

Child Abuse and Neglect Advisory Committee Minutes

VDSS Central Regional Office

March 21, 2019

Committee Members Present: Jeanine Harper, GRSCAN, Jane Tingley, Medical Examiner's Office, Heather Board, VDH, Katherine Hunter, DBHDS, Jenna Easton DJJ, Alana Ama, VCU intern at DCJS, Melissa O'Neal DCJS, CASA—(joined at 11) Betty Wade Coyle (CFC:PCAHR) (by phone)

Additional Attendees: Laura Reed, Project Manager- Family First Prevention Services Act; Carl Ayers, Director, Division of Family Services (joined meeting at 12pm); Nicole Poulin, Executive Director, FACT; Meghan Resler, Senior Research Associate, FACT

Committee Chair Jeanine Harper called the meeting to order at 10:10 and committee members and guests introduced themselves. Ms. Harper introduced the minutes. Heather Board motioned to approve minutes with one correction to a name spelling and Jenna Easton seconded, the motion passed with all in favor. Ms. Harper announced that John Oliver is leaving the committee to move to California, the committee expressed thanks for all that Mr. Oliver has contributed to the child welfare field in Virginia over the years.

FACT Update: Nicole Poulin gave an update on:

- FACT's focus on supporting Trauma Informed Networks (TICNs) across the state;
- The upcoming (April 25) Trauma and Resilience Summit put on by Voices for Virginia Children in partnership with FACT, Greater Richmond SCAN, and Families Forward Virginia which will have a focus on Trauma-Informed Policy and TICNs—approximately 1000 attendees are anticipated
- FACT's upcoming Issue Brief Series on Systems of Trauma, how societal injustices cause and affect traumatic stress.

Committee Member Updates

- Katherine Hunter-
 - May is Children's Mental Health Awareness Month, DBHDS has infographics and other materials to promote the month. DBHDS has made kits and will provide support for communities to hold events. More information can be found on the DBHDS Website: <http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/developmental-services/children-and-families/childrens-mental-health-awareness-month>
 - Abington is holding the Rural Summit for Childhood Success on May 23rd which will be keynoted by Jeanette Wells, the author of The Glass Castle and Jim Sporleder, retired Principal of Lincoln High School in Walla Walla, WA, the school featured in Paper Tigers, a documentary on trauma informed care.
- Jenna Easton-
 - Saw on Facebook that Ready Kids Charlottesville is holding an Event with Rick Griffin of the Community Resilience Initiative from 6-7:30 on March 28th at the MLK Performing Arts Center.

- There haven't been any new developments since we last met on the Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Justice Facility
- Heather Board-
 - There is a new grant opportunity from CDC focused on Opioid Work, rolling many of the existing Opioid prevention grants into one RFP. VDH will apply for the grant and was happy the grant highlighted recognizing primary prevention work involving ACEs as a strategy for implementation.

Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPA): Laura Reed gave an update on the three tiers of Family First: Prevention Services, Foster Care Changes, and Other Programmatic Changes; and the 5 strategic points: prevention services, family based placements, non-family based placements, evidence based services and resource and financial accountability. (PowerPoint of the presentation accompany these minutes).

The committee discussed the following items related to Ms. Reed's presentation:

- Jenna Easton asked about the potential of an increased amount of children being sent to detention centers because there will be fewer group homes and other congregate care programs with the FFPA.
 - Laura Reed answered that FFPA legislation has a specific stipulation that they must prove that the rate of children in detention centers doesn't increase because of Families First. There is a need for better communication around diversionary care, as well as foster parent recruitment and retention. Virginia is looking into evidence based treatment and foster care programs to fill gaps in the continuum of care, specifically the Treatment Foster Care Oregon Model as well as launching a foster family recruitment campaign.
- Nicole Poulin asked for some clarity around Kinship Families and financial assistance in Virginia
 - Laura Reed answered that for CPS cases, part of the safety plan can be to place children with a relative, this is an informal Kinship Family, not diversionary placement; informal Kinship families in Virginia do not get financial assistance nor any formalized training.
 - Virginia has started six Kinship Navigator Programs in regions across the state. These are regional programs that provide support specifically to informal Kinship families.
 - Sometimes Kinship families become formal foster families, however, this means they must give up custody of the children to the state. Being a formal foster family does provide funding and additional support that the families otherwise might not have.
 - Betty Wade Coyle raised the concern that she has heard in her region (Hampton Roads) that families often have as little as a week to decide if they wish to become a kinship family for children in their family or become a formal foster family. She recommended more support and information on what resources are available to these families. Jeanine Harper responded that the new Kinship Navigator Programs will hopefully help families with these materials.
 - Heather Board asked if there would be interest among Kinship Navigators to get trained and given information about suicide prevention. VDH is currently working with CSA's and FAPT teams in spreading best practices. Heather Board and Laura Reed will connect to set something up.

