



Mason Thurston  
System of Care Partnership (SOCP)  
Regional Family Youth System Round Table Partnership  
September 24, 2021 Summary Meeting Notes

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***A Youth Tri-lead called the meeting to order and made the following requests for participants to:***

- mute their device when not speaking;
- avoid over-talking by waiting for others to finish speaking;
- use chat or raise a hand if using video or say your name before speaking if not using video, when you want to make a comment;
- stay on topic as we move through the agenda;
- feel free to share a question or comment after each agenda item.

***Another Youth Tri-lead then asked the convener to read through the roster to sign in participants and then read the vision, mission and eight-part comfort agreement.***

- The new Mental Health Coordinator for Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration introduced herself. She announced that the previous Mental Health Coordinator had retired. She offered her assistance for anyone who needs it and her contact information: [jennice.foy@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:jennice.foy@dcyf.wa.gov) 360-628-3224 (call or text)

***A Family Tri-lead then read the goals for the day.***

- Use of Force & Crisis Response
- Share Time

***A System Tri-lead let the group know that Ryan Spurling, Patrol Division Chief with the Mason County Sheriff's Office would share information about the new laws and response to crisis situations. Chief Spurling's email: [RSpurling@masoncountywa.gov](mailto:RSpurling@masoncountywa.gov)***

***Following are highlights from that conversation with Ryan Spurling referred to as Chief Ryan Spurling and Ryan or He:***

- Chief Ryan Spurling let the group know that he would be parked in his patrol car during the meeting, that it was an impressive group and it was an honor to be here. He provided some background about himself, that he retired from Washington State Highway Patrol about 8 years ago. He currently runs all patrol special divisions and provided a few examples, such as swat, canine and marine.

- Ryan stated that they had about one and a half months to interpret the new (use of force) laws and that it was a major paradigm shift on how they perform their duties during an ITA (Involuntary Treatment Act) situation if the DCR (Designated Crisis Responder) commits an individual. The new law says that we could not use any force unless courts use a legal procedure (writ) to apprehend that individual. There are a few things that had not been ironed out with a lot of ambiguity. Senate Bill 5051 is the de-certification bill and says that if law enforcement does anything wrong, then officers can be charged with a crime and we are seeing that happen. It is a perfect storm for law enforcement. He also mentioned some other professions that can be charged including but not limited to; preachers, doctors, law enforcement, mental health practitioners.
  - Link for ITA: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=71.05.153>
- He went on to say that police reform isn't new and needs to go on as society changes. It isn't a bad thing, but this situation is just a perfect storm. We didn't know what we could do or couldn't do with lots of apparent contradictions. Officers are now afraid to do their job and are being very cautious and instructed to be cautious. Our community supports us tremendously and that's a good thing. The new officers are okay but the old dogs don't like to learn new tricks. We've been learning that some of this has been about the provocation rule, that just showing up can be problematic and charges have been brought in our state and other states. If you are not clear on what you are supposed to do, it causes hesitation. Imagine a soccer player and the rules change and by violating a new rule, you can never play again.
- We are two months in and we don't want to be responsible for provocation in a situation. When we've been called and there is an individual that is suicidal, we first ask if there is anyone in the area such as family members and ask if we can call them and ask the usual questions. If there is no danger then we won't respond because if they see law enforcement it may cause them to charge us with a knife or gun and we end up shooting. We don't want them to be deeper in their crisis.
- Abe Garner is our navigator and helps us with mental health resources. He's been wonderful and if he says a DCR (Designated Crisis Responder) needs to be there so they can be in custody and need treatment, then we call them. But if the individual says no, then there isn't anything we can do. One time we had a situation with an individual that said no but the next time (next day), he was willing and said yes. We could use force when the DCR asked before the new laws were in effect, but the last thing we want to do is use force and end up hurting someone to prevent them from hurting themselves.
- A parent commented that Chief Spurling was covering a lot of things they needed to hear.
- Ryan then shared that they are getting more information on the laws but there are still contradictions. We run about .03 use of force and that is low and it's been consistent. We cover one thousand miles in Mason county and deputies are on their own in the middle of nowhere. We receive about 24,000 911 calls (each year) and working by themselves, our deputies get really good at talking and de-escalation if they don't survive. The work in Mason County it is different than in cities that I've worked in all over the state. There is a difference when you have back-up and when you do not have back-up. I'm super proud of our deputies and excited to have more resources. I'm part of COVID response and impact. There have been shutdowns in the schools, an increase in suicides,

