

**New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect
Department of Children and Families
Allison Blake, Ph.D., LSW, Co- Chair
Dr. Martin A. Finkel, Co- Chair
September 27, 2013
9:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Minutes**

In Attendance

Lorraine Augostini	Office of the Public Defender
Diana Autin	SPAN
Marygrace Billek	Mercer County DHS
Allison Blake	DCF-Commissioner
James Chester	Foster & Adoptive Family Services
Alfred Federico	Mercer County Superior Court
Martin A. Finkel	CARES Institute
Liza Kirshenbaum	CASA & Protection Committee
Marisol Llyod	Department of Corrections
Marianne Majewski	Catholic Charities
Stephanie Petrillo	Camden County Superior Court
Robert DeNigris McCormick	Montclair State University
Natasha Johnson	Department of Human Services
Gloria Rodriguez	Department of Health & Senior Services

DCF Staff:

Ifeanyi Pole	DCF – Office of the Commissioner
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Introductions and Review of Minutes

Introductions were made.

The May and July minutes were reviewed and approved.

DCF Update

The Commissioner provided an update on the status of Superstorm Sandy Long-Term Recovery. She informed that DCF has developed new and expanding existing services based on the needs assessments. The strategy and three-point plan is to prevent an increase in child abuse and neglect, prevent increase in domestic violence, sexual exploitation and to meet the increase need for mental health and trauma services. The goal is to not only reach the families that DCF normally serves, but also those families in the impacted counties who may not normally access social services. As services and programs are implemented, this information will be shared with the disaster case managers and service providers around the state. The Family Success Centers' (FSC) capacity has been expanded for the next two years. There will be increased evening hours, weekend, mobile outreach and access to some existing trauma services. Some of the expanded FSCs are also doing work around financial literacy and linking individuals/families to legal advocates.

The Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Health (DOH), and DCF are working together to link their services. The three Departments are collaborating,

attending events together and coordinating press release to ensure that families are linked to all services to which they are eligible.

The Home Visitation (early intervention) programs have been expanded. These programs are for pregnant and young moms. There are several different models in New Jersey, which have been expanded to the impacted counties. The central intake for the Home Visitation programs will allow for more families to be accepted. The Displaced Homemaker Centers are career readiness and supportive services for women re-entering the workforce, which do not exist in every county. Its main source of funding is through a budget line item and also receives supplemental funds through legislated divorce filing fees. The impacted counties that have an existing program are being expanded to serve more women. DCF is working on a strategy for impacted counties that do not have an existing program. October is National Domestic Violence Awareness month. DCF is planning a statewide expansion of the domestic violence services which will include alternative housing expansion, shelter capacity expansion, counseling, and supportive services and some prevention expansion. The Coalition for Battered Women has been a strong partnership in this effort and they will be receiving supplemental from the federal government to assist them with some additional work.

Recently, DCF had a Request for Proposals (RFP) and a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) released in relation to recovery. There is an RFP for psycho-educational programs which is aimed at targeting schools in the impacted counties to get psycho-educational services into the schools to assist the staff, to work with the students and provide some outreach to families. The RFP is set up for one contract to cover the northern part of the state and one for the southern part of the state. DCF and DOE will be working with whoever receives the contracts to assist them and the school districts in the impacted counties. The expansion is in the final stage.

Additionally, an RFQ for an expansion of respite services for families with children who have intellectual and developmental disabilities is also on the DCF website. As part of the Governor's realignment of social services, this work was moved to DCF last year. DCF have been working on trying to expand services through the recovery dollars to increase the outreach to the impacted counties for families with children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The program at Montclair State University with Gerry Costa and the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health will be expanding their reach with childcare centers within those 10 counties. It is aimed at reaching the staff, children and doing some outreach to families. Natasha Johnson and other DFD staff have been doing a lot of work trying to get the word out.

DCF has been able to use recovery dollars in order to respond to human trafficking. The focus is to increase street outreach to get more professional staff out on the street to identify these youths and connect them to existing services. These are existing service providers in the State that are knowledgeable about the network of services that are available in the ten impacted counties. DCF will be continually assessing needs related to the recovery to determine if there are other services and programs needed. DCF is trying to educate as many people as possible before the Super Bowl. The 2nd floor youth hotline and State Central Registry (SCR) are in the process of adding new

codes (human trafficking-sex or human trafficking-laboring), which should go live in October.

