



New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect  
**PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

Maura Somers Dughi, Esq, Chair

**May 5, 2016**

**10:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.**

Capital Center Building  
50 East State Street, 2nd Floor  
Commissioner's Large Conference Room  
Trenton, NJ 08625

**Minutes**

**In Attendance:**

Christine Baker	Metro-Regional Diagnostic and Treatment Center at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center
Andrea Breitwieser	DHS - Div. of Family Development
Jeanette Collins	Child Assault Prevention Program
Suzanne Conrad	Consultant
Gerry Costa	Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health
Roslyn Dashiell	PEI Kids
Diane Dellanno	Advocates for Children of NJ
Maura Somers Dughi	Child Family Advocacy
Jessica Gregory	DCF – Family and Community Partnerships and Division on Women
Chante Gunter	DCF – Supervising Program Support Specialist
Sunday Gustin	DCF – Family & Community Partnerships
Gina Hernandez	Prevent Child Abuse NJ
Niurca Louis	Robins' Nest, Inc.
Patty Mojta	Prevent Child Abuse NJ
Kerrie Ocasio	Rutgers School of Education
Kathy Roe	Parents Anonymous of NJ
Lenore Scott	DCF – Family and Community Partnerships
Svetlana Shpiegel	Montclair University
Wendi White	Department of Corrections

**Staff**

Ifeanyi Pole	DCF – Office of the Commissioner
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## Review of March Minutes

The March 3, 2016 minutes were approved with the following edits:

### **Page 2; Paragraph 4 - Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children – Update:**

Christina Colon informed the Committee that the Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children project is in the 8<sup>th</sup> month of intake referrals. The DCF Newark local office begins the intake process through Essex Pregnancy and Parenting Connections. Also, the caseworkers contact DCF's Family Success Centers for additional information and referrals for their clients; this "warm handoff" involves two different workers coordinating information on one family at a time. Home visits are viewed as an easier interview because the worker develops a trusting relationship with that family and DCF's Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P). [Suzanne Conrad requested that trauma assessments be included in the outcomes.](#)

### **Page 3; Paragraph 5 - Children's Trust Fund Campaign – Prevention/Communication Committee Workgroup:**

The Committee inquired about the project's data to date and Kerrie Ocasio stated that there [is presently review of a comparison group that uses a randomized control factor design of 75 parents in the prevention group and 75 around 50 parents in the control group.](#) This research [includes parent interviews and administrative data to understand how parents' access to services might be impacted by the practice.](#) ~~looks at case the records and which parents' cases remain open for additional assistance and which close their case.~~ Focus groups are being formed in the case conferences to get [their the perspectives of CP&P and community partners that participated in the conferences that may inform the survey that will go out in May.](#) DCF's Early Childhood programs have many services and expertise to help in the prevention for families in need and have been invaluable. Kerrie informed the Committee of possible systemic factors in data regarding the prevention of families to include a better support of workers and the engagement of the family; this data will be reviewed and analyzed.

### **Infant Child Mental Health in New Jersey Presentations - Gerry Costa and Sunday Gustin**

Maura Somers Dughi informed the Committee that Gerry Costa and Sunday Gustin would co-present information on, "What is Happening for Infants and Young Children in New Jersey" in recognition of Infant Mental Health Month.



Dr. Costa disseminated a printed version of his PowerPoint presentation to the Committee and informed them of his work on infant child mental health at Montclair State University's Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health. Dr. Costa stated that infant and early childhood mental health is concerned with the optimal physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the young child (birth through eight years old) within the context of his/her family. It also investigates and honors the relationships – in the home and community - that are considered crucial to the child's neurological, physical, emotional, and social development which are the foundation for all later developmental progress.

Dr. Costa informed the Committee about the neural connections for different functions of children's brain development. He stated that Interpersonal Neurobiology is a field referring to the child and relationships that play a key role in their mental development and also referenced The Center for the Developing Child website ([www.correctwebsite.com](http://www.correctwebsite.com)) for additional brain research. Dr. Costa stated that least attention is paid to early relationships that form the human mind and brain and the center area of the infant's brain is actually the first to develop. He shared that the "Preverbal Period" is also a critical stage in the intellectual development of that child. This was previously referred to as the non-cognitive skills and had the least attention in child development.