increase in child abuse, child sex crimes, but also a reduction in reporting. We work with schools and others to see what we can do and also work with a doctor who has a specialty in child mental health and helps youth and adults navigate the system. The majority of our calls seem to be mental health related and deputies are really good at what they do. It is exciting to see this group and know that we will be in better shape in the future.

- A youth said they appreciate what Chief Spurling is sharing for all youth and people going through these issues, suicide and mental health. Some questions she shared were asking why people are feeling like this. Is it their guardian? Are you going to investigate legal guardians?
- Ryan responded that the only time deputies are in contact with guardians is if they get a call and they're in touch with the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and Child Protective Services (CPS). Our navigator, Abe Gardner is a huge piece of this. Abe will put the family in contact with the right people. We are also still trying to answer calls and prevent crimes. If we see something we refer it to Abe and he is able to stop things from falling through the cracks.
  - The child welfare participant shared in chat that the Department of Children, Youth and Families oversees Child Protective Services and Family Voluntary Services. This participant's email: [wendy.skarra@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:wendy.skarra@dcyf.wa.gov)
- A parent said they have a child with Autism who is aggressive and that deputies don't want to come out when kids are aggressive or want to avoid situations where deputies can cause things to get worse. Are you willing to come and be in the background?
- Ryan responds by sharing that they do get training on how to deal with youth with Autism. If our presence is going to aggravate the situation we are going to try to stay in the background and it depends on what resources are available. Right now we are down eight officers. We will respond if someone is assaulting someone. I can come and standby. Also, you can bring your son to the agency to have him get familiar with us.
  - We are doing a fundraiser for Special Olympics, a law enforcement torch run.
- The Administrative Services Organization (ASO) participant and see the Designated Crisis Responder (DCR) and mobile crisis data. We are seeing a decrease in children/youth crisis at the same you are seeing an increase. We're aware of that and actively trying to market. We know that 1310 has had an impact and there are less eyes on individuals due to COVID. Do you know how to connect these?
- Ryan responds that they (Mason County Sheriff) are doing educational videos and resources have been posted on our website (address below) and this was part of emergency management's response to the pandemic. We are still in the process of gathering resources. We have a Matlock doctor who was helping with a six foot noodle activity and we have other things we are trying to move and you can get in touch with our area command. We can educate and we are in contact with a school resource officer.
  - <https://so.co.mason.wa.us/>
- The ASO participant said that linking to the children's mobile crisis system would be helpful.
- A parent explained that in Thurston county families can register with 911 so that if you come to the home and you know that our son is 16, aggressive and cognitively like a 5

year-old, he could run up and hit a first responder and because we have registered that he is not aware of what he is doing.

