



El Cajon Collaborative Council Meeting

March 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. Information Roundtable – Community Announcements & Other News

Cheryl invited everyone to participate in the information roundtable. Please use the attached council contact list if you are seeking additional information on any of the announcements recorded below:

- Denise Schoolcraft from Set Free Family Restoration talked about their Christian-based programming for homeless families, including parenting, anger management and Alcohol and Other Drug classes. They are located at 1527 East Main Street in El Cajon.
- Rebecca Reyes from the El Cajon Community Development Corporation shared their continued success with the Saturday Morning Clean-Ups, the February event hosted 130 volunteers and the First Lutheran Church provided lunch! The next event is scheduled on March 28th at the corner of East Park and Roanoke. Also, she shared the March Downtown El Cajon newsletter with everyone.
- Krissy Buxton from Harmonium, Inc. brought flyers for a new group they are hosting to help with parenting teens.
- Tiffany Atalla and Rochelle Doyle were present from the Community Services for Families (CSF) program and gave us an update on their caseload of 14 dependency cases, 14 voluntary cases and 31 prevention cases. Rochelle also noted that they are particularly in need of resources for food and clothing as well as local mentoring programs for youth of all ages.
- Joyce Moore from the Institute for Public Strategies East County Community Change Project is working on a Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) education even on March 25th.
- Liz Johnson from Neighborhood Healthcare can offer services to help bridge the gap between primary health and behavioral health care. She is currently looking for help finding mental health services in Farsi.
- Marilyn Nahas and Elaine McLevie have an interpreter who can speak Burmese/Karen and are working on bringing more services for Burmese/Karen refugees to the El Cajon area.
- Michael McKay from Catholic Charities gave additional information to the group about the numbers of refugees that will likely be arriving in El Cajon this year. The newest projection is about 4,800 arrivals from Iraq will be resettling in El Cajon.
- Christina Piranio from the International Rescue Committee(IRC) also shared information on refugee services.
- Kara Vickrey of the El Cajon Valley High School Family Resource Center shared information about their upcoming (incoming) Freshman Orientation and their next “Coffee Talk” forum on Adolescent Development and Discipline.
- Ansam Abadallah of the IRC shared information about the refugee Family Connect program, which provides a tutoring match and parenting education.
- Joseph Ziauddin of the East County Refugee Center, shared information about the seminars held in February and their success. He is currently looking for two ESL teachers, one male and one female.
- Janet Middleton from the Cajon Valley Union School District shared information about their Newcomer Classes.
- Lorenzo Higley of Communities Against Substance Abuse (CASA), talked about the substance abuse prevention work they are doing with community groups.

Information Roundtable – Community Announcements & Other News - continued

- Orfa Rios from Vista Hill Parent Care, shared information about their programs which benefit pregnant/parenting women and teens, who need substance abuse intervention advocacy.
- Paula Guerra from Home-Start, once again shared information about their Family Self Sufficiency program, which can help with tax returns, employment and bus passes (619) 401-8375. Additionally, they are able to provide case management in English and Spanish to new moms with children under age 5.
- Janendra Sykes and Kristin Haas of Center for Community Solutions, shared information about their services for Domestic Violence survivors including case management, shelter, counseling, prevention and education. Additionally, Kristin shared that April is sexual assault awareness month and they are doing a survivor’s retreat and are looking for donations for some gift bags to give to the survivors.
- Janette Fellis from the Birthparent Association shared information about their parent partnering opportunities.
- Jon Sturgill from Southern Indian Health Centers, shared information about their 3rd annual spring gathering – more information will be sent out via email.
- Gwen Johnson from the Bethlehem Food Pantry at First United Methodist Church of El Cajon shared information about their Free Bread program, which runs on Monday and Saturday from 9-12. She also is able to provide emergency food by appointment only, by calling (619) 517-4364 or (619) 401-5278. Additionally, they offer community dinners every Wednesday at 6pm for a small donation and after-school time for kids from 4-6pm on Wednesdays. Finally, Gwen passed along the latest Golden Share food sharing program information, where food packages can be ordered and picked up at her location.
- Monica Torres of the Chase Avenue Family Health Center announced their new walk-in clinic is open for urgent care, same day appointments from 8:30-5:30pm.
- Cheryl Cosart of the El Cajon Library shared information about their free library space that is available for meetings up to 80 people. Also, she shared some of the current times for classes and storytimes at the Library.
- Debbie Comstock of the East County Family Justice Center (ECFJC) shared that the center is open and busy as a one-stop shop for domestic violence services.
- Shahin Rahimi from the Legal Aid Society of San Diego shared information on low-income tax assistance services and financial literacy classes that he can teach. Additionally, Shahin recommended providers who work with low-income individuals encourage attendance at a tax preparation clinic in the East Region. Individuals can file up to three years of past tax returns.

III. 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.

IV. Next Council Meeting

Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 7th from 12:30-2pm at the Cajon Valley Union School District Board Room (750 East Main, El Cajon, CA 92020).

Coordinator Contact Information:
Lea Bush, (619) 447-4380
lea@elcajoncollaborative.org