

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
July 24, 2015
9:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Minutes

In Attendance

Suzanne Alvino	DCF- Chief of Staff
Christian Arnold	Department of Law and Public Safety
Diana Autin	Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Mary Jane Awrachow	Foster and Adoptive Family Services
Marygrace Billek	Mercer County DHS
Yvonne DeCicco	Office of the Law Guardian – Public Defender
Maura Somer Dughi	Child and Family Advocacy
Martin A. Finkel	CARES Institute
LaTasha Holmes	DCF/ Special Assistant to the Commissioner/ Long-Term Recovery Coordinator
Debra Lancaster	DCF-Office of Strategic Planning
Kelly Moore	DCF-Office of Strategic Planning
Stephanie Petrillo	Camden County Superior Court
Natasha Johnson	Department of Human Services – Division of Family Development
Gloria Rodriguez	Department of Health
Cecilia Zalkind	Advocates for Children of New Jersey

DCF Staff:

Ifeanyi Pole DCF – Office of the Commissioner

Introductions and Review of Minutes

Introductions were made.

The May 2015 minutes were approved with noted edits.

DCF Updates from Suzanne Alvino

2015 Biennial Conference Updates

Suzanne Alvino provided the Task Force with information on the 2015 Biennial Conference: Kinship Care and Family Connections, on September 9, 2015 at the Hyatt Regency in New Brunswick featuring keynote speaker, Dr. Joseph Crumbley. Suzanne informed the Task Force that approximately seventy-five workshop proposals were received by Rutgers making it difficult to make workshop selections this year. However, workshops have been selected and confirmed. In addition, this year's Conference will also include three all-day invitational workshops. The Task Force was also informed that registration for the Conference is opened and Ifeanyi Pole will email the Task Force and its committees the registration information. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) have been allotted staff registration slots for the Conference. Suzanne further informed the Task Force to contact Rutgers if they were is interested in exhibiting at the Conference.

DCF Video Communications

LaTasha Holmes presented DCF's educational videos on water safety tips and the dangers of leaving children unattended in a car to the Task Force. LaTasha informed the Task Force that DCF's communication efforts align with the Department's strategic plan, most notably, the strategic priority of communication in which DCF seeks to enhance its communication with DCF employees, partners, media and the general public. The two videos shown were as follows:

Not Even For A Minute – Never Leave Children Unattended in a Car

<http://youtu.be/-YUEckZiwQs>

Not Even For A Second – Keeping Kids Safe Near Water

https://youtu.be/1BoMrq4y_CA

LaTasha encouraged Task Force members to share their feedback on the videos, potential ideas for broader dissemination, and overall comments on DCF's efforts to enhance its communications through the use of this media. The Task Force members provided the following feedback on the videos at the meeting:

- The Task Force members stated that the videos are well constructed.
- Mary Jane Awrachow stated that she would post a link to DCF's videos on the Foster and Adoptive Services (FAFS) website as well as their Facebook page.
- The Task Force discussed the possibility of DCF forwarding these videos to news stations to feature during their news segments.
- Dr. Finkel stated that he will contact the Wakefern Foundation to see if they will disseminate the videos.
- The Task Force discussed that DCF may wish to partner with the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide this safety information to their licensed child care centers and families.
- The Task Force also discussed that DCF may consider partnering with the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission to have the car safety posters posted in their stations and/or post the video on their website.

Ifeanyi Pole will email the Task Force members a link to the videos. In addition, feedback will be shared with DCF's Director of Communications.

DCF Trauma Needs Assessment Presentation

Debra Lancaster, Director of the Office of Strategic Development and Dr. Kelly Moore presented on trauma needs assessment for DCF. Debra and Dr. Moore worked with other systems that have done this work and the DCF Trauma Needs Assessment was built upon existing tools and assessment processes. Dr. Moore informed the Task Force that she is a clinical psychologist who has experience implementing evidence-based practices with vulnerable populations, children, families and individuals on trauma. Dr. Moore informed the Task Force that she was motivated to pursue her doctorate when she began this work at Robin's Nest, Inc. and she has been with DCF since July 2014.

Dr. Moore informed the Task Force that the definition of trauma informed child welfare system that DCF is using was developed by the National Advisory Committee of the Chadwick Trauma Informed System Project and approved by the Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) Advisory Committee. It is based on the awareness of trauma and its impact (i.e. people receiving services and people that deliver the services). Information is infused into the culture or organization in terms of practice and policy and using the best available science to foster recovery and resilience. The professional quality of life skills measured looked at secondary traumatic stress and risk for burn out with child welfare workers as well as sixteen focus groups. The data collection was from October 2014 through January 2015. The report recommendations (a copy of the Recommendations at a glance document was sent to the Task in advance of the meeting) are:

- Trauma training is available (how frontline staff are interacting with families and children)
- Promoting stability by keeping children in their community (eg. same school district) and working with other systems
- Identifying resources for the biological parents that have a trauma history
- Providing refresher training for resource parents
- Well-being and resilience of the staff - supervisors are the key in creating workplace moral and some level of consistency in place where workers really feel supported
- Expanding trauma informed services for resource parents and biological parents
- Debra informed the Task Force that there are two pilots under Lisa von Pier and Liz Manley in Mercer and Burlington counties where they are partnering with personnel at Mobile regarding new placements and connecting with the resource parents and briefing
- Developing guidelines on how things are communicated to children in way that they are a part of what is happening with their case
- Local Offices will be trained on materials they can utilize the next day
- Discussion regarding implementation and recommendations moving forward along with an executive summary once approved which will be shared with stakeholders as well
- A proposed project is to do some more intensive work with the Child Health unit nurses, ensuring them up to do trauma informed work

The Task Force was informed that 1,700 CP&P staff responded to the survey out of about 5,000 staff. There were 16 focus groups and interviews that were spread out throughout the State with participation from staff from all levels.

