



El Cajon Collaborative Council Meeting
February 3rd, 2009 Meeting Notes

I. Welcome & Introductions

Council Chair, Cheryl Cosart opened the meeting with a few announcements and passed around the sign-in sheet which will be emailed to all Council participants, in order to facilitate further discussion beyond the meeting. Anyone wishing to have their name or contact information withheld from this public sharing should contact Lea Bush, lea@elcajoncollaborative.org.

II. Presentation –

Jenne Bergstrom, Adult Services Librarian from San Diego County Library El Cajon Branch gave a short presentation on services the library can offer (its more than just books). She reminded everyone that the library is always looking for tutors for their adult literacy program. For more information contact Cheryl Cosart.

III. Information Roundtable – Community Announcements & Other News

Cheryl invited everyone to participate in the information roundtable. All flyers were distributed through the El Cajon Collaborative Resource e-mail on February 4th. Please use the attached council contact list if you are seeking additional information on any of the announcements recorded below:

- Suzanne Moser, a parent volunteer with the El Cajon Collaborative attended to share information on the “What to Do When Your Child Gets Sick” free workshop she can offer to parent groups. The training is about 1.5 hours long and is most appropriate for parents/families who have children under age 5 and K-3rd grade.
- Community Services for Families (CSF) Report – currently El Cajon CSF Case Managers are serving 55 families a majority of which are prevention cases. The CSF program offers intensive in-home case management and is now taking community referrals. Email Lea or Tiffany Atalla for more information.
- Monica Bauer from the Anti-Defamation League was in attendance for the first time.
- Estela de los Rios from the Center for Social Advocacy announced a housing workshop in El Cajon on February 26th.
- Kara Vickery from El Cajon Valley High School introduced two new parent mentors who will be working with newcomers at the school. She also notified everyone of their upcoming parent “Coffee Talk” information night series, starting on February 23rd talking about different parts of the school system to help new families with information about high school education.
- Marilyn Nahas and Elaine McLevie from the St. Luke’s Refugee Network were in attendance and again interested in bringing services to El Cajon, particularly for the Burmese and Sudanese refugee populations. They were accompanied by the Rector/Pastor from St. Alban’s Episcopal Church in El Cajon.
- Rebecca Reyes from the El Cajon Community Development Corporation shared their success with the Saturday Morning Clean-Up scheduled in January, they had a total of 92 volunteers! The next Lend A Hand event in on February 28th. Also, she shared that this Friday is the “First Friday” event in Downtown El Cajon – with shops and galleries staying open late!

Information Roundtable – Community Announcements & Other News - continued

- Pam Toohey from the Birthparent Association announced that her weekly support group has moved to El Cajon Family Night from 6-8pm every Thursday at the Meridian Baptist Church (660 S. Third Street, El Cajon). Additionally, their group will host an East County Youth and Family Round Table meeting on the first Thursday of every month, starting in March. More information can be found on www.birthparentassociation.com.
- Shahin Rahimi from the Legal Aid Society of San Diego shared information on his low-income tax assistance services and classes that he can teach. Additionally, Shahin recommended providers who work with low-income individuals start now to encourage them to attend a tax preparation clinic in the East Region. Individuals can file up to three years of past tax returns.
- Paula Guerra from Home-Start urged anyone interested in taking advantage of the free tax preparation services through the Family Self Sufficiency Program to call (619) 401-8375 for an appointment as soon as possible. She also shared information on the Family Support Network meeting on Friday, February 6th.
- Multiple staff from the International Rescue Committee (IRC) were in attendance and interested in working on after-school education programs as well as health related programs in the East County.
- Enrique De La Cruz from Communities Against Substance Abuse (CASA) gave information about youth prescription drug abuse and some of the issues that their organization is targeting this year. He also passed out information on East County Licensee Education on Alcohol and Drugs (LEAD) trainings.
- Sheryl Eaves from Cuyamaca College CalWORKs program noted that classes start on January 26th and that she can help anyone who is in the CalWORKs program get enrolled.
- Laura Drangmeister from Shakti Rising shared their interest in expanding their community education in 2009.
- Megan Joseph and Dave Meyer from the East County Refugee Center promoted two upcoming trainings being held at the library in Downtown El Cajon on February 9th, the topic will be laws regarding child abuse and domestic violence; on February 23rd, they will provide a drug education seminar for refugee families. Additionally, Dave Meyer requested that organizations consider signing the “Hate Free San Diego” Declaration at www.hatefreesandiego.org
- Romalyn Galacgac announced that the El Cajon Community Development Corporation received a “Golden Footprint Award” for their work in Downtown El Cajon. She also gave information about an upcoming Fall Prevention Summit for Seniors.
- Laura Carter, public health nurse with San Diego County announced the next Raising the Bar forum on February 13th, for children exposed to violence. Flyer will become available and sent electronically via weekly collaborative resource email.
- Jenny Mork from FamNet introduced herself as new to the organization and the collaborative.
- Kristin Haas and Ma’at Crook from Center for Community Solutions shared information on the organization’s domestic violence prevention services and presentations that can be given to community groups, parents or even students. Titles for these presentations are often called “How to Help a Friend” (for adults/teens) or “Good Touch – Bad Touch” (for youth).
- Brenna Ring from the Rancho San Diego branch of the County Library system, shared flyers on the Gateway Internet classes offered at the library in Arabic. She also discussed some unique programs such as “Hispanic Cultural Storytime”, Tai Chi, and Financial Health programs that will be starting in March/April.

Information Roundtable – Community Announcements & Other News - continued

- Laura Andrews from Mental Health America shared her role as an educator to help eliminate stigma of Mental Health in the community. She offers FREE classes and presentations to any group.
- Besma Coda from Chaldean-Middle Eastern Social Services shared information on their mental health clinic for Middle Eastern families and Arabic speakers. They are currently offering a mammogram and osteoporosis clinic, as well as special services for those affected by trauma. Additionally, the organization can provide cultural sensitivity training about newcomers from Iraq.
- Dilkhwaz Ahmed from License to Freedom shared her organization's services for Newcomer women, with free classes on driver's education, cooking, and communication. They are located at 277 E. Lexington, Suite C, in El Cajon.

IV. ECC Committee/Workgroup Reports

The Program Committee meets regularly on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 1:30pm to discuss collaborative programs and El Cajon Collaborative Family Night, currently the meetings are being held at McAlister Institute (1400 N. Johnson, El Cajon). Debbie Comstock of the East County Family Justice Center is the chair.

Joyce Moore from Institute for Public Strategies (IPS) announced that the Neighborhood Safety workgroup will be meeting on March 26th from 2:30-4pm. Susan Caldwell from the East County Community Change Project through IPS is the chair.

Other Workgroups – Lea announced that at this time we will not be adding any new workgroups to the El Cajon Collaborative, as the Collaborative is in the process of reviewing its workgroup structures and making sure that they are in line with the vision, mission and goals of the Collaborative.

V. Next Council Meeting

Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 3rd from 12:30-2pm at the Cajon Valley Union School District Board Room (750 East Main, El Cajon, CA 92020).

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