

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
November 21, 2014
9:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Minutes

In Attendance

Lorraine Augostini	Office of the Public Defender
Mary Jane Awrachow	Foster and Adoptive Family Services
Rhona Beadle	New Jersey Children’s Alliance Chapter
Marygrace Billek	Mercer County DHS
Lauren Carlton	Department of Law and Public Safety
Kathy Collins	Monmouth Cares
Christene DeWitt-Parker	Department of Education
Maura Somers Dughi	Child and Family Advocate
Martin A. Finkel	CARES Institute
Rita Gulden	CASA of New Jersey
Carolyn Murray	Essex County Prosecutor’s Office
Stephanie Petrillo	Camden County Superior Court

DCF Staff:

Ifeanyi Pole DCF – Office of the Commissioner

Introductions and Review of Minutes

Introductions were made.

The October 2014 minutes were approved with the following edit:

Natasha Johnson and Marygrace Billek volunteered to review CTF proposals and we are looking to recruit one more Task Force member who does not have a conflict of interest and meets the ethics criteria.

NJFTCAN Business

Youth Membership

Ifeanyi Pole distributed the updated Youth Membership flyer to the Task Force members in response to the discussion at the October meeting about the need to find a youth representative to join the Task Force, as per the statute. The flyer is also posted on the Task Force portal. The flyer will be sent to the Youth Advisory Boards, the Foster Scholars Program, Project Teach and the Tech Student Project. Members were encouraged to distribute the flyer and it was suggested that the flyer be shared with the Rutgers Child Advocacy Clinic “Youth 4 Youth” for their website as well as advertising at colleges/universities. The Committee discussed possible transportation issues for the youth to attend the bi-monthly meetings.

Marygrace Billek will forward Ifeanyi the “Where did you sleep last night” flyer to share with the Task Force. This flyer was generated to get a sense of youth housing stability.

Subcommittee/Committee Updates

Communication Committee - Dr. Martin Finkel

The Task Force members voted to approve Yvonne DeCicco as the new Vice Chair of the Communication Committee. Dr. Finkel presented the following Communication Committee's updates on behalf of Yvonne DeCicco:

During the Committee's conference call on October 28, 2014, it was discussed that the Committee will continue to research options for the branding logo for the Task Force, explore new ways to recruit new Committee members, partner with the Prevention Committee to disseminate the Standards and Prevention Plan; and review and discuss updating the Task Force website. The Communication Committee's next meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2014.

A conference call will be scheduled with Dr. Finkel, Maura and Yvonne to strategize about the best way to inform communities about the Prevention Plan.

Prevention Committee - Maura Somers Dughi

Maura informed the Task Force that staff from Family and Community Partnerships (FCP) is charged with crafting the Children's Trust Fund (CTF) Request for Proposal (RFP). The Committee is still seeking a third person from the Task Force to review the children's trust fund applications. The Committee wants to ensure things are in place before the process begins.

Maura stated that the Prevention Committee's current work is guided by the Prevention Plan and the dissemination of the Standards. The Committee is also working on identifying and collaborating with other state agencies and entities to ensure that the Prevention Plan is implemented in accordance with the Standards.

Christene DeWitt-Parker stated that she has signed up for the Protection Committee and is requesting information be sent to her regarding upcoming meetings.

Protection Committee – Dr. Martin Finkel

The Task Force voted Donna Younkin as the Acting Chair for the Protection Committee until a new chair is identified. Dr. Finkel informed the Committee that Donna has taken the lead role on human trafficking for the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Dr. Finkel recently discussed with Donna the Committee's two agenda items: 1) building capacity through strategic physician workforce development for the Regional Diagnostic Treatment Centers (RDTC) and 2) the role of SANE nurses and their relationship to RDTCs.

Dr. Finkel presented the following Protection Committee updates on behalf of Donna Younkin:

The Attorney General's (AG) is hosting a human trafficking training in Camden on November 25, 2014. Although this event is filled to capacity, there will be additional trainings in 2015. Donna has been attending the human trafficking meetings around the State and has observed that each county approaches the subject differently. Also, Donna serves on the New Jersey Human Trafficking Commission and requests that Task Force members email her with any

difficulties they may be encountering with human trafficking legislation. Donna would like to share this information with the Commissioner Blake.

SORS Update – Rita Gulden

There were no updates for SORS due to their November meeting being canceled. However, Rita stated that the Subcommittee's ongoing effort is to recruit new members. Rita will connect with Dawn Leff, DCF staff liaison to SOR, to explore new ways to recruit new members. SORS is still without a vice chair. Rita has someone in mind but due to their schedules, they have not been able to meet.

2015 Biennial Conference Update – Dr. Martin Finkel and Ifeanyi Pole

Ifeanyi provided the Task Force with information about the biennial conference which will take place in September 2015 in Southern New Jersey (Atlantic City) or Central New Jersey. Dr. Finkel informed the Committee that the Conference theme will be "Kinship Care" and the keynote speaker is Dr. Joseph Crumbly from the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Crumbly's most recent areas of specialization have been kinship care and transracial adoptions. Dr. Finkel and Maura proposed Dr. Susan Kelly of Georgia State University as an additional Conference speaker. Dr. Finkel will send Ifeanyi Dr. Kelly's contact information. There will be a "call for papers" issued shortly which will require a proposal review committee made up of the Task Force members. Ifeanyi emphasized that any Task Force member interested in presenting at the conference will not be eligible to serve on the proposal review committee. Ifeanyi will provide additional updates at the meeting in January 2015.

Dr. Finkel announced to the Committee that September is National Kinship Care Month and stated that New Jersey has been the national leader in the area of kinship care. It was also discussed that this conference will highlight the accomplishments of New Jersey in this area.

It was discussed that the New Jersey Supreme Court has accepted certification on relative resource cases and the Supreme Court is considering whether relatives should or are subject to licensing, receipt of funds from Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P). This decision will likely be made just before the 2015 Biennial Conference and it was discussed that the Task Force may wish to have a workshop on this topic at the Conference.

Announcements

On Monday, November 24, 2014, the New Jersey Judiciary Child in Court Improvement Committee is sponsoring a one-day training to become a certified child welfare law specialist.

The CARES Institute will be hosting a lecture on December 16, 2014 on "Experts in Child Abuse and Neglect Lecture Series" with Dr. Harriet MacMillian as the keynote speaker. The lecture will be held at The Conference Center at Mercer from 9:30 am until 12:00 pm. The lecture is free and Task Force members were provided the website to register: www.caresinstitute.org/. Task Force members were encouraged to have their staff attend as well.

Ifeanyi informed the Task Force that the Governor's Office of Appointments is aware of the open seats on the Task Force.

Next Meeting/Announcement – January 16, 2014 – Trenton