

**New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect  
Prevention Committee  
Maura Somers Dughi, Esq, Chair  
Diana Autin, Esq, Vice-Chair  
September 6, 2012  
9:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M  
Minutes**

**In Attendance:**

Diana Autin	Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN)
Jeanette Collins	Child Assault Prevention Program
Suzanne Conrad	Consultant
Anthony DiFabio	Robins Nest, Inc.
Maura Dughi-Somers	Child and Family advocacy
Gina Hernandez	Prevent Child Abuse-NJ
Natasha Johnson	DHS-Division of Family Development
Natasha Palmer	NJ Department of Education
Gayle Riesser	Department of Human Services
Rush Russell	Prevent Child Abuse-NJ
Lisa von Pier	DCF-Division of Family & Community Partnership

**Staff:**

Grace Hamilton	DCF-Division of Family & Community Partnership
Adrienne E. Jackson	DCF-NJTFCAN

**Introductions and Review of Minutes**

Introductions were made and May meeting minutes were approved.

**Family and Community Partnerships, Office of Domestic Violence Services**

Grace Hamilton, Administrator of the Office of Domestic Violence, provided a brief update. This office works with community stakeholders in an effort to improve and enhance services that are culturally-competent, strength-based, empowering, accessible, and non-stigmatizing to those who voluntarily request these services. She began by advising the group that October is domestic violence awareness month. Several shelter programs scheduled activities throughout the month and a calendar of events relative to these programs is being developed.

Conversation continued around two programs within this office: Domestic Violence Liaisons (DVL) and PALS. The PALS Program – Evidence informed, evidence based creative arts therapeutic program provides services to children between the ages of 4-12. There are eleven programs throughout the state: Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Essex, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Union and Passaic counties – the department fully funds these programs. Each of the eleven programs must begin with fifty children although more are served. NJ Coalition for Battered Woman is working on a three-year project to complete a status review of the PALS

program throughout the state. This initiative is being led by Dr. Linda Jeffries of Rowan University. Relative to domestic violence, the department expanded the DVL program by seven positions increasing the liaisons to thirty-one noting newly hired DVL received training around the department's case practice model and new worker training.

### **April 2013 Child Abuse Prevention Month**

Discussion ensued around naming April strengthening family's month in an effort to move away from child abuse prevention month. The group requested this item be included on the Task Force and Communication Committee agenda. Adrienne agreed to add this item to November Task Force agenda.

### **Task Force 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report**

The second annual report was posted on NJTFCAN web page. The report can be found at [www.njtaskforcecan.org](http://www.njtaskforcecan.org).

### **Workgroups Update**

*Feedback* – Reviewed DCF/FCP strategic plan PowerPoint; however, a PowerPoint on the Prevention Plan needs to be developed. This group is hoping to do some focus groups in the spring, but resources are limited so new strategies need to be discussed to get the focus groups accomplished. The group will consider asking DCF-funded partners/programs to host the focus groups.

*Standards* – Continued work around revising the Standards for Prevention noting good progress.

Workgroups convened

### **Next Meeting & Announcements**

Tuesday, November 1, 2012