

Good morning committee members,

My name is Maggie King, and I have had the privilege of serving with the Umatilla County CARE program for a decade. I am deeply invested in this initiative and believe that CARE should be implemented statewide. Our program has played a crucial role in reaching out to households and establishing personal and empathetic connections with families.

CARE provides families with the opportunity to share their narratives, fostering deeper relationships and empowering them to overcome current barriers. Our objective is to facilitate the success of our clients through a teaching and training model. Through my experiences, I've come to realize that engaging in open and honest conversations with parents facing early attendance challenges can be incredibly impactful. It encourages families to truly appreciate the importance of education and fosters a positive relationship with the school.

A significant advantage of CARE is providing transportation for individuals who might otherwise miss appointments or meetings due to unreliable transport options. Many of our community partners rely on us to transport families to important appointments that address various barriers, including dental and vision problems, as well as medical and mental health needs. Addressing these barriers is crucial, as there could be underlying factors affecting attendance. During these rides, many clients express their frustrations, concerns, or positive developments with us. We dedicate time to listen and offer nonjudgmental guidance, utilizing these moments as opportunities to teach through exemplification.

Our team assists clients in making phone calls, scheduling appointments, finding their voice, and advocating for themselves. CARE promotes an environment where families can be open and candid regarding their past or future choices without fear of judgment. As CARE specialists, we are tasked with familiarizing ourselves with the resources available in our community to connect individuals with appropriate support. We cultivate personal relationships with our community partners, thereby streamlining the referral process and ensuring that our clients are in capable hands. Our partners include schools, the Department of Human Services, law enforcement, parole and probation officers, mental health service providers, landlords, and various other entities.

They can depend on us to facilitate meetings and maintain amicable interactions with our shared clients.

The strength of CARE lies in its support for any individual with a child, regardless of their legal status, demographics, or economic circumstances. CARE has been instrumental in assisting families confronting challenges such as addiction, homelessness, suicidal ideation, food insecurity, job loss, mental health crises, teen parenting, and transportation obstacles. Our program delivers essential support within our communities, ensuring that when concerns or issues arise, we are present to assess and navigate through potential complications they may have.

Sincerely,

Maggie King