

Family & Children's Trust Fund of Virginia
Child Abuse & Neglect Advisory Committee Minutes

VDSS Central Regional Office 1604 Santa Rosa Road, Henrico Thursday September 13, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 am on Thursday September 13, 2018 and included Jenna Foster (DCJS), Zandra Relaford (CSA), Heather Board (VDH), Craig Patterson (DSS), John Oliver (FACT Board, CAN Co-Chair), Beverly Crowder (FACT Board), Nicole Poulin (FACT Executive Director), Meghan Resler (FACT Senior Research Associate), Lawanda Long (DJJ), Michael Gregory (VDOE), Jenna Easton (DJJ) and Betty Wade Coyle (citizen member, who called into the meeting).

Nicole Poulin welcomed the committee and gave a background of the committee's history and charge for the new members.

Committee members provided the following updates:

- Michael Gregory: The Department of Education's Virginia Tiered Systems of Support had a training specific to trauma sensitive classrooms and cultural responsiveness. He's working with Keith Hart at DBHDS to develop regional trainings around Trauma and the Brain paired with Trauma Sensitive Classrooms. Jenna Foster asked Michael to keep the committee updated on progress on the regional training. DBHDS has been hosting regional trainings on train the trainer model on trauma's impact on the brain and on ACEs.
- Jenna Foster: DCJS has been giving regional trauma-informed trainings for domestic and sexual violence advocates but has recently included educators, social workers etc. Their trainings were always full with a lot of interest from educators.
- Jenna Easton: A committee she serves on just recently finished rewriting the school code of conduct. The committee discussed the need for policy change around criminalizing child trafficking victims and the need for data collection around human trafficking. The committee discussed that this needs to be a collaborative effort— homeless services, DSS, DJJ, DOE all need to be looped in and working together. Nicole Poulin noted that the Children's Cabinet is a good avenue for collaboration across departments and is doing a lot of info sessions with schools with a focus on school safety, and specifically mental health.
- Jenna Foster- The VOCA cap has significantly risen from \$54 million to \$87 million. They currently have a survey out asking what organizations would do with funds if they were awarded them. Jenna would like to see the money go towards children's programs and is looking for more child serving agencies to fill out the survey. The RFP will be released in early 2019.

CAN Committee Objectives

Shenandoah Juvenile Center sub-committee

Committee Chair John Oliver overviewed the DJJ/CPS report on Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Center relating to the treatment of undocumented children housed at the Center. The CPS investigation found no evidence of abuse. DJJ found that the

documented staff actions did not violate DJJ regulations, but the DJJ report raised concerns about the adequacy of the facility's training and behavior management protocols, and it called for the DJJ Board to re-visit existing regulations that allow the use of certain restraint techniques when responding to inappropriate behaviors by children in the facility. The use of such practices in caring for detained children is a serious concern, and the roles of both DJJ and VDSS in addressing and monitoring such practices need to be discussed and clarified.

John proposed the development of a sub-committee to further examine the issue and follow the actions and deliberations of DJJ and VDSS, to determine whether this committee should make specific and comprehensive recommendations related to this matter. The subcommittee would meet in person and via phone a couple of times prior to the December CAN meeting. The goal of the subcommittee would be to present the full committee with recommendations to discuss and put forth to the FACT Board.

Jeanine and John Oliver will be part of the work group. Jenna Easton would like to join the committee if it's okay with her department. Jenna Easton let us know that there is a Guidance Document by Anne E. Casey for Juvenile Justice Centers—there are no centers seeking this assessment in the state.

CAPTA

John Oliver brought the committee's attention to the CAPTA report the FACT Board sent to Commissioner Storen in May based on the committee's recommendations. The committee will be following up on each of the five areas of concern outlined in the report throughout the next year to learn about the progress being made. Craig Patterson joined the committee for this meeting to provide an update on the study underway on the practice of "diversion".

Update on Diversion Study (Craig Patterson)

The 2016 General Assembly Session directed VDSS to conduct a pilot project on data collection and reporting for local departments of social services regarding foster care diversion with Budget Amendment, Item 343(c).