- <http://tcomm911.org/>
- <http://tcomm911.org/faqs/#Smart911>
- Ryan responded by explaining that the way that most dispatch systems are run is that they are independent of law enforcement agencies. We (law enforcement) are the customers to them and there is no consistency across the state. Logs are created when there is a call but fire departments don't have access to those logs. For example with welfare checks, if we cannot go then aid can go but they won't have access to the individual's information. I'll bring it up on our: <https://macecom.org/>
- Another parent explains that their son is Autistic with very little communication, impulse control problems with severe Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and mom is who he comes after. There are times when I'm alone with him and have needed to lock myself in the laundry room. He doesn't understand he could hurt himself if he picks something up. If I call 911 wouldn't he be transitioned to a hospital? For him to be arrested and taken to jail he would have no understanding of what was going on. Wouldn't they dispatch a medic to give him something to calm him down?
- Ryan answers by saying it's going to depend on the district and agency to agency is different. Statewide we had to do 2 hours of training on PTSD and before that we had training on Autism. My officers have been through 40 hours of mental health crisis training. In the past it's all been the jail where we take people. Now, we call people in the community and parents of children/youth with Autism are resources. Hospitals are really stressed. If there is a crime, we still deal with it by getting it to the prosecutor and not jail. If someone is assaulting someone we deal with that different than someone with Autism.
- A parent asks if a deputy would respond and Ryan responds that they would.
- Another parent asks if we have ideas, can we get in touch with the area command, emergency management or commissioners?
- Ryan responds that he is the area commander and would love to have any information you have to share.
- More questions from the same parent asking if tasers are considered use of force, if the pandemic has changed things for law enforcement and if there is anything we can do like calling our representatives to help make our communities safer?
- Ryan answers that tasers is an intermediate level of force and absolutely considered use of force. We had an individual who was in a mental health crisis and had a knife. The new laws took shot guns away and we don't have a bean bag or rubber ball. We did buy hand held body shields which have been helpful. We used the shield to force the individual into an embankment. Tasers can cause falls that can be dangerous. The individual could have hit their head and they were under the influence. (Answers to the other questions as follows)
  - Our baseline has risen since the pandemic but we still see the same cycles. Just had a full moon, sports season, alcohol, full moon and holidays. We have what we call the 70 degree rule when people lose their minds and call volume goes up. We don't lower down anymore.

- Getting involved with legislators is super important so they get feedback about the changes they've made. The average citizen doesn't know anything about new laws but involvement is the key and when we are disengaged things happen.
- A parent said that someone brought up a register and they were wondering if Mason going to do that. He explained that he's had the cops called on his son several times. He is over 6 foot and 250 pounds and sometimes disrobes. Are you planning on smart911 for children with Autism and special needs?
  - This parent also mentioned that they were impressed with the amount of training hours and it's the kind of thing we do with foster parents
- Ryan shared that Shelton and tribes use Macecom and I will check with them.
- Another parent said that you (Ryan) answered the questions I had within the first five minutes.

***A Family Tri-lead explained introduced share time and that this time is for updates, concerns or anything that brings you joy.***

- The Family Tri-lead shared that her son is 13 and her family has been in different states. School has been difficult. But during COVID he started to appreciate his teacher because he was on the computer and he was doing things like making slime. He wasn't always wanting to go to school, so that is my little bit of joy.
- A Youth Tri-lead shared that the convener will be sending a couple of messages to the group:
  - The first message will be to send a link to the quarterly meeting survey.
  - The second message will be to ask about the Wraparound with Intensive Services (WISe) data presentation in November.
- The United Healthcare (UHC) participant shared that the WISe settlement was dismissed and there will be no further oversight. This is quite a celebration. Thanks to everyone However, she said there are some obligations including the opportunity to develop crisis response teams, supplemental WISe response; increase serving youth ages 18-20 and youth with Autism. There will be a focus on staffing shortages for WISe. It is hard to get youth enrolled when there is no staff. She also added that all Managed Care Organizations are under corrective action.
- A parent stated that they were not involved with the lawsuit and asked the UHC participant for an overview.
  - The UHC participant said WISe was (part of) a result of the lawsuit (TR v Quigley) that was brought by 7-12 youth and was a class action brought as a class action because of a lack of access to intensive services in the home and community (where they live). There had already been some work on a modifier to wraparound that was already in existence. WISe was made available with an intensive number of hours (of service each month) and the state will continue to monitor WISe services for Transition Age Youth, youth with Autism and youth with Substance Youth Disorders.

