


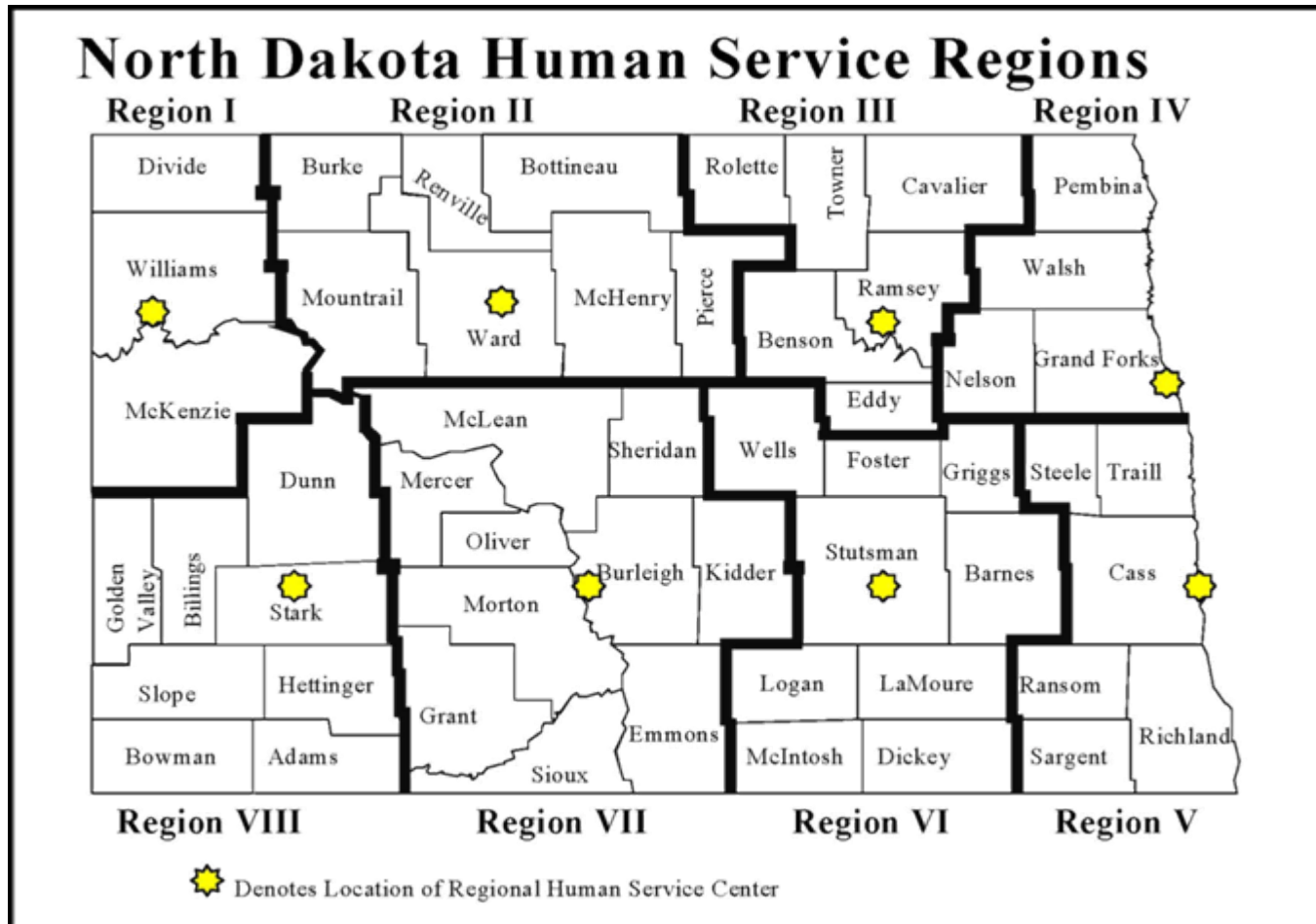


Career Options Round Table

Welcome

- Penny Lasky
 - Employment Program Director
 - Since December of 2007
 - Began in December 2007 as the Director for Regions IV and V's TANF Program
 - Since then have also began implementing and supervising the Vocational Development Program and the Community Options Supported Employment Program
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Regions IV and V Overview



