



Chafee Advisory Group Meeting December 9, 2021

Minutes

In Attendance: Rachel Barth, Blake Connor, Mary Coogan Hailey D'Elia Alice Garcia, Kaysie Getty, Niambi London, Naomi Louissaint-Grant, Randi Mandelbaum, Konniesha Moulton, Ifeanyi Pole, David Rosen, Safa Simmons, Jessica Steiger, Chelsea Sutphin, Tyhesha White

Absent: Tosca Blandford-Bynoe, Kelly Nestor, Suzanne Kreie, Janel Winter, Dr. Yolanda Allen, Dan Rhoton, Dr. Steven Kairys

1. Welcome & Introductions

- a. Welcome by Niambi
 - i. Introductions of new CAG members as well as OAS staff in attendance.
- b. Membership Updates
 - i. CAG discussed updated version of the Chafee Logic Model.
- c. Mindfulness Exercise by Alice
- d. Review of minutes from CAG May 10, 2021 meeting
 - i. CAG discussed concerns about the Chafee Logic Model wanted to review/revise the CAG's May 10, 2021 Minutes to reflect this information.

2. Agency Spotlight

- a. No agency volunteered to share an update.
 - i. CAG will ask for an agency volunteer for the March 2022 quarterly meeting.

3. DCF/OAS Updates

- a. OAS transitioned to CP&P in August 2021 – now within the Case Practice Unit.
 - i. OAS oversees LifeSet, Wraparound, and NJ Foster Care Scholars as well as responsible for adolescent policy, practice and training.
 - ii. Distribution of Adolescent Services/Supports and previous staff members to new offices
 1. Office of Housing – within Family and Community Partnerships – Luther and Latarsha – will get some additional information during the Chafee plan updates on this OOH and the work they are doing.
 2. Family Preservation and Reunification – Michele and Emel – life skills, PACES
 3. Family Support Services – existing office within FCP that oversees School Linked Services and Family Success Centers – OTARY contracts
 4. Already shared that Kelli Puryear is with the Office of Resilience and JT is with the Office of Training and Professional Development

- iii. CAG requested an organizational chart of the new DCF offices and OAS' work. See link to the DCF table of organization here: [TO.pdf \(nj.gov\)](#)
- b. Division X updates
 - i. Department was able to hire two Youth Ambassadors who helped DCF with its public campaign to get the word out about its Division X funding.
 - ii. DCF has been able to assist 1,800 young people between the Division X and Chafee funds.
 - iii. CAG inquired how funds were used to help young people get their drivers licenses and if any of this money is available for young people with housing issues? DCF stated Division X funding is still available for young people, 14-21 until 9/30/22 as well of Wraparound funds.
 - iv. Shared there is a technical assistance opportunity to help jurisdictions put together a program related to youth obtaining their driver's license which also includes insurance. OAS is exploring this opportunity.

4. Chafee Plan Updates

- a. *Youth Voice*
 - i. Office of Family Voice (OFV) presented info about its goal of placing youth and parents at the table to advocate and see their recommendations can be moved forward.
 - ii. OFV shared that the Youth Council (the Council) started in January 2020 and its members include young people in CP&P, CSOC, and who are a part of DCF's regional schools. In the summer of 2019, the OFV interviewed DCF's Executive staff and researched other youth councils throughout the U.S. in the creation of its Council. In January 2020, twenty-four (24) young people were welcomed into the Council. The Council was asked what they wanted the System to "start doing" and "stop doing". The Council has created subcommittees to complete its new initiatives. The Council has drafted a "Sibling Bill of Rights". Also, the Council developed a "Peer to Peer Program" and was involved in drafting its RFP. The Council is working to redesign the NJYRS website; the Council is writing the content and mocked-up the colors/photos/website and developing a NJYRS app for a 2022. The Council is reviewing courses that resource parents should be taking to keep their license and make them aware of the types of trauma that may have been experienced by young people in their care. The Council worked with the NJ Dept. of Health to discuss COVID and they also spoke to the Courts. In November 2021, the Council hosted a live Briefing on YouTube.
- b. *Promoting Kinship Care, Permanency and Connections*
 - i. DCF is reviewing the Departments' Life Skills programs. DCF has been working with Mathematica to identify an intervention or program. OAS wanted to include the Youth Thrive protective and promotive factors as a starting point. There was a team of people working on this project. OAS has developed a draft proposal the Office would like to implement for youth 13-17-year olds. As we move forward with this work, OAS will share updates with the CAG at its March 2022 meeting.

