



Protection Committee
Richard Stagliano, Chair
Liza Kirschenbaum, Esq, Vice-Chair
October 2, 2019
1:00 P.M. Meeting
Minutes

In Attendance:

Greta Anderson	DCF – Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit (IAIU)
Joyce Applegate	Catholic Charities – Diocese of Metuchen
Doug Behan	Rutgers University School of Social Work
Scout Hartley	National Foster Youth Institute
Liza Kirschenbaum	CASA of New Jersey
Sonia Moticha	Department of Education
Judy Spinney	Therapist
Richard Stagliano	Center for Family Services

By Phone:

Esther East	Jewish Family Services
Martin Finkel	CARES Institute
Debbie Riveros	Monmouth County Child Advocacy Center
Jane Reynolds	Mercer County Forensic Nurse Coordinator

Staff:

Daniel Yale	Department of Children and Families
-------------	-------------------------------------

Guest:

Katie Stoehr	Department of Children and Families
--------------	-------------------------------------

Introduction and Welcome

A brief welcome was provided by Richard Stagliano and each attendee briefly introduced themselves.

Review and Approve July 17, 2019 Minutes

The July 17, 2019 minutes were not reviewed at this time.

The 21st Century Child Welfare System

Katie Stoehr, DCF Deputy Commissioner of Operations

Katie explained that DCF is trying to transform the Department into one that's positioned for the 21st Century. DCF's vision is that all NJ residents are safe, healthy, and connected. No one of these conditions is more important than any of the others. They are all interrelated and equally important - it's a three-legged stool. If you don't have one component, you won't have the other two. Safety, being absent from harm or maltreatment, is present across all of DCF's divisions. Healthy is not just about physical health, but mental health, developmental achievements, etc. Connected is being connected to



Protection Committee
Richard Stagliano, Chair
Liza Kirschenbaum, Esq, Vice-Chair
October 2, 2019
1:00 P.M. Meeting
Minutes

other people. Many of us are grounded around the healthy and safe concepts, but the science around how biologically important it is to have social connections is fascinating.

DCF spent a good amount of time to articulate the Department's values. They are important because you can't have a rule set, policy, or procedure that anticipates every family situation or investigation. Real time decisions must be made and the point of these values is how to anchor our work in the moment.

- Collaboration – Willingness and intention to work in teams in comfortable and uncomfortable ways. We must team and share power with those whom we might not be used to sharing power. We have to ask people with lived experience to join in the policy and decision-making process.
- Equity – Making sure that we do what is needed to support each person that we serve to become safe, healthy, and connected. There is no standard package that everyone gets. Everyone needs to get to the finish line, whatever it takes.
- Evidence – Need to use evidence-based or promising practices that are scientifically rooted when available. We can't only use evidence-based services because there isn't enough of them. But when they are available, we need to make use of the evidence.
- Family – All that we do should be in the interest of family and should be determined, as much as possible, by listening to their needs and providing appropriate supports. This includes our family of staff, all of whom have valuable input to our goals and processes.
- Integrity – Making sure that we are honest, reliable and respectful in all that we do.

DCF core approaches are meant to be deeply embedded in all of DCF's work. Commissioner Beyer often refers to these as "the air we breathe."

- Race Equity – In NJ, like every other child welfare system or behavioral healthcare system, there is racial inequity rooted in the system. We must acknowledge that it is present and work on eradicating that and promoting racial equity. DCF is working with Dr. Carol Spigner of the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work. She is a renowned academic, educator and consultant in the areas of cultural competency. She will be helping us to integrate policies that advance racial equity in the work that we do. We have also been able to collaborate with the Administrative Office of the Courts on their efforts around race equity.
- Healing-Centered Practice – This is the next generation of trauma-informed care. By assuming that every individual has faced trauma, all of our approaches will be healing-centered.
- Protective Factors Framework – Five characteristics of families that, when they are present, there is a far reduced likelihood of maltreatment. Developed by the Center for Social Policy and was based on a meta-analysis of literature on child abuse and neglect.
- Family Voice – Are we listening to people with lived experience? Are we doing what we think is best for people or are we asking people and incorporating what they say? DCF created the Office of Family Voice at the end of 2018. DCF spoke with people around the country about



Protection Committee
Richard Stagliano, Chair
Liza Kirschenbaum, Esq, Vice-Chair
October 2, 2019
1:00 P.M. Meeting
Minutes

how to incorporate the voices and experiences of people with lived experience in all the work that is done at DCF. We need to employ people with lived experience, have people with lived experience provide training, have people with lived experience at the table when making policy decisions, etc. DCF will soon be launching youth councils as well as parent councils.

- Collaborative Safety – This is about behavior and operations. Safety science is being used in aviation, hospitals, heavy industry, etc. DCF is bringing this science to child welfare. This will help to DCF to not merely respond to adverse events, but learn from them in such a way that we can reliably prevent future adverse events from happening. This way of working rests on our ability to create a safe space for staff to let us know where our weaknesses exist before critical events occur. This will manifest in the next few months in changes to the way that DCF reviews critical incidents in child protection. DCF will be using a process of human factors debriefing.