The project has 32 pilot agencies: 22 from Western region and 10 volunteer pilot agencies (Fairfax, Prince William, Arlington, Alexandria, Middlesex, New Kent, King William, Campbell, Albemarle, and James City County). The project's intent is to collect baseline data regarding "diversion cases" (CPS, CPS Ongoing, and Prevention) that will assist in exploring the barriers to achieving safety and stability for children who are informally placed with kin or alternative caregivers as a result of CPS involvement. Data was collected quarterly for a period of 18 months (July 2016-December 2017). Data analysis included: description of population, description of practices, description of child and family outcomes, description of policies, and exploration of how findings might inform future state kinship diversion policies and practices. Data will be evaluated and interpreted to: quantify and identify the extent of diversion practice; examine assumptions about current diversion practice, determine the impact of diversion on child safety, permanence, and well-being. The outcomes will be used to develop best

practice guidance, propose necessary regulatory and/or code change(s) and inform future data collection.

Safe Families Pilot (Craig Patterson)

In 2016 General Assembly Session Budget Amendment, Item 339 (s) directed VDSS to partner with Patrick Henry Family Services to evaluate the Safe Families for Children (SFFC) model as an alternative to placement in foster care for children in Planning District 11 (Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell Counties, and the City of Lynchburg).

Patrick Henry Family Services is a nonprofit inter-denominational Christian ministry that provides community-based and residential care services to children and families. Safe Families for Children was founded in Chicago in 2003 and is a volunteer movement that seeks to support families in crisis by facilitating a hosting arrangement between the “Placing Family” and “Host Family”. The “Placing Family” maintains full custody of the child, but provides the “Host Family” with a signed Power of Attorney giving the Host Family the authority to care for the child. SFFC operates in 27 different states, and has an average six week length of stay.

The pilot program at Patrick Henry Family Services provides programmatic and safety requirements, including background check requirements. Policy and procedures for governing the program also include: active and closed cases; admissions; monitoring the administration of medications; prohibiting corporal punishment; ensuring that children are not subjected to abuse or neglect; investigating allegations of misconduct toward children; implementing the child’s back-up emergency care plan; assigning designated casework staff; management of all records; discharge policies; and the use of seclusion and restraint.

Recommendations include: While VDSS supports the enhancement of family-driven service models, like Safe Families, as a best practice in prevention, a more rigorous evaluation of the Safe Families model’s impact on children and families in crisis is needed to justify broader implementation of the program in other Virginia communities. Local departments of social services and other community-based organizations should have the opportunity to work together as partners to strengthen the infrastructure and array of local prevention efforts.

Findings and recommendations of the evaluation have been finalized and can be viewed on the Virginia Legislative Information System (LIS) website.

Committee Discussion: The committee agreed that innovative, collaborative and family based interventions are needed to supplement the child welfare system but expressed concern over this intervention being a superficial substitute for addressing larger issues of poverty and lack of capacity in communities. Concern was also expressed potential mistreatment of LGBTQ children in religious families and programs, and overall limited oversight for children’s safety.

John Oliver asked for an update on the Diversion Data Pilot and the Safe Families Pilot in the next CAN meeting

FACT Update

(Nicole Poulin)

Nicole provided an overview of state level efforts to increase trauma informed care education and practices.

The legislatively directed workgroup established to examine current trauma informed efforts in Virginia to foster systems that provide a consistent trauma-informed response to children with adverse childhood experiences and that build resiliency of individuals and communities has been incorporated within the work of the Children's Cabinet. The group meets bi-monthly. A process report is due to the General Assembly in December. Nicole, in addition to several other members of FACT's CAN Committee, participates on the workgroup.

Voices for Virginia's Children has launched a Trauma Informed Virginia legislative policy effort. It includes (1) a web-based resource guide hosted on their website that provides information and resources on trauma informed care work being conducted at local, state and national levels, (2) the development of priority legislative policies and (3) hosting a statewide conference in April 2019 focused on trauma informed care policies and practices. Additionally, FACT has continued its support of the trauma informed care networks (TICNs) through two system grant awards: one to the greater Charlottesville TICN, and the other to Richmond SCAN for its TICN efforts in the Richmond metro area. The award to SCAN is also to support increasing their outreach and technical assistance efforts to other developing TICNs.

In addition to the two systems grants awarded for this current two year funding cycle, which began on July 1, 2018, eight service grants were awarded to programs throughout Virginia. The majority of those are for services focused on children.

FACT will be releasing its 2018 Annual Report next month.

John Oliver adjourned the meeting at 1:00pm