Overview of Regions IV and V

– Region IV

– Walsh, Pembina, Steele, Traill and Grand Forks County

- Consists of, on average, about 150 TANF clients
- 1 Office Location in Grand Forks only
- 4 Case Managers
 - Case loads of up to 50 clients at a time
 - 1 day of outreach per Case Manager
- 1 Employment Specialist
 - Provides office support
 - Job Development

Demographics of Region IV

- Grand Forks is the 3rd most populated city in ND with roughly 52,000 people (largest being Fargo with only 93,000)
- Grand Forks County has roughly 67,000 people total (Steele-2258/Walsh-11,000)
 - o 93% Caucasian Population
 - o 89% High School Graduates
 - o 28% Bachelors Degree or Higher
 - o 15.5% Living at or below Poverty Level (11.8% avg for the state of ND)
 - o Median household income is \$43,500
 - o Roughly 8,500 Individuals age 5+ have been diagnosed with a disability
 - o Information gathered from the US Census Bureau

Common Barriers or Challenges for Region IV

- Lack of qualified, flexible Child Care Providers
- Lack of benefits planning provided to individuals on assistance
- Lack of higher education
- High School Drop out rate
 - o The Grand Forks 1 School District had a grades 9–12 dropout rate of 1% in 2005. The national grades 9–12 dropout rate in 2005 was 3.9%.
- Lack of Transportation and/or lack of knowledge in regards to utilizing the transportation system
 - o City bus system is available in the city of Grand Forks, yet limited schedule and no availability in rural areas

–Region V


–Richland, Ransom and Sargent County

- Consists of, on average, about 30 TANF Clients
- 1 Office Location in Wahpeton, ND only
- 1 Case Manager
 - Case load of about 30 clients per month
 - 1 day of outreach a month


Demographics of Region V

- Richland County (Wahpeton) has a population of 18,000, which is the largest of these 3 counties (Sargent-4048 and Ransom-5628)
- 6.3% Unemployment Rate
- Child Abuse and Neglect cases have risen from roughly 100 cases in 2003 to 163 cases in 2007
 - o In these cases the parents receiving TANF are working even harder in efforts to get their children back. Often times some children remain in the home while others are taken into Foster Care.
- Adult Abuse cases have been high this year in the TANF cases working with Career Options, yet statistics on this have not been gathered
 - o This can affect participation greatly and the ability to focus on a career versus safety is just not reasonable


Common Barriers or Challenges for Region V

- Distance of travel necessary to resources available
 - Automotive Shops
 - Non-Profit Organizations
 - Discounted Shopping
 - Population is sparsely located
 - Qualified, flexible child care providers
 - Economy
 - Transportation
 - Housing
 - Language Barriers
 - Migrant Workers
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Engaging the Participant

- Develop a team approach, get to know who they are working with in all aspects of their household management
 - This will build a stronger, healthier working relationship with an increased chance of success.
 - Teachers
 - Child Care
 - Counselors
 - Eligibility Workers
 - Employers
 - Family Members
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Motivate, Educate and Inspire

- Look at getting through the barriers first
 - Take the next step at developing skills, which in turn builds confidence
 - Put things into perspective, don't complicate things, simplify them!
 - Model behavior and the enthusiasm desired
 - Accompany participants to appointments, interviews, job searching, etc
 - Develop a Special Project to conquer those hard to manage situations
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Take Away the Excuses...

- In Regions IV and V we are challenged to overcome a lot of language barriers
 - *Solution:* That challenge was turned into a Special Project by creating a program called “Picture Perfect”
 - We encounter a lot of individuals who have several children and state no child care is available therefore they cannot hold employment.
 - *Solution:* We then went out in the community and met the Child Care Providers and gathered enough info and developed a partnership with many providers when accommodations could be made in such situations. We now receive notices of openings/number of openings from providers which again takes that excuse away more frequently.
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Cont.

- We have participants that wanted to start college, but we quickly learned that many began thinking it was a way to meet the TANF expectations of hours needed so many dropped out
 - *Solution:* We then developed a Special Project called “Creative Pathways” where we networked with employers which frequently hired from those they knew and very rarely advertised their positions. We developed on site, short term (20 hrs) experiences at these locations so individuals could get a better understanding of a potential career field they might have been considering. This is in efforts to decrease the college drop out rates and we hope to have statistics one day. Ex. Fire Department, Police, Nursing, Teaching, Entrepreneurs, and so on.
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Thank You

