



New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

Allison Blake, Ph.D., L.S.W., Co-Chair
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Updates from Commissioner Blake

DCF is statutorily required to develop a child abuse prevention plan, a state domestic violence plan and a program improvement plan for DCF. Once these plans are complete, DCF will be holding a large planning meeting with stakeholders from different aspects of those systems. The requirement from the federal government is that we take pieces from each of those plans and incorporate them into the state's larger strategic plan.

The federal monitor's report for the period ending June 30, 2017 will be released shortly and DCF will appear in court in January.

DCF was awarded a federal SAMHSA grant "Promising Path to Success" which has two main focuses – statewide reduction in the use of seclusion and restraint and a culture change of the system towards the Nurtured Heart Approach. There was also a 3rd aspect of the grant - return on investment study of the Children's System of Care. This study is being conducted by Rutgers Center for State Health Policy. One of the deliverables included in the grant was that 9,000 individuals across the state needed to be trained in the "Nurtured Heart Approach". DCF has already hit that mark with almost two years left in the grant. There is no data available yet on the reduction of restraint and seclusion.

2017 NJTF CAN Biennial Conference Discussion

Commissioner Blake thanked everyone who attended the 2017 Biennial Conference held at the Westin Princeton at Forrestal Village. This conference was to serve as the kick-off of the implementation of the DCF blueprint for support of Evidence-Based/Evidence Supported services in the state. There were 344 attendees at the conference with a wide range of participants from the service provider community from across the state, as well as parents and youth. The conference included a facilitated discussion with Kim Dumont from the William T Grant Foundation, which funds the integration of Evidence based practices and services in the public and nonprofit sectors across the country, Allison Metz, director of National Implementation Science Research Network, which has been instrumental in New Jersey in helping develop a blueprint on how the state will use evidence based practices and services, and Esther Deblinger, model developer for Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Because Esther is the model developer, she has been able to provide significant technical assistance across the state to organizations and clinicians who are beginning to implement Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. The focus is now on implementing those services and making them available for children who have been exposed to domestic violence and child abuse.

Participants were able to choose from a total of nine workshops offered at the conference. The Task Force was informed that although it was a good conference overall, there were some challenges behind the scenes. DCF has recently released a Request For Proposals in an effort to determine if there are other entities that may want to provide conference planning services.

One of the ongoing issues with planning Task Force conferences has been the struggle with locating a suitable venue. The Task Force may consider discussing the location for the 2018 Skill Building Conference at the January meeting. Some of the other issues that were mentioned and may be discussed for upcoming conferences were the cost of the conference and provision of Clinical Continuing Educations Units. There was a suggestion that the Task Force consider holding two identical conferences, one conference to accommodate the northern part of the state and another for the southern part of the state. The Task Force also briefly discussed broadcasting of the conference by video.

NJTFCAN Business



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Review NJTF CAN Annual Report and Recommendations

Commissioner Blake informed the Task Force that the NJTF CAN Annual Report gets posted on the DCF website and is also submitted to the federal government to be posted by the Administration for Children and Families. The NJTF CAN Annual Report was accepted with the following edits:

The report listed the wrong title for Wendi White - ~~Vocation~~ Program Specialist.
Dr. Finkel stated that his title should include Rowan University.
Jennifer Underwood – ~~Grant Manager~~ – Contract Administrator.
Christopher Porrino – ~~Acting~~ Attorney General.

Review SORS Annual Report

The SORS Annual report was accepted without edit.

Vote on Children's Trust Fund Logo

The Communication Committee was presented with multiple versions of a logo to potentially represent the Children's Trust Fund. The logo ultimately chosen was selected for being representative of families. The logo includes a child and parent holding a watering can with a tagline of *Growing Strong Families*. Children's Trust Fund logo was voted on and accepted.

Commissioner Blake also informed the Task Force that DCF is now able to accept online donations for the Children's Trust Fund.

Consideration of Committee Applications

All committee applications that were proposed were accepted.

Subcommittee/Committee Updates

Communication

The Communication Committee is currently discussing a marketing proposal centered around CTF, as donations to CTF fund are low. The committee hopes to develop a revised marketing plan to submit to the Task Force by the January meeting.

Prevention

The Prevention Committee's focus for the past few meetings has been developing the 2018-2020 Prevention Plan. The committee is working with Clarus Consulting to build on the previous plan, clarify the committee's goals and ensure that the plan has actionable and measurable steps.

Protection

The Protection Committee has developed two workgroups. The Digital Realm of Child Abuse workgroup is focused on internet safety and protecting children. The workgroup is collaborating with the Department of Education to distribute surveys to public schools to evaluate what they are doing around educating children and parents.

The Juveniles with Sexually Inappropriate Behaviors workgroup is focused on disparities between different counties on how the needs of this population are addressed, lack of distinction among different offenses, lack of treatment programs, as well as how to advocate for more consistency. The workgroup is hoping to get input from the State Prosecutor's Association on how to standardize treatment and obtain assistance overall with this issue. Two members have volunteered to go county by county to conduct an inventory of programs and



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services throughout the state. Stefanie Ullman stated that she would bring this issue to the planners of the Children in Court Conference, Family Education Conference and Judicial College as a possible training topic. The Protection Committee was provided with a presentation by Rush Russell regarding NJ Assembly Bill A4442, or the “Pass the Trash” Bill. Assemblywoman Muñoz informed the Task Force that she is the fourth prime sponsor of this bill. The Task Force discussed the need for bipartisan support for the Bill to be passed.

Commissioner Blake spoke of an online training developed for educators about reporting child abuse and neglect. The Task Force discussed looking into the training to determine if it needed to be updated so that it could be recirculated. Regarding the lack of treatment programs for juveniles with sexually inappropriate behaviors, Commissioner Blake informed the Task Force that if there is an effective intervention that is being used in another state, DCF has an evidence based advisory board that would be able to determine if DCF can support it. The Task Force also discussed that they have supported training in the past to develop a cadre of clinicians and therapists in NJ that could do assessments of child sexual abuse.

SORS

The committee has been preparing the SORS Annual Report and has a meeting scheduled for the following week.

Consideration of proposed 2018 NJTF CAN and committee meeting dates

Calendar was accepted with the exception of the following edits: May 25th moved to May 18th.
Protection Committee meeting – September 19th moved to September 12th.
SORS calendar to be updated after their next scheduled meeting.

Announcements

Assemblywoman Muñoz delivered over 200 purple caps to University Hospital 2 weeks ago as a part of the Shaken Baby Syndrome awareness campaign.

Dr. Finkel announced that on December 19, 2018 CARES Institute will be hosting a free child abuse and neglect expert lecture series at The College of New Jersey. The speaker is a pediatrician and child psychiatrist and Director of Division of Child Protection and Family Health at the University of Utah. The presentation is entitled “Blindspots: Increasing Understanding of Pediatric PTSD by the Multidisciplinary Team”.

Next Meeting – January 26, 2018 in Trenton (Commissioner’s Large Conference Room)