

LINCOLN COUNTY YOUTH JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE COMMITTEE

Friday, April 17, 2026 - 9:00 AM

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Kaminski at 9:04am. 9 people were in attendance. Those that attended in person: Sofia Widowski, Sarah VenRooy, Stefanie Kaminski, Amber DeRizzo, Sara Klebenow, Trisha Kubichek, Brittney Woebbecking. Those that attended virtually: Erin Ray, Sandy Stetzer.

2. Review Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve by Widowski, second by VenRooy, all in favor.

3. Review Guiding Principles Poll

This agenda item should have been listed as a Partnership vs Membership Discussion. Widowski informed the group of the difference between a partner and a member. A member has to be at the majority of the meetings, and you need to have 50% attendance by members to carry on a meeting. A partner supports the committee but may not attend regular meetings. Those that responded to being members: Social Services, Tomahawk School District, Children's of WI, NCHC, Kinship, Merrill Area Public Schools, State Public Defender's Office and Health Department. Those that responded to being partners: Merrill Police Department (can the SRO's possibly rotate meetings and attend if staffing allows), Tomahawk Police Department, Big Brothers Big Sisters, DA's Office, Active & Aware Citizens. Widowski will reach out to those that have not responded. There was also discussion on opening the meeting to more community agencies — the Park & Rec Department with all the youth activities that they offer; local Churches with all the youth programs they have. These entities may not need to attend all meetings, but if they feel they have information that pertains to the agenda during that time, they could attend.

4. Review the 2026-2028 goal and the next steps

The 2026-2028 goal: Increase awareness through education relating to youth substance abuse.

What are our steps/ideas:

- There has been discussion that DARE will be coming back to Merrill schools.
- Tomahawk Police Department is partnering with Kinship to offer 2–3 stage training in substance abuse in youth, Woebbecking will send more information.
- Raise awareness of the need for youth services — there needs to be buy in within the community; expectations are not realistic and teens are being set up for failure.
- Kinship is offering group therapy for their youth, and it is going well.
- The less formalized it is, the more successful it will be.
- Could Al Anon be offered to youth? Where would it be offered?
- The Tomahawk library referendum wasn't passed which may impact the youth services that the library offers in the community.
- Is there another option to pre-expulsion and expulsion and what are the guidelines?
- **Could this group meet quarterly and break into subgroups that would meet separately to attain this goal and future goals? Which agencies would be interested in what steps? (create another poll)**

5. Upcoming Programming/Programming Updates

Kinship received a grant to offer families help with food. They are seeing an increase in habitual truancy in Tomahawk schools, but Sofia hasn't seen this on the AMC side, she will check into it. Kinship is working to break the stigma when youth/families have to meet with law enforcement.

The **Health Department** is offering Anti-Stigma education and Narcan training.

Lincoln County **Social Services** - ART is still being offered in both Merrill and Tomahawk. VenRooy will soon be trained in this. There needs to be better scheduling with AMC and the 3 schools that it is offered at. There are

only so many staff to cover, and they cannot be offered at the same time.

Children's of WI is working on marketing a parenting resource line. They are bringing back Family Matters this summer. Triple P Primary Care has been very popular but there is a waiting list.

The **State Public Defender's Office** has a lot of new faces. DeRizzo also explained that the Supreme Court just passed a bill that law enforcement cannot question youth without offering a parent to be present.

MAPS updates - Kubichek is leaving and taking a new position at North Central Health Care. Klebenow stated ART is going very well at the middle school.

6. Next Meeting Date(s)

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 19th at 9:00am at the Lincoln County Service Center in room 247-248.

7. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:13am.