

**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
May 23, 2014
9:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Minutes**

In Attendance

Mark Ali	Essex County Prosecutor's Office
Lorraine Augustini	Office of the Public Defender
Diana Autin	Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Mary Jane Awrachow	Foster and Adoptive Family Services
Marygrace Billek	Mercer County DHS
Lauren Carlton	Department of Law and Public Safety
Kathy Collins	Monmouth Cares
Maura Somers Dughi	Child and Family Advocate
Alfred Federico	Mercer County Superior Court
Martin A. Finkel	CARES Institute
Marisol Llyod	Department of Corrections
Stephanie Petrillo	Camden County Superior Court
Joseph Ribsam	DCF-Assistant Commissioner
Lisa von Pier	DCF – Assistant Commissioner

DCF Staff:

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

Introductions were made. The March 2014 minutes were approved.

DCF Update

Data Transparency Initiative

Assistant Commissioner, Joseph Ribsam and Assistant Commissioner, Lisa von Pier presented the “Commissioner’s Dashboard - April 2014” on behalf of Commissioner Allison Blake. The Commissioner’s Dashboard is a monthly snapshot of DCF’s data that is posted on the Department’s website. In an effort to be more transparent, DCF is making this information available to the public.

Copies of the Commissioner’s Dashboard - April 2014 were disseminated to the Committee and discussed:

- **Page 2: DCF At a Glance** – It was explained to the Committee that the “DCF At a Glance” represents who DCF is serving and some of DCF’s key data elements. The total number of children served includes children through the Children’s System of Care (CSOC) and Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) in-home and out-of-home placements for youth between 18-21 years old that have chosen to keep their cases open after their 18th birthday. Also, the total number of clients served for Family and Community Partnerships (FCP) and Division on Women (DOW) are provided to DCF via Excel spreadsheet by the providers. One of DCF’s future goals for FCP and DOW is to develop a robust data collection system like the ones implemented by CP&P and CSOC. DCF At a

Glance also highlights quick facts on CP&P, CSOC, FCP, DOW and caseload intake. The Committee discussed that it would be important to see data on the families served by the Family Support Organization, which was not captured.

- **Page 3: MSA Update** lists some of the key Modified Settlement Agreement (MSA) measures that DCF is tracking. The chart represents gaps between the measures and performances. There was a brief discussion on meeting the target for parent/child visits in relation to different factors (i.e. court order, child sick, parent sick, etc.).
- **Page 5: CP&P Quick Facts** provides information regarding families receiving services under CP&P (non kin and kinship, legal guardianship, adoptions, out-of-home placements, entries and exits to Care). The Task Force recommended a breakdown of this list of children receiving services by county.
- **Page 6: CPS & CWS Referrals Assigned to all CP&P Offices** compares, over a number of years, what child protective service (CPS) and child welfare service (CWS) referrals were assigned to all offices. This shows the response time (i.e. once the referral is received, how quickly staff begins the investigation) and investigation timeliness (i.e. how long it takes staff to complete the investigation). The Task Force has requested separating the CPS and CWS data.
- **The Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit (IAIU)** data is not captured in the Dashboard and it was discussed that the IAIU data is important information. The Task Force requested to have IAIU present at a future Task Force meeting.
- The Task Force inquired that given DCF's movement toward a trauma-informed workplace and use of evidence-based practices if a percentage of providers are actually meeting the objective could be provided. Lisa stated data is not being collected on such at that this point. However, within the next year and a half, DCF will be in a better position to determine how this work is actually being accomplished and will be included in the contract requirements. Lisa will check with Elizabeth Manley to see where CSOC is with this requirement.
- **Page 8: Initial & Quarterly Family Teams Meeting** - Progress is being made in the utilization of the family teams meetings and the development of the ongoing case plans.
- **Page 10: Children in Care Management** - The CSOC data for children in case management reflects the change that was made to include the youth with DD (developmental disabilities) and substance abuse treatment.
- **Page 15L: Tracking Data from Superstorm Sandy** - The red bars indicate the counties that were designated in the Social Service Block Grant (SSBG) as the counties most impacted by the storm. It was noted that Camden and Passaic are showing high numbers, however, they were not included in the HUD-designated impacted counties. The second chart represents the calls PerformCare received from people identified as being impacted by the storm. Again, Passaic and

Camden numbers are relatively high.