Strategic Focus

Katie stated that DCF doesn't want to have just baseline functioning in the system that we have, we want it to be excellent and we want to change it. If you think about any type of change, you have to tend to the system that exists, while trying to change it, both at the same time. We want to make fundamental changes in our system itself.

- Primary prevention - We want to prevent maltreatment and fatalities. We want to prevent the need to have somebody need to call SCR. We need to focus earlier on prevention.
- Preserving Kinship Connections – the literature is clear that on the whole, if you have to separate a child from their family of origin, the very next best thing is to place them with a relative or somebody that they know. We have to do everything possible to find relatives or family friends for them to be able to be stable and healthy.
- Staff Health and Wellness – Healthy, well people are at their best. We need to make sure that the people that are doing the work, not just our staff but providers as well, have access to what they need to be healthy and well themselves.
- CSOC Integrated healthcare – If we want children and their families in CSOC to be doing well, we have to tend to an integration of medical and behavioral healthcare.

#TeamDCF

Katie informed the Committee that, at DCF, there is a lot of talk about the fact that there cannot be silos. One example is regarding kinship. Commissioner Beyer charged every member of the executive management team with laying out what they will do in the next quarter to advance the goals around kinship.

DCF needs to do everything we can to be connected to every system and stakeholder that is at play in child and family work. All residents in NJ need to work together to prevent child abuse and neglect. The only way we can get to where we want to be is to build broad coalitions and great support for the notion that families can be supported and can be strong in their own community.



**Protection Committee
Richard Stagliano, Chair
Liza Kirschenbaum, Esq, Vice-Chair
October 2, 2019
1:00 P.M. Meeting
Minutes**

Richard asked about the marketing plan for DCF's 21st Century Child Welfare System plan. Katie spoke about the Regional forums that have already taken place and those that are scheduled to take place. Katie stated that in May 2019, the Regional Forum discussed the plan and the Regional Forums scheduled for October 2019 will discuss what has been accomplished so far. Once the plan is available online, the link will be sent out via social media so that the public will be able to see the plan as well.

Doug Behan asked what steps are necessary to make this culture shift for staff. Katie stated that once the parent and youth councils are created, the hope is that they will be able to inform DCF as to what they need to pay attention to and that will change conversations in some of the various offices across the department. Katie stated that just starting to do things differently moves the dialogue. Another example is the child stat process. In the child protection system, we review each county once in the course of a two-year cycle. The Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Asst. Commissioner for DCPD and the Asst. Commissioner for CSOC attend these meetings so they are directly engaging with mid-level managers in DCPD and CSOC more often. They are then able to promote responsibility and ask for accountability quickly. The CIC Advisory Committee are looking at children that have been in foster care for more than 36 months and what they can do about it. DCF will be rolling out an enhancement to the case practice model called solution-based casework, which is the only evidence-informed child welfare practice model that exists that has been proven to have an impact on federal measures.

2019 Committee Initiatives

The Digital Realm of Child Abuse Workgroup

Sonia informed the Committee that the workgroup will focus on locating parent resources. Sonia stated that they determined from the results of the survey that a lot of schools are lacking a parent education piece across all grade levels and areas. Sonia stated that, at their next meeting, they will discuss other areas that they would like to look at it. For example, across different grade bands, more education is happening at the secondary level versus the elementary level. They will look at how education can increase in elementary schools as this type of education is very important for students of all ages. They will also look at child exploitation/sexual abuse curriculum and whether there is an internet safety piece included in the curriculum. Dr. Finkel stated that sexting and sextortion should be included in the education as well. Liza stated that sexting was a part of the survey and they will go back and look at the results.

Dr. Finkel spoke about a recent article in the New York Times about child pornography on the internet. Dr. Finkel stated that he will send the article to the Committee. The article discusses how ubiquitous access to child pornography is and how problematic it has become. Dr. Finkel felt that there has to be some kind of way to reduce potential volume and exposure to this material through internet providers.



**Protection Committee
Richard Stagliano, Chair
Liza Kirschenbaum, Esq, Vice-Chair
October 2, 2019
1:00 P.M. Meeting
Minutes**

Dr. Finkel asked if there are any committees in state government that deal with this issue outside of the Task Force. Liza stated that there are committees that could be charged with this type of issue. Dr. Finkel stated that any attempt at limiting access or exposure would elicit an argument about free speech. Liza felt that we restrict free speech in many ways through time, place and manner, but nobody has yet made a challenge on the internet using the time, place, and manner restriction focusing on the manner with subscription services, password protected, etc.

Juveniles with Sexually Inappropriate Behaviors Workgroup

Dr. Finkel stated that Dr. Krupnick was working on a proposal for training of clinicians, but that the proposal had not yet been sent. Dr. Finkel stated that he would send an email to Dr. Krupnick to check on the status.

Announcements

Richard spoke about the 2019 Biennial Conference. He felt that the quality of the conference was excellent. The speakers were great, the content was great, and it was very forward thinking, transformational. Richard stated that the number of attendees shows something about the interest and the concern about ACEs as well as the community behind this work.

Sonia informed the Committee that there was recently legislation passed that requires schools to display posters sharing the child abuse hotline information. The DOE put out an email broadcast and social media post to get the word out to the schools.

Meeting adjourned – Next Meeting December 4, 2019.