

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
January 16, 2015
9:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Minutes

In Attendance

Diana Autin	SPAN
Marygrace Billek	Mercer County DHS
Lauren Carlton	Department of Law and Public Safety
Yvonne DeCicco	Office of the Law Guardian – Public Defender
Alfred Federico	Mercer County Superior Court
Martin A. Finkel	CARES Institute
Rita Gulden	CASA of New Jersey
Donna Younkin	DCF – Director of Special Initiatives

DCF Staff:

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

Introductions were made.

The November 2014 minutes were approved.

NJFTCAN Business

Committee Applications – Dr. Finkel

The Task Force voted and approved Eileen Caraker’s application for the Protection Committee.

Subcommittee/Committee Updates

Communication Committee - Yvonne DeCicco

Yvonne informed the Task Force of the meeting that she and Andrea Lovas had with the president of Graphic Image, Inc. (a marketing and graphics company in Hackettstown, NJ) to create a logo for the Task Force. During the meeting, they discussed the Task Force’s history, provided sample logos, and collaborated on design ideas for the Task Force logo. The discussed logo design includes the child abuse prevention color of blue and the contrasting color of orange. The Committee should have draft samples of logos to choose from within a week or two which will be shared with the Task Force at the March 2015 meeting for feedback. Yvonne informed the Task Force that Graphic Image, Inc. is creating the logo pro bono.

The Committee is also working on reviewing and updating the Task Force website content. In addition, they are researching the possibility of an addition of an interactive calendar of events to the website. Ifeanyi Pole has agreed to reach out to Office of Information Technology (OIT) to see if the calendar is feasible and an update will be provided to the Task Force at the March 2015 meeting. It was noted that Ifeanyi and Juan Serrano (DCF Graphic Designer) updated the Task Force website content. The

Committee and Task Force will further discuss the process by which information would be posted to the Task Force's webpages.

Prevention Committee - Diana Autin

Diana informed the Task Force that Prevent Child Abuse - New Jersey (PCA-NJ) has been awarded the contract to develop a webinar around the Standards for Prevention. It will be a two-part webinar with a one hour introduction to the Standards and using the assessment tool. The webinar will be archived for future viewing for those who are unable to participate during its launch. Follow up is being done to see whether or not social work credits will be available. The Committee further discussed the needs for additional training beyond the webinar. The Committee also discussed the need for additional funds for professional development and the importance of training for parent leaders. A follow up conference call is being scheduled. Diana will inform the Committee of Dr. Finkel's suggestion on reaching out to the business community, particularly banks, as a way to get additional funding to broaden the Committee's efforts on spreading the word about prevention.

The Prevention Plan Workgroup met before the 2014 holidays to focus on the next steps identified in the Prevention Plan which are cited in the Plan as being at a greater risk of being abuse or neglected: young children, children with disabilities, child and families impacted by substance abuse and/or mental health issues. The Workgroup has identified a point person for each of these identified areas and the Workgroup members will plan to meet with representatives of key state agencies and non-state agencies to assess if there are areas for collaboration beyond DCF. A draft survey of questions has been developed by the Workgroup to assist the members in these agency meetings and/or conference calls. A conference call is being scheduled to finalize the survey. Diana also informed the Task Force that the Children's Trust Funds Request for Proposal (RFP) will be issued before the end of January 2015. Members of the Task Force have volunteered to review the proposals.

Diana announced that February is National Parent Leadership month and a Family Leadership Roundtable discussion has been organized by Michelle Rupe from DCF-Family Community Partnerships (FCP) for February 18, 2015 at the DCF Professional Center. Also, Parents Anonymous and SPAN are sponsoring a breakfast to celebrate parent leaders.

Protection Committee – Donna Younkin

Donna updated the Task Force on the Batterer's Accountability workgroup. During the December 15, 2014 conference call, the Committee discussed that the purpose of this workgroup may be outdated as it relates to current initiatives addressing this topic. Judy Spinney from Rutgers will attend the Committee's January 28, 2015 meeting and share information on this topic to assist the workgroup in deciding on how they wish to proceed.

The human trafficking workgroup is working on a guidelines document to assist counties as they address the issue of human trafficking. Eileen Caraker, Nurse Coordinator/SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) Coordinator will attend the January 28, 2015 to discuss what Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) nurses are doing with regard to human trafficking. Dr. Finkel will be attending the January meeting as well. Donna informed the Task Force that Eileen used to be a Protection Committee

member years ago and she is very excited about joining the Committee once again. In the future, Eileen will invite another nurse to attend the Protection Committee meetings. Donna mentioned that over 250 human trafficking reports have been received since September 2013. Dr. Finkel stated that the doctors at the Regional Diagnostic Treatment Centers (RDTC) are very interested in joining the committee and he will send out a reminder email for them to send their application to Ifeanyi.

