COLLABORATIVE MEETING MINUTES

WHITE COUNTY family connection™

Date: 9/18/26

Location: White County Board of Education

Attendees: 32

White County Family Connection
WCFC Board
Department of Juvenile Justice
Bridging Hope
Department of Public Health
Carter Hess 9th
Circle of Hope
Region 2 DFCS
White County DFCS
Family Promise
Matthew 25 Alliance
North Georgia Tech
Christ Kids Ranch
South Enotah Child Advocacy Center
White Co Headstart PreK
Cleveland First Methodist Church
WIC Program
Mountain Education

Announcements

- White County Family Connection:
  - Sept. 22: Celebrate Connection Awards Dinner at Meadows at Mossy Creek. Collaborative partners attend free. Tickets for their guests are $25.
  - Sept. 30: Free Food Distribution
  - October: White Christmas signups begin
  - Nov. 7: Empty Bowls Fundraiser at Sautee Nacoochee Center
- Matthew 25 Alliance: Resource sessions are held the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 10 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Cleveland
- Circle of Hope: Dueling Pianos fundraiser Oct. 24 at 5 p.m. at Piedmont University
- Family Promise: Annual Duck Race Oct. 24 at 4 p.m. in Helen
- North Georgia Tech Adult Ed: Looking for free class locations in White County
- South Enotah Child Advocacy Center: Christmas Gala is Dec. 4 at Willow Creek Farms
- White Co. Head Start: Open positions
- Department of Public Health: Flu clinics starting soon

Presenter: Debbie Townsend, Enotah Family Therapy Program

- Began in August 2013 and was developed in response to ongoing concerns involving youth in the juvenile justice system, including substance use and other behavioral and family challenges.
- Serves youth in the four-county Enotah Judicial Circuit: White, Lumpkin, Union and Towns counties.
- Works closely with juvenile probation officers and DJJ staff throughout a youth's involvement in the program; staff have participated in DJJ meetings and maintained regular communication with probation officers and other juvenile justice partners.
- Program generally serves youth ages 12–18 who are involved with the juvenile justice system and on probation and typically lasts 4–6 months.
- Most participants are boys, although the program serves eligible youth regardless of gender.
- Debbie Townsend serves as a Case Manager, helping families identify and overcome barriers such as housing, utility or rental assistance, food and transportation.
- Families do not necessarily have to be low-income, although many participating families face significant financial or practical challenges.
- Program staff include two therapists, a case manager, a teacher advocate and a tutor.
- A major goal is to strengthen communication and relationships between parents and teenagers and help the family function more effectively as a team.
- The program works to address more than the behavior that led a youth to probation—it looks at barriers affecting the entire family, with the goal of creating lasting change.
- Therapists report a strong success rate, particularly when families remain engaged and participate consistently in the program.
- Current caseload is approximately eight families at a time, allowing staff to work closely and intensively with each family.

Next Meeting: Oct. 16, 11 a.m.

Aislinn Cummings with Amerigroup will provide an overview of Georgia Families 360 program for foster care as well as an overview of Amerigroups broader programs for low-income families.