

Family & Children's Trust Fund (FACT) of Virginia

**Child Abuse & Neglect Advisory Committee Meeting**

**DSS Central Regional Office**

**March 26, 2018**

The meeting was called to order by committee co-chair Betty Wade Coyle at 1:07pm on Monday March 26, 2018 and included Betty Wade Coyle (FACT Board), Nicole Poulin (FACT), Meghan Resler (FACT), Katherine Hunter (DBHDS), Jeanine Harper (SCAN), Nancy Toscano (UMFS), Chris Spain (DSS), Anya Shaffer (DCJS), Beverly Crowder (FACT Board), Melissa O'Neal (DCJS- CASA), Heather Board (VDH), John Oliver (FACT Board)

Mr. Oliver suggested we paginate minutes and also add Trauma Informed "*Community*" Network.

Ms. Toscano motioned to approve the minutes as corrected, Ms. Hunter seconded, motion carried with all in favor.

Mr. Spain reported on the federal Families First Prevention Services Act- [Bill Summary](#). Ms. Harper brought attention to the possibility of unintended consequences. Mr. Oliver asked about how it will impact opioid epidemic and removals because of that. Chris Spain answered that the bill requires evidence based practices that specifically address mental health and substance abuse. Betty Wade Coyle raised concern that for this bill 'prevention' means prevention of foster care not prevention of abuse or neglect as well and also raised concerns about community capacity for services. Ms. Toscano elaborated on what constitutes "evidence based".

Mr. Spain gave a Child Protective Services (CPS) update by presenting a Substance-Exposed Infants (SEI) Decision Tree Tool to help hospital staff to understand when SEI infants should be reported to CPS for a Family Assessment.

A recent Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) review noted that the three Virginia CAPTA Citizen Review Boards must provide a list of concerns and recommendations about child abuse prevention and treatment each year so that VDSS can meet their Federal CAPTA requirements.

Ms. Coyle started a discussion around proposed CAN Advisory Committee recommendations and the committee agreed on presenting the following CAPTA recommendations to the FACT Board for approval to be placed in a letter to the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS):

1. With the changing landscape regarding how services for Substance Exposed Infants (SEI) and their families will be provided, it has been hard to keep up with what's going on legally and programmatically. What plans does the Virginia Department of Social Services have to communicate ongoing information about these changes to health and service professionals, administrators and how might this information trickle down to the public and potential clients?

2. Structured Decision-Making (SDM) has been an important tool for child welfare workers in Virginia. There are worries, however, around its current implementation. There are concerns about:

- the way workers are using the tool and what are the agency's plans for training workers on how to more effectively use the tool;
- the contract with the developer of the tool, Children's Research Council (CRC), was discontinued for a number of years and only recently renewed. To remain effective, the tool should be constantly monitored and evaluated. What are the plans of the Virginia Department of Social Services to deal with CRC after the current contract expires? What evaluations are available regarding the effectiveness of SDM? If there are none currently, what plans are being made to evaluate SDM?

3. The wait times and culture of the staff at the state hotline are troublesome. What is the department doing to address these concerns? Particularly of interest is:

- training to ensure that the culture around accepting calls is positive and encouraging;
- that staffing is adequate and workers are well- trained; also that pros and cons of staffing the hotline with temporary and remote workers are studied;
- the exploration of the use of technology such as recorded messages to facilitate the work of the hotline and the accessibility for callers; and
- creation of a system that reporters of child abuse and neglect can use to check on the status of their reports.

4. Local agencies have been using varying practices of diversion to keep children out of the system for years. VA DSS was doing a study on this practice, but findings of that study have not yet been released. What was found and what recommendations were made?

Other issues the CAN Committee would like to learn more about:

- Diversionary care
- Child on child sexual assault
- Near fatal incident data collection

Ms. Poulin gave her FACT report and overviewed the Trauma-Informed Care Budget Amendments at the state level. Ms. Poulin is not optimistic that they will pass because the expansion of Medicaid is a priority. Ms. Poulin then discussed the Grant Review and reported we should expect an announcement on funded projects by next week.

Under committee member reports:

Ms. Harper reported on the Greater Richmond SCAN Trauma Informed Community Network and said it has a newly formed Outcomes Committee.

Ms. Hunter reported that DBHDS brought in an “ACE Interface” and ACE trainers. More information on the Office of Behavioral Health Wellness’ ACEs initiative can be found [here](#). Amanda Stehura has joined their team as the new Women’s Services coordinator and the department has expanded Project LINC.

Ms. Toscano reported that United Family Methodist Services has been working with DJJ to increase evidence based practices around Functional Family Therapy as well as taking kids from correctional facilities and putting them in residential treatment.

Ms. Board reported that VDH will be using Project Echo as a model for addressing Substance Exposed Infants. Project Echo is a web based educational tool that is currently being used around Opioid use. The RFP for this project has gone out.

Ms. Shaffer reported that she has changed positions and is now working with DCJS.

Ms. Coyle reported that Champions for Children: Prevent Child Abuse Hampton Roads is rolling out a No Hit Zone project.

Ms. Coyle adjourned the meeting at 3:28PM.