c. *Services for Young Adults 18+*

- i. DCF launched a new Office of Housing (OOH) in FCP; it creates a hub for young people seeking housing. DCF's OOH's programs include:
 - Rapid Rehousing
 - Transitional Housing
 - Supervised Transitional Housing
 - Connect to Home
 - Expectant and Parenting Youth (EPY)
 - Family Unification Program (FUP)
 - Supportive Housing Program
 - Keeping Family Together (KFT)
 - 2 Street Outreach Programs in the North and South Regions of New Jersey
- ii. DCF is addressing young people's housing needs? Rachel referenced back to DCF-OOH's housing programs for youths' housing needs.
- iii. DCF is involved in the new FYI program initiative in partnership with housing authorities.
- iv. DCF shared the following LifeSet updates:
 - LifeSet is a program of Youth Villages; it is an evidenced-based intervention.
 - New Jersey started the LifeSet program in October 2020.
 - the Young Adult Services Study (YASS) began in August 2021.
 - The first round of LifeSet's virtual site visits has taken place.
 - Since randomization has started in August 2021, there has been a slight decline of enrollment numbers.
- v. CAG suggested that LifeSet partner with Law Guardians and judges to encourage young people's participation. Also, asked if the LifeSet program could be a hybrid program versus in-person and it was shared that the model is an "in-person" model.
- vi. CAG shared information about housing assistance through Legal Services of NJ. In Essex County they were working with families who were helping with housing programs. Mary will send list of contacts for Legal Services.
- vii. DCF shared that the Casey Life skills Assessment is changing. As of April 2022, the Casey Life skills website will not be available. OAS is reviewing other assessments that might be utilized.
- viii. DCF informed CAG that info on DCF's Solutions-Based Case Work will be rolling-out in the upcoming year.
- ix. DCF stated that in the fall 2021, DCF/ACNJ held a virtual Fall Forum- [Watch the Recording - ACNJ/NJ DCF 2021 Virtual Fall Forum - Advocates for Children of New Jersey](#)

d. *CAG general updates - Members*

- i. DCF shared that the CAG added a couple of new members who participated in the December 9, 2021 meeting. The new members are: a young adult (youth) ambassador with lived child welfare experience and a representative from an adolescent DCF contracted provider.
- ii. OAS has also identified a possible representative for the Faith-Based Community CAG seat and a new representative from Montclair State University (MSU) since the previous member is no longer with MSU.

e. **Strategy Teams**

- i. DCF shared that OAS recently reassessed the Chafee strategy teams. ETV is currently the only strategy team what will be meeting. The CAG will be working to see who needs to move which areas of the Chafee work forward. Niambi will resend the list of the Chafee strategy teams to the CAG.

5. Closing

- a. *2022 Chafee Advisory Group Meeting Dates – please note that since the meeting, these dates have been adjusted to:*
 - i. *March 10th - 10:00 a.m. -12:00 noon*
 - ii. *June 9th - 10:00 a.m. -12:00 noon*
 - iii. *September 15th - 10:00 a.m. -12:00 noon*
 - iv. *December 15th - 10:00 a.m. -12:00 noon*
- b. *Volunteer for Agency Spotlight*
 - i. DCF would like an agency to volunteer for the CAG’s March 2022 quarterly meeting.
- c. *Announcements, resources, etc.*
 - i. CAG members had no announcements, resources, etc. to share.

6. Meeting Adjourned

All ideas reflected are not endorsed by the agency.