- **Page 18: CP&P Key Performance Indicators by Local Office** - This requires the Area and Local Office Directors to understand what areas of work need attention. The document has been critical for CP&P work to move toward continuous quality improvement. CP&P data collection is done through the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) federally supported to collect and track all types of information about the children and families served by DCF. Joe informed the Task Force that arrangements can be made to have Information Technology (IT) staff come and give a presentation on SACWIS.

Dr. Finkel suggested that the Task Force take time to view and absorb the Commissioner's Dashboard. A list of questions will be compiled and submitted to DCF beforehand to discuss at a later date.

NJTFCAN Business

Child Death Review and the State Medical Examiner-Ad Hoc Committee - Dr. Finkel

Dr. Finkel stated at the last meeting, the Task Force discussed creating an Ad Hoc Committee and a notice was sent out to all that agreed to participate. The Child Fatality Near Fatality Review Board (CFNFRB) has expressed a willingness to attend a Task Force meeting to speak on this matter. The CFNFRB will be added to the July 25, 2014 meeting agenda. Also, Senator Joseph Vitale has taken the lead on this matter. Dr. Finkel will reach out to the Ad Hoc Committee to see how the Task Force could provide additional support.

Subcommittee/Committee Applications - Task Force

The Committee applications for Charmaine Thomas and Michelle Rupe have been approved for the Prevention Committee.

Task Force members gave brief remarks regarding Michelle Rupe's willingness to assist and her dedication to the Prevention Committee. It was also noted that Charmaine Thomas' first day with the Committee coincide with the March 24, 2014 Prevention Retreat.

Subcommittee/Committee Updates

Communication Committee Update – Kathy Collins

Kathy thanked the Task Force for their feedback and attention to the 4th Annual Task Force report. The content of the report is complete and it is now being formatted by DCF staff. Everyone will receive a final copy of the report.

The Communication Committee attended the unveiling of the Standards and the Plan on April 28, 2014. The Committee is interested in assisting the Prevention Committee with their communication part of the Plan.

The Committee is still recruiting members and contact has been made with Montclair State University to see if they have any communication students interested in assisting the Committee.

Prevention Committee Update- Maura Somers Dughi

The Task Force was thanked for their attention in approving the Plan via electronic vote. The April 28, 2014 public unveiling of the Standards and the Prevention Plan was discussed. DCF was largely represented at the event. The Committee did not receive the participation from the community and providers that they had anticipated. The Committee's next step will be working toward determining how to get out to the communities in every county to inform them of the Standards and Plan.

The Prevention Committee May 1, 2014 meeting was canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2014. And follow-up will be provided at the July 25, 2014 meeting regarding the Committee's next steps.

Dr. Finkel thanked Maura, Diana and the Prevention Committee on behalf of the Task Force for their hard work and leadership.

Protection Committee Update – Mark Ali

Mark reminded the Task Force of the Protection Committee's three active working groups: Batterers Accountability, Data Collection and Human Trafficking. The Batterers Accountability workgroup has been working on the IRB application and they are now able to conduct their survey. The surveys will be given to the prosecutor's office this summer. The data will be collected and presented to the Task Force.

John Esmerado has been working on the data project. Data has been collected from DCF and Promis/Gavel from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) on as it pertains to New Jersey's sexual abuse statute (2C2:14-2). The data was uniform among most of New Jersey's twenty one counties, with the exception of Atlantic and Middlesex, which had some data entry issues. All the data has been collected on this project and the information should be in written form before September 2014. Mark informed the Task Force that John will no longer be involved in child abuse issues, which is a huge loss for the Protection Committee.