Ifeanyi provided Donna a list of the Protection Committee attendees for 2014 to remind them of the meeting dates and to make sure the list is up to date.

SORS Update – Rita Gulden

Rita announced that SORS has a new vice chair, Linda Porcaro, who is heading the survey with the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI). The survey is being revamped from the one that was done several years ago.

Robert Ring, Director of Office of Training and Professional Development, attended the SORS meeting on January 13, 2015 to answer the following questions: What constitutes a passing score?; What is the follow-up when a staff member does not pass and how is that linked to the participant's performance evaluation/the percentage of poor compliance classes at the different levels (caseworkers, supervisors, etc.) by local office. SORS is requesting this information in order to make recommendations to Commissioner Blake. Also, the Office of Training and Professional Development will be incorporating new technology (test pilot) to be implemented by July 2015 with assistance from Rutgers.

Nancy Parelo from Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) reported on their education stability report. SORS is still waiting to meet with Michele Safrin to address the concerns for children placed in group homes and institutional homes and how their education is tracked moving forward. SORS is completing a list of questions to send to Michele. The other concern is whether or not a surrogate is available at each school district as well as how to obtain this information. It was discussed that it is the school district's responsibility to provide a surrogate for the child.

The Task Force discussed how DCF staff is informed of court decisions pertaining to child abuse or neglect. Lauren Carlton informed the Task Force that she keeps her staff and Deputy Commissioner, Joseph Ribsam informed of all decisions as well as presenting the law at the Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) Area Directors meetings and Local Office meetings.

2015 Biennial Conference Update – Ifeanyi Pole

Ifeanyi reported that this year's Biennial Conference will be held on Monday, September 9, 2015. The location of the Conference will be announced at the March Task Force meeting. The keynote speaker is Dr. Joseph Crumbly and the conference theme is "Kinship Care and Family Connections". The Conference's conference title, Call For Papers (CFP), tracks and proposed workshop topics were discussed. It was discussed that a track on trauma informed care should be added since this is the focus of DCF. The Task Force voted on amending the track title to, "Trauma Informed Care and Therapeutic Interventions." The amendment of the CFP's criteria section to focus on child well-being versus maltreatment as well as adding a category for non-social workers was also discussed..

Ifeanyi will send out another email to the Task Force member to see if anyone is interested in serving on the planning Committee for the conference as well as sending the draft call for papers for feedback. Any Task Force member submitting calls for papers are unable to be on the planning committee.

Ifeanyi reminded the Task Force that DCF is contracting with Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education to assist with the conference logistics.

Announcements

Donna informed the Task Force of the SANE Nurse Conference she attended in Baltimore, MD. One of the workshops was on strangulation and discussed an increase number of neck injuries and the use of black lights in detecting trauma. Donna recommended that the speaker present at a future conference in NJ. Donna will send Dr. Finkel the nurse's information along with the PowerPoint presentation.

Lauren Carlton informed the Task Force that on January 22, 2015, the Monitor will be filing and publishing their Period 15 report on the Department of Children and Families (DCF) before Judge Chesler in Newark, New Jersey. Court hearings are held every six months to review in public the Monitors report concerning DCF compliance with the Modified Settlement Agreement (MSA). The Monitor's report will be posted on DCF website.

Diana announced that the 2015 Statewide Parent Leadership & Advocacy Conference will be held at Montclair State University on April 18, 2015 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. It is being sponsored in collaboration with Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN), Parents Anonymous, the National Institute for Family Success and the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA). This conference is held every two years.

Dr. Finkel announced that the CARES Institute's Experts in Child Abuse 9th Annual Best Practices Symposium is being held on April 1, 2015 from 9:30 am until 4:30 pm at DCF Professional Center in New Brunswick. Jodi Quas, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Social Behavior at the University of California, Irvine will be presenting on "Children's Memory and Suggestibility: Areas of Consensus and Controversy" and Mary L. Pulido, Ph.D., Executive Director, The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children will be presenting on Supporting Responders to Child and Family Trauma: Ways to Manage Secondary Traumatic Stress at the Agency, Professional and Personal. There is no cost to attend.

Next Meeting/Announcement – March 27, 2015 – New Brunswick