Dr. Costa and Sunday shared updates on the following New Jersey infant and early childhood mental health projects:

- New Jersey Council for Young Children
- Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge
- Central Intake Units
- Essex Project Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health (LAUNCH)
- County Councils for Young Children
- Grow NJ KIDS and Regional Technical Assistance Centers
- The Pyramid Model
- Keeping Babies and Children in Mind
- New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health (NJ-AIMH) Competency Guidelines and Endorsement System

Dr. Costa and Sunday informed the Committee that in 2010, the New Jersey Council for Young Children was created by Executive Order to serve as the Governor's State Advisory Council for Early Education and Care as authorized under the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. Dr. Costa also shared that New Jersey was awarded a \$44.3 million Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant to improve program quality and services coordination for infants, young children and their families to maximize infants and young children's learning and development, starting during pregnancy. He stated that parent leadership is critical in giving parents the power to do the work needed. Dr. Costa informed the Committee of the importance



of Central Intake Units to serve as a one-stop to give a family coming in for assistance access to many different programs.

Dr. Costa and Sunday also informed the Committee about the following Essex Project LAUNCH Programs and Initiatives:

- Essex Parenting and Pregnancy Connections (EPPC)
- Educating Physicians in the Community (EPIC)
- Promoting healthy social emotional development through Evidence Based Practices (EBPs)

Dr. Costa informed the Committee about the Grow NJ Kids program and stated that it has been a big part of the community addressing social mental development. The Grow NJ Kids' program provides agencies' assistance and resources to help sites progress through a five level Quality Rating Improvement System.

Dr. Costa and Sunday informed the Committee about the Keeping Babies and Children in Mind- (KCBM) project and KCBM's goals. They stated that since May 2014, the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health at Montclair State University offers a series of trainings for professionals who work with infants, toddlers, young children and their families (pregnancy thru age eight), initially in the 10 counties most affected by Superstorm Sandy, now statewide. They also shared that staff from all sectors of public and private infant/child/school and family programs are invited to attend, including home visiting, childcare centers, Early Head Start/Head Start, Early Intervention, family child care providers, preschools, Family Outreach Program, Parent Linking Program, Project TEACH, Family Success Centers, elementary schools, and child welfare offices. Dr. Costa also disseminated four flyers to the Committee on the following topics:

- Early Intervention Program for Parents & Children, 4-Day Seminar – Circle of Security (COS) Parenting Training from June 13 through June 16, 2016
- Brazelton Touchpoints Approach Training – Individual Level Training for Professionals
- Keeping Babies & Children in Mind – Professional Training and Support for the Promotion of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health
- Zippy's Friends – Classroom-based Mental Health Promotion Curriculum

Maura thanked Dr. Costa and Sunday for their presentation and stated that the topic of Infant Child Mental Health in New Jersey is integrally related to the work of the Prevention Committee. Kathy Roe suggested that the Committee consider ways in which information about New Jersey's prevention resources are written at a broader level to reach more parents. Kerrie Ocasio



suggested that the Committee may want to consider drafting a paper about New Jersey's evidenced-based statewide programs; the Committee discussed that this document could memorialize Prevention Committee's accomplishments related to these programs. Maura also suggested drafting a State Prevention Statement. The Committee will discuss this topic at a future meeting.

Maura stated that she would like each Committee member to share a brief presentation of what they have been doing in their area of expertise in the upcoming meetings.

#### **Business – Workgroup and Program Updates:**

##### **Prevention Course Development Workgroup - Kerri Ocasio**

Kerrie informed the Committee that the Workgroup's expectations, goals, and materials are being reorganized. The Workgroup is researching websites to identify current materials to assist in the drafted prevention course including current information. The Committee discussed the topic of the Prevention Course's "authorship/ownership" as it pertains to partnership with outside contributors and/or experts on this project, such as the Doris Duke Fellows. Maura stated that she would partner with DCF on legal guidance on this issue and also discuss this topic at the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect's (NJTF CAN) May 20, 2016 meeting.