- The convener sent follow up information in an email to the group about the WISE, the lawsuit and local information about how to access WISE as follows:
      - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NScjTSwT6U4>
      - <https://www.disabilityrightswa.org/cases/tr-v-quigley/>
      - <https://staging.wacita.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/WISE-TR-Presentation-Susan-Kas-WSBA-Juv-Law-Section-May-2016-CLE.pdf>
      - <https://www.familyallianceformentalhealth.com/wise-programs.html>
      - Here is another link shared by the child welfare participant: <https://www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports/behavioral-health-recovery/wraparound-intensive-services-wise>
- The Administrative Services Organization guest shared that 988 will become a statewide crisis line. The national focus was on teen suicide and how to develop response, technology and mobile outreach. One thing that should be added to the list is the 988 number as well as our own crisis line in Mason and Thurston counties.
  - Here is the link about 988 that was shared by the child welfare participant:
    - <https://www.wsha.org/articles/washington-passes-law-establishing-9-8-8-call-line-for-behavioral-health-crises-and-plans-redesign-of-crisis-behavioral-health-system/>
- A parent announced that she was asked to be in the role as ally/advocate for LGBTQIA+ and if someone has questions, I will answer them but if I cannot, then I can quickly find someone who is able to provide an answer. This parent put her phone number in chat: 360-338-2239. She also explained that she has life experience but is not LGBTQIA+.
  - Another parent said that they had a question and would be in touch.
- The same parent shared that she has seen a huge rise of violence in our schools especially at the high school. Then asked if there are any Mason County parents who want to improve security, have safe places on campus for kids, have a more secure campus, then we could use more parents advocating and going to school board meetings and you can reach out to me at 360-338-2239. She has spoken with the principal and he is very concerned and that Shelton High School has been rated #1 for easiest school to get into/out of and they are trying to get more personnel. This will be helpful so that it won't be students themselves needing to breakup fights. They are extremely concerned and desperate for anyone to help.
- Another parent said that she was concerned and has three kids at the high school and her daughter told her that she didn't want to be stabbed at school. She told her daughter to stay out of the way. The parent sent an email to the principal stating that you'd be amazed at how many kids have hands laid on them and lots of kids carry switchblades. She said that the principal responded with a thank you for your consideration. The parent said that is not good enough and that is time to put metal detectors in schools but the

schools don't want to do that. She says her son walks around with his head held down. She shared her contact to be involved with advocacy: 360-999-0317

- A parent wanted to share with Chief Spurling that her son is in a special needs class and I appreciate our high school (Belfair). We have doors that lock where you can't get into the school and have to scan-in to get into the office. When you build a new school you update things. I want our school people to know that and we are not seeing as much here as you are seeing (in Shelton). We are seeing a response when there are issues.
- The parent who brought up the concerns about violence commented that there are modular buildings and they are building new ones, but our school (Shelton High School) has been like this forever, but they didn't have problems like this then. It is the architectural design. North Mason, Mary M Knight and Shelton High School. The other schools have a lot of safety precautions in place.
- The North Mason Schools participant said that he appreciates this conversation and there isn't an educator that isn't concerned about safety. I think it is great that you get together and raise your concerns with your boards (school directors). There can be multiple solutions. It takes a community and takes people talking and not on social media. Metal detectors are not necessarily the solution. New buildings are funded and built with more safety features. He encouraged parents to advocate in their communities and said that this is complicated.
- A Thurston parent thanked the North Mason Schools participant for what he said. Working with schools is more helpful than walking into the school and saying this is my idea and you need to use my idea. But it makes things difficult not only for the parent walking in, it makes it difficult for the school to partner with parents. Parents need to work WITH the people in the schools. Funding does come from different areas.
- A youth tri-lead repeated information about the two emails that would be sent by the convener.

***The meeting was adjourned after a Youth Tri-lead thanked everyone for their participation and it was announced that the next meeting would be on October 22<sup>nd</sup>.***