- Nicole Poulin expressed concern about the limited number of Kinship Navigators available for such large regions. Laura Reed responded that the funding allocated is very limited. This is a start; the committee agreed that the program seems to be one that should be expanded in coming years.
- Jeanine Harper expressed that an additional challenge in offering Evidence-Based Services, is finding clinicians that speak Spanish. This is a good reminder that Strategic Priority #4, Evidence-Based Services, must be culturally sensitive.

Discussion of Recommendations for VDSS CAPTA Recommendations

Jeanine Harper led a conversation about the recommendations the committee would like to include in the annual CAPTA letter to VDSS.

The Committee agreed to continue all recommendations from last year, although there has been activity on these areas, there is still more work to be done because these are complex challenges with long-term solutions. Therefore the letter will cover the following areas from 2018's letter:

- Workforce development and retention- Improve workforce development and retention of Child Protective Service Workers, but have more of an emphasis on well-being of workforce as far as secondary trauma and workplace/organizational culture (supportiveness and healthiness).
- State Hotline and Local Call Lines- Although the wait time for the state hotline and local call lines has been reduced from 45 to 15 minutes, the committee would like for the time to be wait time to be either significantly shorter or non-existent.
- Use of structured decision making (SDM) - The committee would like an updated report on policies and procedures as well as progress on the uniform training of DSSs workers on proper use of the tool. Tools should have regular follow up to ensure fidelity.
- Diversion- The committee requests the results from the diversion study and would like a report on what practices will be put into place that better protect children and support kin.
- Substance Exposed Infants- The committee would like a report on how localities are implementing recommended policies and procedures.

In addition to the 5 priorities from 2018, the committee will add the following two priorities:

- Child on child sexual abuse- The committee would like VDSS to explore solutions on how these cases can be more uniformly responded to. The response to these complex cases varies from locality to locality and there are jurisdictional issues that present challenges to appropriate responses.
- Child victims of sex trafficking- The committee would like VDSS to explore the state's response, options and support given to children in sex trafficking cases.

CPS & Legislative Updates

Carl Ayers gave an update on the 42 pieces of legislation that impacted the child welfare system this session. Twenty-seven bills made it through with a large focus on Foster Care. Some highlights include:

- **Senate Bill 1339** – Foster Care Omnibus Act- specific language over what State Supervised and locally administered means and will create more supervision by State

- **House Bill 2597; Senate Bill 1661** (a result of direct recommendations out of the Crime Commission)—This bill was about how we as a system should be supporting sex trafficking victims by avoiding criminalizing victims and creating a new CPS response specifically for child sex trafficking victims which includes an assessment of the sex trafficking victim’s home of origin to determine if the victim should be returned home or enter the CPS and foster care system.
- **House Bill 1671** (Heaven’s Law) There was no requirement in CPS to check in with another state to see if there is a history of child maltreatment. CPS workers will now have to screen families by asking the question: “Have you lived in another state within the last 5 years?”, if they say yes then they must inquire formally to see if the family has a record the other state. Most CPS workers have been fulfilling this, but this law will make it a requirement.
- **House Bill 1953** (Delegate Campbell on behalf of Local DSS) Whenever there is a concurrent investigation of law enforcement and CPS departments, CPS used to have to put their case on hold until the Law Enforcement case is over. This bill will put the limit on waiting for the law enforcement case to end to 6 months.
- **House Bill 2743** (Delegate Moorefield) - Requires families to tell CPS that they’re moving before they’re moving if they have a case open. Will also have a reporting mechanism within OASIS. To track and document and report the number of individuals who notify CPS change in address

After the legislative report, Jeanine Harper asked for an update on the Child Fatality Report. Mr. Ayers responded that the results of the Safe Sleep 365 study conducted by Dr. Sunny Shin showed that safe sleep education increases safe sleep practices, however safe sleep practices were already at 90%. Mr. Ayers stressed that one of the most important intervention responses for child fatalities to require CPS workers to prioritize responses to reports involving children under the age of 2.

The meeting adjourned at 1:03 pm.