



**Friday, October 21, 2022 | 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.  
Zoom Meeting**

**Agenda**

- |      |  |                                |
|------|--|--------------------------------|
| I.   | Welcome & Approval of Minutes  | B. Troyer                      |
| II.  | Texas Workforce Commission: Childcare + Funding opportunities  | C. Arwood                      |
| III. | Workgroup Committee Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Family Childcare Network</li><li>• Working Family Success: Financial Empowerment</li></ul> | B. Orduna<br>J. Dooley         |
| IV.  | Denton County Leadership Teams Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DCBHLT</li><li>• DCHLT</li></ul>   | S. Spencer<br>O. Mata-Williams |
| V.   | Public Comment   | B. Troyer                      |
| VI.  | New Business   | B. Troyer                      |
| VII. | Adjourn  | B. Troyer                      |

**Next Meeting Date:  
Friday, November 18, 2022 | 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. | Hybrid  
Meeting**



## **Denton County Workforce Success Leadership Team**

8:30 am Friday, September 23, 2022

Virtual Meeting Over Zoom

### **Welcome and Introduction**

Mr. Bob Troyer calls the meeting to order and welcomes everyone.

### **EMPathways Presentation**

Ms. Raysheema Rainey introduced the presentation regarding their programs. They gave a brief overview of Economic Mobility, Mobility Mentoring, and the Mobility Network Exchange programs. Ms. Natalie Veilleux continued the presentation by going deeper into what mobility mentoring looks like and why it works. They discussed that mobility mentoring can help garner skills necessary to the change process like self-regulation and knowledge of the stress response. Ms. Natalie continued by discussing how mobility mentoring has four essential elements: Coaching for economic mobility, Bridge to self-sufficiency, Goal setting, and Recognition. The Presentation included all of the ways that the EMPathways program could help clients reach their goals and move out of poverty. The floor was then opened for questions.

Dr. Del Rio asked what the retention rate of EMPathway's clients were. Mr. Raysheema answered that their short-term programs last from eight to eighteen months and long-term programs last three to five years. Ms. Raysheema said that most of their participants complete the long-term program because the trust building process is so in-depth.

Ms. Olivia Mata-Williams asked about how EMPathway's work evolved from working with the Boston Housing Authority to working with hospitals and schools. Ms. Olivia went on to say that United Way of Denton County would like to take some of those pieces and adapt them for Denton County. Ms. Raysheema said that because they are known at their capital building, they will be asked to work on other projects. They also mentioned that they are currently working on a randomized control study about families who are using their EMPathways programs versus families who are not showing that they are figuring out how to work with other groups both in research as well as partnering.

Dr. Roxanne Del Rio asked how many people EMPathways has moved from poverty to self-sufficiency. Ms. Raysheema answered that those numbers vary. Their temporary shelter received a gold star rating because of the services offered to their participants. They mentioned that they have specific staff that can help specific cases and seek to "wrap services around the family."

Ms. Dani Shaw asked about how EMPathways set up their housing program as well as where the funding came from. Ms. Raysheema answered that there is one facility with eleven units and that transitional housing funding comes from HUD. They also mentioned that there was a program that entered families into a lottery for housing assistance. After five years, families are prepared to pay market prices for housing.

Dr. Ling Jeng pointed out that this program does not only help people who need housing, but people who come from all different places. They go on to praise the way the program is designed and how it pulls from a strength-based counseling model with an added incentive component. Dr. Jeng then asks how EMPathways works with participants to move from a crisis-based lifestyle to a growth mindset.



Ms. Raysheema answered that EMPathways has a program for families who are in stable housing and just want to make greater economic gains. They go on to say that EMPathways attempts to move participants from a transactional relationship to a transformational partnership. They work with participants as they are, where they are in life. They said that adding the unconditional positive regard piece helps immensely.

Ms. Dani Shaw highlighted the fact that stable housing has a large part to play in the ability of participants to succeed in these programs. Ms. Natalie said that the less stable people are, the more difficult this work is. They said that the coaching and relationship becomes where the most transformation happens because it can help participants to see themselves differently and realized they can plan their lives.

Ms. Jennifer Lajoie asked about the success rate for short term interaction. Ms. Raysheema said that they have an 85% success rate when working with participants on a short term. They said that coaching sessions can help participants manage crisis and build necessary skills to grow.

Ms. LeMaya Woods asked how EMPathways was able to keep families in their housing. Ms. Raysheema said that work begins day one with the participants. They have meetings to discuss how to be a good neighbor and how to pay rent on time which helps them keep their housing but will also help in the future when they move to other housing. They also continue the relationship with the families two years after moving into permanent housing to ensure success.

Ms. LeMaya Woods asked about the challenges of keeping staff in place to maintain the services. Ms. Raysheema said that during the hiring process, they ask questions about emotional intelligence as well as about the values surrounding poverty. They look for a candidate with a growth mindset as well as who shows up to the trainings. EMPathways offers many training about trauma-informed care and motivational interviewing skills. Ms. Raysheema also mentioned that they offer the same services to any volunteers and will try to keep a running list of volunteers who would make good candidates for mentors.

## **Workgroup Updates**

Ms. Shelby Redondo discussed the upcoming legislative session and how on October 1<sup>st</sup>, all child care places who accept subsidies must be Texas Rising Star associate. She mentioned that she was working with six child care facilities to go through the process of becoming TRS certified.

## **Denton County Leadership Team Updates**

Ms. Shanan Spencer discussed that there will be a veteran program that begins next grant year. They are also looking into including home repair and mental health services for veterans. They will be making the decision on whether to pursue those grants. Ms. Shanan also mentioned that the Denton County Commissioners Court will fund three hundred thousand dollars toward the mental health pilot programs and that MHMR is the steward of that grant.

## **Homelessness Team**

Ms. Olivia Mata-Williams discussed the programs that were closing at United Way of Denton County. The ESGCV2 program, rapid-rehousing program, and the homelessness prevention program all will



end. She also mentioned that she has submitted renewal for housing navigator and housing reentry grant. Also, she discussed the barrier's fund and how fundraising is currently going on for the \$500 for 500 campaign.

### **Backbone Support**

Mr. Gary Henderson said there was nothing regarding backbone support to report but did acknowledge the loss of staff.

### **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourns at 9:59 am. Our next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2022.

If you have something you would like on the agenda for our next meeting, please contact Olivia Mata-Williams: [Olivia@unitedwaydenton.org](mailto:Olivia@unitedwaydenton.org)

Dr. Ling Hwey Jeng  
Secretary of DCWSLT