Mary Jane Awrachow informed the Task Force that Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) has developed a trauma and resilience two-course training for families approved by CP&P and she has agreed to share the training with the Task Force.

An update will be provided to the Task Force in 2016.

NJTFCAN Business – Action Items

Committee Applications

The Task Force approved the applications for Christian Arnold for the Prevention Committee and Aubrey Powers for the Staffing and Oversight Review Subcommittee (SORS).

Maura Somers Dughi requested to be notified in advance of anyone was interested in joining the Prevention Committee.

Protection Committee Members-Removal Recommendation

The Task Force voted and approved to remove those members of the Protection Committee that were not in good standing with attendance according to the bylaws. A letter will be sent to the members thanking them for their time served on the Protection Committee and if their time and commitment change, they can reapply.

Subcommittee/Committee Updates

Communication Committee - Yvonne DeCicco

Yvonne informed the Task Force that the NJTFCAN's logo design was revised to spell out, "New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect" beneath the acronym. Yvonne will request the design file of the logo from Graphic Image, Inc. The NJTFCAN's logo will be debuted at the 2015 Biennial Task Force Conference and the Committee is discussing recommendations for its future placement on electronic and printed materials. Yvonne informed the Task Force that a letter will be sent to Claudia Ehr Gott, President of Graphic Image, Inc. thanking her for her logo contribution. Yvonne also shared that the Committee will be reviewing/editing the Task Force's website content and the 2014-2015 Staffing and Oversight Review Subcommittee (SORS) and NJTFCAN annual report content.

Prevention Committee – Maura Somers Dughi

Maura updated the Task Force on the Essex County project which the Task Force approved Children's Trust Fund (CTF) funding of a staff member for one year in Newark. The project is focused around positive outcomes for young children and Maura shared that periodic reports about this project will be presented to the Prevention Committee.

In addition, Maura informed that Task Force that the Standards for Prevention webinars training were held twice for "Standards for Prevention Programs: Overview 101" and twice for "Advanced Standards for Prevention Programs: Practical Application for Administrators". All of the webinar training sessions were filled to capacity. The Committee's conversation now focuses on ways to increase capacity as well as how to make the Standards for Prevention a requirement for funding from the Division of Family and Community Partnership (FCP). The Task Force was also informed of the Prevention Plan and the Committee's discussions on marketing it throughout New Jersey's communities. Diana Autin informed the Task Force that interviews are being conducted by her workgroup with key people in other state agencies (i.e. DOH, DOE, DHS, etc.). The Committee received recommendations from these meetings about how the Committee could be looking at people who their primary mission may not be prevention of child and abuse and neglect. The Committee discussed the need for training staff and grantees of other agencies doing prevention and family strengthening work on the Prevention Plan and Standards for Prevention.

Protection Committee – Dr. Finkel

Dr. Finkel informed the Task Force of the following Protection Committee updates on behalf of Donna Younkin:

- The Task Force approved the Human Trafficking County Guidelines electronically via email with a majority of “Aye” votes. The Guidelines document has been forwarded to Commissioner Blake for consideration.
- John Esmerado has been engaged in a project around data discrepancies with abuse/neglect data from the AOC and DCF/DCPP. He has shared briefly preliminary data and draft recommendations with the Protection Committee at its last 2 meetings and the Committee looks forward to seeing his final document in the near future.
- The Protection Committee has drafted its 2014-2015 summary of activities for the 5th annual Task Force report.
- At the July 15th Protection Committee meeting, the Committee had two representatives from the FBI Unit that handle sexually exploitive images, along with a U.S. Assistant Attorney who prosecutes these cases make a presentation. It was a sobering presentation in terms of the significant scope of this issue, the manner in which this occurs, how victims are groomed and preyed upon, and the long-range devastation of victims. A follow-up discussion by the Committee will occur at its next meeting in September.

SORS Update – Dr. Finkel

Dr. Finkel informed the Task Force of the following SORS updates on behalf of Rita Gulden:

- Completion of the follow-up survey to the DCP&P workforce
- Reviewing the SORS goals sheets for updating for FY 16 – 18
- Updating the SORS understanding on what is covered by the Educational Stability Law and who that law leaves out. The discussions reviewed how DCP&P is addressing those not identified in the law.
- Working on the SORS annual report for the Task Force.

Next Meeting/Announcement – September 25, 2015 – Trenton*

**The September 25, 2015 and November 20, 2015 NJTFCAN meetings were canceled.*