Commissioner Blake will be in Washington, DC in November with other child welfare leaders, experts and representative from the juvenile family courts to try and understand what is working and what is not with human trafficking. The biggest challenge for systems that have undergone reform is around treatment. Over the next couple of months, DCF will be visiting treatment programs in neighboring states to understand based on their data, what is working, so that we can be make some decisions. There is a concern for an outreach for boy victims, and DCF is having discussions with experts from other states to help them think about what the outreach should look like. The FBI and SCR are currently reporting seeing primarily domestic victims. The federal government funds residential treatment centers and other support services for international victims and there are contracts in NJ with existing residential providers through the federal government, where the FBI makes a placement through the federal office of refugee services.

DCF will be training over seven thousand staff in several modules. Between now and the Super Bowl staff will be completing module one, which is understanding human trafficking, focus on their understanding of adolescent development, recognizing the signs of human trafficking, educating them about survival sex, and the long term impact of sexual abuse. There will be additional modules to following and someone will provide an overview at the next meeting. Dr. Finkel will be presenting on the issue of child sexual abuse. A lot can be learned from the international community because they have been dealing with this for a long time.

The Hope and Healing crisis counseling program was due to end on February 14, 2014 but has been extended. This is FEMA funding which Commissioner Velez has to continually go back and renew.

DCF staff is currently meeting with the DAG's office with regarding to not having children fall through the cracks when there is no parental involvement. This is a developing and continuing work. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

DCF is working with Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and some other stakeholders looking at the needs of parent, foster parents, and resource families in terms of being able to identify and responds to the signs of trauma for the children in their care. AAP has a large national disaster task force of experts that address trauma issues. Two weeks after super storm Sandy, a Dr. David Schonfeld was sent to the Jersey Shore Medical Center to do some psychological first aid work with physicians and resource parents in those shore counties. Two months ago, the Dr. Schonfeld was sent to the Family Success Center annual meeting. The day was spent presenting the psychological first aid. Dr. Schonfeld works with, child and families after natural/man-made disasters. FAFS will be coordinating the four sessions in October. On the October 15th, there will be a morning and afternoon training aimed at the southern part of the state in Willingboro. FAFS and the Family Support Organizations (FSOs) will be bringing the parents in to have the opportunity to hear and speak with him. On October 16th, a morning and afternoon training will be held at the Professional Center in New Brunswick. This session is slated to have an exhibit hall with information about services and supports for

families. DCF will be reassessing if more sessions are needed and the information will be shared with the committee.

Biennial Conference Update

Martin thanked Ifeanyi and Rutgers for their hard work putting the conference together. Ifeanyi acknowledged LaTasha's assistance in organizing as well.

A confidential handout was shared with the committee regarding an update of the conference that was held on September 20, 2013. There were 18 exhibitors (13 nonprofit and 5 governmental) and the keynote speaker Charlyn Harper-Brown were well received. Dr. Harper-Brown's presentation was engaging, informative and many attendees asked about getting the presentation email to them. There was a lunch presentation given by Commissioner Blake, presenting the Commissioner's Partnership Award to Junius Scott, Program Manager for his time and service with children and families. The morning and afternoon workshops were discussed. There was a little over 500 hundred attendees. The feedback from the presenters and attendees were very positive and worthwhile. There was discussion around the feedback from those who attended and who did not attend the conference in regards to the location and the keynote speaker (known in the prevention circles). Recommendations were made for the 2015 conference and the skill building conference next year. An email will be sent to members asking to participate on the committee.

Ifeanyi is in progress of reviewing the evaluations received from Rutgers. The summary will be available at the next meeting along with the answers to some of the data questions (where participants were located and their expertise). Also, thank you letters will be going out to the presenters and the attendees.

Subcommittee/Committee Applications

The Committee applications for Elizabeth Bowman, Loris Morris, Diane Dellanno and Suzanne Alvino have been approved

The question was raised as to whether or not DCF committee members would be able to participate in the Task Force committee meetings. The committee was reassured that this would not be an issue.

