

**New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect  
Staffing and Oversight Review Subcommittee  
Ceil Zalkind, Esq, Chair  
Rita Gulden, M.S.W., Vice-Chair  
January 8, 2013  
10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.  
Minutes**

**In Attendance**

Marygrace Billek	Mercer County Human Services
James Chester	Foster and Adoptive Family Services
Amy Fischer	Administrative Office of the Courts
Mary Hallahan	Upper Freehold Regional High School (Foster Mom)
Patricia Myers	Legal Services of New Jersey
Nancy Parelo	Advocates for Children of New Jersey
Linda Porcaro	Somerset County Office of Youth Services
John Ramos	DCF, Child Protection and Permanency
Clarence Whittaker	DCF, Children's System of Care
Karen Baldoni	DCF, Office of Contracting
Ceil Zalkind	Advocates for Children of New Jersey

**Staff**

Adrienne E. Jackson	DCF-NJTFCAN
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**Introduction and Review of Minutes**

Introductions were made and September meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.

**Service Mapping Presentation & Current Child Visitation Follow-up**

Karen Baldoni, DCF, Director of Contracting, provided an in-depth review of the department's work around its contracted services resource directory. Handouts were also provided to illustrate the directory. This directory contains programmatic information for DCF contracted providers across all four of its Divisions. The directory includes information such as geographic areas the provider serves, referral and payment process information, NJ SPIRIT resource ID number and details about the contracted provider. Information is organized by service category with drop-down options of sub-categories. Frequently used categories and commonly used services are listed. The directory is updated continuously as contracts are renewed, and staff is encouraged to take the brief survey that was created to capture their feedback about the directory or a particular service. Conversation continued around the directory. Members acknowledged the directory is a good first step and that the presentation was informative. Notwithstanding this, members agreed the presentation raised more questions. Relative to this, the SORS asked the DCF the following questions relative to visitation & contracts:

- 1). Where are the contracts and how many contracts exist?

- 2). Accessibility - as it relates to hours of operation (i.e. evenings & weekend) how accessible/available are providers?
- 3). How is DCF assessing the quality of programs?
- 4). How does DCF define performance based contracts?
- 5). How much money is DCF spending on supervised/therapeutic visitation?
- 6). Can the SORS review survey results generated by staff around the resource directory?

Given the department's focus on visits - quality as well as quantity and case planning; specifically as it relates to visitation and family engagement, the SORS asked DCF:

- 1). Is there a corrective plan?
- 2). What are the barriers and how are barriers being addressed around not meeting benchmarks?

A rich conversation continued around current child visitation, needs driving service development, service availability, assessment and quality of services. Discussion continued relative to parent/child visitation - the SORS agreed supervised/therapeutic visitation would be their area of focus moving forward. Ceil distributed copies of ACNJ policy brief *The Littlest Victims: Protecting Babies from Abuse and Neglect* to the subcommittee.

### **Finalize Activities and Measures – Open Discussion**

Strategic plan discussion was tabled until March.

### **2013 Annual Report Workgroup – Adrienne Jackson**

Nancy, Amy and Linda agreed to work on the annual report - due May 31, 2013. Adrienne agreed to arrange a conference call following the meeting.

### **Next Meeting – March 12, 2013**

In the interest of time and given the amount of work the SORS hope to accomplish by the end of March, members agreed to extend next month's meeting two hours to finish their strategic plan. ACNJ agreed to provide lunch.

### **Future Presentations/Updates**

- Elizabeth Bowman, OPMA – March 2013
- Robert Ring, CWTA – May 2013
- Michele Safrin, OESP – July 2013

### **Announcement & Closure**

Pat announced legal assistance is now available for Hurricane Sandy victims. Copies of this one-page handout - Legal Services of New Jersey, Hurricane Sandy Legal Assistance Hotline – were distributed to the group.