor
A Time For Hope

Our cover story this edition centers on the new Partnership for Hope Medicaid waiver that went into effect on October 1, 2010. The actual story of the Hope waiver began in 2008 when the Missouri Association of County Developmental Disability Services (MACDDS) – the state association for the SB 40 boards, received a grant from the Missouri Health Foundation to explore the efforts other states across the country were making to increase services to persons with developmental disabilities. We had many experts and consultants come in from various states and speak to us about their programs, and as a result, the Hope Waiver was born. A true partnership between the counties and the state, each participating county pays half of the waiver match and the state pays the other half, and together that draws down the federal share. Think of it as every 18 cents the county pays we get $1 worth of services – what a bargain!

The goal of the Hope Waiver is to provide those services that people need now, not waiting until they find themselves in a crisis situation. It’s an attempt at proactive prevention. Persons on the DMH waiting lists who will never rise to the top until serious health or living situations arise can now be recommended to receive in-home or community services that will prevent them from getting into serious problems. These services include: day habilitation, temporary residential, speech therapy, transportation, supported employment, personal assistance, various therapies, and others. A person needs to meet certain eligibility criteria and their needed supports cannot exceed $12,000 annually. At present there are thirty-seven SB 40 counties participating, with another 33 agreeing to sign on in the next year. Based upon each county’s level of financial participation a number of Medicaid “slots” are assigned to the county. Jackson County has 90 slots and as of this writing, 80 of them have been assigned. If more are approved by Medicaid, eitas will fund more.

Despite all the economic troubles, budget problems, and reduction of services everywhere; here in Missouri we were able to do something new that will help people now and in many years to come. Hope has been re-born where before there was none.

For more information about the Partnership for Hope Waiver please contact Malinda Barnett at eitas, (816) 363-2000.

FYI

- Eitas Camp Scholarships Available While Monies Last — All Applications Due by May 31
- Jake Jacobs, 2011 President of MACDDS
- Christian Youth Theater (CYT) Heart program is a full inclusion program that provides individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in classes, shows and camps. Contact Josie Strickler at (913) 782-7778 for more information.
- Person Centered Thinking classes with Amanda George —April 5 & 6— Open for Enrollment
- Person Centered Approach to Risk with Amanda George—April 14— Open for Enrollment
Meet our Third Team of Service Coordinators

Mr. Quinn McCue leads our third team of Service Coordinators. Quinn was already a member of the eitas staff and was selected for his dedication and perseverance for the individuals and families he supported. Inherent leadership skills assist Quinn in leading his team of Service Coordinators.

Every Service Coordinator joining the eitas team goes through an orientation period consisting of prescribed state and eitas prerequisites before a coordinator is assigned any clients. At eitas each team consists of 11 Service Coordinators and a Supervisor. Each Service Coordinator is assigned no more than 36 individuals so they can provide the level of service needed by everyone.

Members of our third team consist of Quinn McCue, Supervisor, Steve Brown, Amber Burden, Jennifer Fry, Helen Faubion, Cougar Gray, Debi Gregor, Stephanie Hudson, Jennifer Shaver and Anne Sikorski. Interviews are underway to complete the team.

S E R V I C E S B Y E I T A S

Developmental Disability Services of Jackson County-eitas’ mission is to support individuals with developmental disabilities and their families with services that respect their choices, increase their opportunities, encourage their independence, and assist their inclusion in all aspects of the community.

Eitas’ approach to funding services has changed over the past 35 years. Each year our grant process allows providers to apply for funding to support a variety of services in Jackson County.

V O C A T I O N A L:  Eitas’ Vocational Services provides employment and training opportunities to citizens with developmental disabilities as well as maintaining job development and supported employment for persons working in community environments, in addition to funding 8 sheltered workshops within the county.

R E S I D E N T I A L:  Eitas funds residential support for adult citizens with developmental disabilities throughout Jackson County, helping to integrate individuals into the community through in-home services; independent supported living and in group homes.

D A Y  H A B I L I T A T I O N:  Eitas funds Day Habilitation Service programs that are designed to enable adult citizens with developmental disability services a way to develop more independent lifestyles and maximize their involvement within the community.

T R A I N I N G:  Eitas offers basic medication, CPR and First Aid classes for providers with staff working directly with persons with developmental disabilities. Person Centered Thinking/Planning, Gentle Teaching and Let’s Be Healthy classes are but a few of the other classes offered. To find out more about the classes being offered or to register for a class please contact our Training Coordinator, Ms. Rita Trotter at (816) 822-8900 or rtrotter@eitas.org.
Service Coordination: In 2007 Developmental Disability Services of Jackson County – eitas contracted with the Missouri Department of Mental Health – Developmental Disability Division to assist in reducing the caseloads in Jackson County by hiring and providing Service Coordination with our own staff. Medicaid pays eitas for the services, just as it did the state, but now any funds generated by this department stay in Jackson County and do not go into general revenue dollars in Jefferson City. Any excess funds are then being used to get individuals off the waiting list for services through the Partnership for Hope waiver and to fund new services that are not possible through limited tax levy dollars.

Service Coordination provides advocacy, coordination of services, needs identification, plan support, and links with community resources for individuals with developmental disabilities. Eitas has created an infra-structure to train and support all Service Coordinators on our staff – training that goes beyond what is required by the state.

Transportation: Did you know that eitas constructed its own transportation facility in 2003 with the help of state and federal transportation grants. Our Transportation Center now has 30 buses that transport over 500 persons a day from home to work and back again—making it the largest transportation service for persons with developmental disabilities in the state of Missouri; all at no charge to the riders.

Making sure that eitas transportation services are safe, timely and efficient with the most courteous and professional employees in the industry is Mr. Bob Rice, Transportation Manager. If you are a person with a developmental disability in need of transportation please contact Malinda Barnett, Intake and Information Specialist at (816) 363-2000.

Support Services: The Support Services staff of Tracy Mauk and Nancy Nicolaus continue to provide support and technical assistance for agencies funded by eitas. During the past four and a half years that the Support Specialist positions have been in existence a wide range of supports have been provided. It has included training and consultation regarding developmental disabilities, community resources, intake for Eitas transportation, individual and family support, funding assistance for adaptive equipment and a myriad of other types of requests.

Each year funded agencies identify Missouri Quality Outcomes (MQOs) the agency will focus on in support of people with developmental disabilities. Minimally, the Support Specialists meet with agency staff quarterly to review successes and determine the degree to which the MQOs are present.

The Support Specialist's continue to provide leadership in the development of gentle cultures for the people Eitas supports, caregivers and agency staff. Due to the response to and success of the Gentle Teaching training conducted by Dr. John McGee, as well as local community training conducted by Tracy and Nancy, interest has grown across the state of Missouri. Individuals from 10 other counties in Missouri have traveled to Kansas City for the training and several are now participating in the Mentor Network. Due to the expanded membership the network is now known as the Heart of America Gentle Teaching Mentor Network. Over 400 hundred people have participated in at least one week of training with 65 individuals completing a second week. There have been representatives of 55 agencies attending training. With several training sessions scheduled for 2011, it is anticipated that many more people will soon experience peaceful lives in gentle environments. Please contact Nancy Nicolaus, Support Services Supervisor at nancyn@eitas.org or (816) 595-6708 to request more information.
What do you say to a kid with a disability?

Start with, “Hi.”