Communication Committee Update

The Communication Committee Chair, Kathy Collins was unable to attend the meeting. She is attending training at Georgetown University until Saturday. An email was sent to inform the Task Force that the committee is finalizing their current goals and objectives. At the top of the list is to brand the Task Force with its own logo and tending to the site of the DCF website. More details will be available in the next report.

Prevention Committee Update

The prevention committee has been working on updating the prevention standards and preparing to work on the prevention plan. A draft of prevention standards was discussed at the last meeting and members were given two weeks to submit their comments. The standards are easier and the narrative chart version can be used as an assessment tool for entities to see if they are actually implementing the prevention

standards. The prevention plan workgroup is working very closely with Lisa von Pier, FCP staff and some data people within DCF around first developing an updated shorter and easier prevention survey. The parent version of the survey has been piloted in both English and Spanish and available on the website to be completed and some hard copies that will go out to parents. The goal is to receive 700 prevention surveys.

There are 5/6 focus groups with families around the state. The focus groups are aimed at a variety of different audiences (families who participate in home visiting, with FSC, etc.) and will be held in October and November. There are key stakeholder interviews with people who are knowledgeable about and committed to prevention. The committee is also looking at what data is currently available to see if we can identify particular issues that are connected to child abuse and neglect in New Jersey. Clarus Consulting has been contracted by the DCF to collect the data, analyze it, so that it can be feed into the prevention plan. This should be completed by November to begin developing the prevention plan. Maura mentioned at a previous meeting that the prevention plan will not be ready by January 1 and asked to have the current plan extended. The goal is to launch this in April for "Child Abuse Prevention Month".

Protection Committee Update

The Protection Committee had a reorganizational meeting on August 20, 2013. There was an initial discussion about participation and as a result of that discussion the committee has decided to create a recommendation to the Task Force, which will be forthcoming, regarding what actually constitutes a conflict of interest on the committee and how they are handled.

The Protection committee work right now is being done within the workgroups primarily because of the difficulty of getting people to attend meetings. The Batterers Accountability Workgroup is at a standstill, which will be revived in the near future. There has been significant movement in the area of data and John Esmerado is the lead person. He is looking at different data sets from data sources and this was the result of Rush Russell's presentation a while ago. The committee is also addressing the differences in the functionality and capacity of the MDTs due to concerns about the function and consistency across the state. A workgroup is being created to conduct a survey to gather information about what is happening with the MDTs to get a sense of how often they are meeting, who are participating on a regular basis and how the information is being shared with MDT participants.

The Commissioner acknowledged Liza's leadership with the Protection Committee. Liza is really giving a lot of time to this work, which is being noticed from other stakeholders and DCF staff as well.

The committee is also tackling the topic of human trafficking. The human trafficking workgroup has split up into two. The first group is focusing on what happens once a youth is identified as potentially trafficked. Youth includes anyone under the age of 21. Our goal is to develop some mechanism of serving the youth. The workgroup looked at the MDTs model and thought that this would be a good model to replica for trafficked youth. The group is looking at which cases would be appreciate for human trafficking-MDT and what are some questions/red flags that would be useful to non-law enforcement (CP&P, CSOC worker, CASA volunteer, healthcare). The second group (Liza facilitating) is working on actual MDT guidelines for human trafficking and using

the existing MDT guidelines. The human trafficking workgroup is meeting on October 9th and a draft will be given to them. There are some big questions that need to be asked as far as confidentiality issues and Director of Special Projects, Donna Younkin is sorting through them in terms of when MDT comes together, what information can be shared with the group and what information cannot.

SORS Update

There was a presentation given by Assistant Commissioner Elizabeth Bowman on the qualitative review. The presentation was about information that was collected the factors of cases that they are looking to get information about, how the interviews are conducted and when they come back how they analyze it and provide the information to the various offices about what they found. And there was a review of the program improvement plans that are being developed.

Announcements

There is advertisement regarding the judiciary conducting an "Access and Fairness: survey on Oct 7 – 11th", developed by the National Center for State Courts. The survey is looking at getting peoples feedback on whether or not they were given true access and fair treatment to services. The committee was informed to share this information with people that are using the services.

Next Meeting/Announcement – November 22, 2013 – New Brunswick