The human trafficking workgroup received a presentation from DCF at their May 15th meeting on how the Department is addressing human trafficking with the Family Intervention Crisis Unit (FCIU), the mental health aspects and how they are capturing the data. Mark informed the Task Force that the Workgroup is interested in the model that the Boston Child Advocacy Center (CAC) has developed. The next Human Trafficking meeting will be coordinated with the Boston CAC to develop a similar approach in NJ. Mark hoped to have a clear understanding of the Boston CAC model to present an update on this initiative at the September 26th Task Force meeting.

The Task Force was informed that Commissioner Blake is a member of the Commission on Human Trafficking; this Commission has not yet met to date. The human trafficking workgroup will draft their ideas on the Boston CAC and present them to the Task Force. It was discussed that DCF receives weekly referrals of human trafficking of minors. It was further discussed that there is a lot of work to with respect to ongoing training, support for caseworkers and supervisors to understand how to work with youths/their families, and to build resources for treatment services. Mark also mentioned that DCF is working with Polaris, an organization that has a nationwide network, to arrange for shelter and therapy for human trafficking survivors in different states.

SORS Update – Lauren Carlton

The SORS 8th annual report is complete and Ifeanyi stated that the report is currently being formatted. Once formatted, the SORS report is forwarded to the Governor's office, legislature, and the New Jersey State Library. In addition, the SORS report is made available to the public and published on DCF's website. The 8th annual SORS report focuses on visitation. Another staff survey will be conducted, with Linda Porcaro leading the team and assistance from the national organization that helped out with the first survey. There will be at least one focus group prior to handing out the survey.

SORS will continue to monitor the educational stability and the service mapping directly related to visitation. A Geographic Information Map GIS map will be created with just the visitation programming. One of the issues that the Subcommittee will research is what kind of training staff is received to implement the requirements. Joe Ribsam informed the Task Force that every local office has an educational stability liaison, which they should speak with first. If the issue cannot be resolved with the liaison, contact should be made with Michele Safrin who can coordinate with the county superintendent office and the Department of Education. Lisa will send out an email reminder to her staff regarding the protocol. The Task Force was informed of the summit held in March 2014 with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) through the Children In and Court Improvement Committee (CICIC). The educational summit objective was for each county to have a group of systems liaisons (i.e. child protection, courts, etc.) working together to address the issues in their particular county. Joe informed the Task Force of the joint guidance with the Department of Education (DOE) around educational practice for the youth in foster care and how the educational stability should work. The Educational Stability Act is geared toward keeping kids in their home school rather than a new school. The caseworker can make the decision with input from the law guardians, parents, and resource parent for what is in the best interest for the child; and if there is a disagreement then it goes to the judge. Per SORS conversation with Michele Safrin last July 2013, it was discussed that the standards are being met and kids are staying in their home school districts.

There was a brief discussion on the Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) checks. Joe discussed examples of the industries that are required to get a CARI check: adoption agencies, people planning to be adoptive parents, adoption agencies staff, foster parents, child care workers, family daycare workers, approved parents through Division of Family Development (DFD) to serve as local day care providers for people who are receiving assistance from TANF, CASA workers, residential treatment providers, resources parents, DCF staff and people eligible to be an adult guardian. DCF has hired additional staff to keep up with the demand.

Announcements

Mark Ali informed the Task Force that Wynona's House 1st Child Advocacy Center National Summit on Child Abuse and Neglect that was held on April 7-8, 2014 was very successful. The Summit's keynote speaker was Dr. Robert F. Anda.

The Task Force was informed of the New Jersey Foster Scholars Program. There are over 400 youth currently going to post-secondary education as a result of this program. Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) have managed the program for over ten years. The goal next year is to have 450 students participating in the program. The

students are attending two or four year colleges/universities and vocational/technical schools. They are maintaining their grade point averages and graduating from these schools and/or programs.

Next Meeting/Announcement – July 25, 2014 – New Brunswick