

Minutes – Community Meeting on Trauma and Resiliency – March 11

Hello Everyone,

This message is to thank those of you who attended last night's community dinner and meeting on "Building Child Well-Being" and to let those of you who weren't able to make it know it went.

By all accounts it was a successful event. We had 20 adults and enough children to keep the basketballs bouncing all evening.

Marilyn presented the community version of "Trauma 101" with questions and interaction throughout the presentation. She helped everyone understand the profound impact of trauma on students' abilities to learn and on their future health and success. At the same time she made it very clear that schools have an enormous potential to help shift the odds. We can greatly improve the chances of our kids' having much better academic, social, emotional success and physical health in the future.

Marilyn let us know that "CBITS" (a therapeutic group program for working with MS and HS students who are struggling with active and serious symptoms of PTSD) to the school through Altacare will provide an excellent healing opportunity for those students who become involved. Beyond that though she's ready to provide training for Arlee staff in the ARC model of supporting and educating staff around secondary trauma and the STAR Curriculum (4 lessons to be used with kids to help them better understand and cope with trauma). If we invite her, she will come!

We discussed how these resources might be offered to staff without feeling like an imposition of "one more thing" to do and several ideas were offered such as selecting a single or a few grades whose teachers would like to learn the skills, to offer training for staff during PIR time, to offer support services in the classroom to individual staff who express interest.

Next steps? Perhaps a conversation about PIR opportunities for staff training in Arlee? I'll ask Marilyn for some specific time requirements to provide the ARC and STAR trainings to staff so we know exactly what we're looking at. One idea I just had is to wonder if there's anyway Tribal Education might consider allowing us to offer any of that training here in Arlee or at their Polson PIR day. We could invite other reservation staff to attend... maybe? I'll look into it.

Please let me know any ideas, suggestions or thoughts you have on where we might head next or "reply to all" to share your thoughts with everyone on the list. The ball is definitely rolling. Let's work together to keep it headed in the right direction!

By the way, many thanks to Maureen of Altacare for door prizes, Pearl from Youth Health and Wellness at the Polson Clinic for the flyer and for funding the delicious dinner, Amy Burton for spreading the word, Wendy Swab for coordinating and preparing dinner and Marilyn Zimmerman of course for sharing her knowledge, time and resources.

I look forward to our continued journey together in this important effort,

Dana

PS – You may have noted that I’ve once again adjusted the name of our interest group. I hope it even better reflects our goals but I’m certainly open to your thoughts on that as well ☺.