##### **Prevention Plan Implementation Workgroup - Maura Somers Dughi**

Maura informed the Committee that since Diane Autin has resigned from the Committee, she will invite someone from the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) to apply to serve on the Prevention Committee to assist in the ongoing dialogue and engagement of parents and their families. Maura stated that she will follow-up with Diana regarding the Prevention Plan Implementation Workgroup's updates.

She also Committee discussed the New Jersey Department of Children and Families' (DCF) development of a Request for Proposal (RFP) to bring the New Jersey Prevention Plan (Plan) to communities throughout the state. Jessica Gregory informed the Committee that she and Charmaine Thomas, Assistant Commissioner overseeing Family and Community Partnerships and Division on Women, discussed the idea of an RFP to assist in informing New Jersey's communities about the Plan. The Committee also discussed the procedures and limitations for the New Jersey Children's Trust Fund (NJ CTF). The Committee also briefly discussed the NJ CTF marketing campaign that is being developed in partnership with the Communication Committee. These two NJ CTF topics will be further discussed at a future meeting.



### **The Prevention Standards Workgroup - Gina Hernandez and Kerri Ocasio**

Gina stated that Rutgers University is scheduled to launch the first Prevention Standards in-person training in May 2016; Jessica disseminated a list of the Standards for Prevention Programs' training dates and locations to the attendees. The Committee was informed that the self-assessment is still open for parents to complete the training.

Kerrie informed the Committee that Rutgers received the NJ CTF grant to execute these trainings. The trainings will be accessible by people who speak Spanish and will include a program evaluation component. Kerrie stated that the training will also include parent webinars in English and Spanish. Three additional webinars will be scheduled for professionals.

Maura requested that the trainings' participation data be shared at upcoming meetings.

The Committee discussed ideas on how to recognize programs for their participation which will be further discussed at a future meeting.

### **Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children - Sunday Gustin and Lenore Scott**

Sunday Gustin and Lenore Scott presented updates on the Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children on behalf of Christina Colon.

Sunday and Lenore asked the Committee to consider recommending to the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect (NJTF CAN) that \$50,000 of additional New Jersey Children's Trust Fund (NJ CTF) be paid toward the salary of a staff member (i.e. Christina Colon) to continue the execution of the Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children project in Essex County; Sunday emphasized the exemplary work that Christina Colon has accomplished for this project to date.

The Committee received, reviewed, and discussed a three page July 2015-March 2016 progress report that covers on the Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children project. The Committee voted to recommend to NJTF CAN that \$50,000 of additional NJ CTF be paid toward the salary of a staff member (i.e. Christina Colon) to continue the execution of the Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children project in Essex County.

### **Discuss Additional Children's Trust Fund support for DCF's IOFIYC project**

The Committee discussed the additional Children's Trust Fund (CTF) support for DCF's Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children project and voted in favor of recommending NJTF CAN to approve \$50,000 for this project.



**Discuss the Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities' Final Report and the Prevent Child Abuse America Summary**

Maura informed the Committee that copies of the Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities' Final Report and the Prevent Child Abuse America Summary had been emailed to the members in advance of the meeting. Maura disseminated an updated version of the Prevent Child Abuse America's Summary to the attendees and stated that this topic will be tabled for this meeting and added to the July Agenda for further discussion.

**Announcements**

Maura informed the Committee that she attended the 2016 International Center for Assault Prevention (ICAP) Conference.

Ifeanyi distributed the Uniform Ethics Code, Plain Language Guide to New Jersey Executive Branch Ethics Standards, and DCF's Code of Ethics documents to the Committee's newly confirmed members; members were asked to sign and return the first page of this packet to Ifeanyi as confirmation of receipt.

**Next Meeting – July 7th** at 10:00 am (50 East State Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Commissioner's Large Conference Room).