

Child Abuse and Neglect Committee Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2019

VDSS Central Regional Office

Meeting attendees: Ginny Powell, FACT Board; Jeanine Harper, GRSCAN; Shannon Hartung, VDSS; Anya Shafer, DCJS; Ellen White, VA Courts; Ali Faruk, Families Forward; Kat Monusky, VSDV Alliance; Melissa O'Neill, CASA-DCJS; Zandra Relleford, Office of Children's Services; Katherine Hunter, DBHDS Office of Child and Family Services, Beverly Crowder, FACT Board (joined by phone); Michelle L'Hommedieu, OAG; Betty Wade Coyle, CFC:PCAHR (joined by phone); Janice Dickens-Davidson, Children's Advocacy Center of Virginia (arrived at the break)

Committee Co-chair Jeanine Harper called the meeting to order at 10:03am and introduced the meeting agenda and minutes. Ellen White had a correction to her committee member report. Ellen White moved to approve the minutes with one correction and Anya Shaffer seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.

Committee Member Updates:

- Anya Shaffer- DCJS- Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) are being supported by DSS with VOCA funds now, Anya is working very closely with the folks at DSS to ensure that there is consistency with all programs that are VOCA funded. DCJS is working with DSS on maintaining what is unique about each program and what is consistent across programs. The committee discussed limitations in VOCA grant data collected, specifically for the prevalence of child on child abuse.
- Melissa O'Neil/ Anya Shaffer- DCJS is working on providing some capacity building training for prospective grantees. Trisha Everetts, the DCJS training manager is leading this project. The first iteration of this training, *The Road to Excellence*, has begun.

FACT Update: Nicole Poulin

- FACT is in the process of finalizing their RFA that will focus on Trauma-Informed Community Networks. FACT will fund 6 networks across Virginia for \$50,000 each. FACT also developed a frameworks document that will guide funding and grant monitoring.
- FACT is hoping to increase impact with money allocated from General Funds from the Governor's Budget. Board members are working with Voices for Virginia's Children to advocate for this. Advocacy day for Voices for Virginia Unified Policy for a Trauma Informed VA is January 21st. Funding for FACT is included in this policy agenda.
- FACT is developing a trauma-resource tab on our website to link to trauma-informed community network resources and our partners.
- FACT continues to work through VDSS procurement to hire a fundraising professional.
- FACT's Board allocated FACT funding to be used for capacity building for non-profits in under-served, under-resourced areas that may need technical assistance on grant writing and non-profit management. FACT will start focus groups for this project the first of the year for the program to be up and running by July.

CPS Update: Shannon Hartung

Human Trafficking Overview:

In July of this past year there were three significant legislative changes regarding child human trafficking, which have resulted in the following processes:

- VDSS now has a 3rd response for abuse for human trafficking
- LDSS's may categorize trafficker as caregiver if needed.
- LDSS's may hold children in custody for 72 hours (not considered foster care)

Since that time, there have been 11 human trafficking investigations or assessments that have spanned across the state: 2-Fairfax, 1-Loudoun, 3- Henrico, Portsmouth, Richmond, Culpepper, Scott County, Wise County. VDSS conferences with each LDSS for each case to provide guidance with new processes.

DJJ and DSS have convened a child trafficking work group to work together on this systemic problem.

DSS uses the Federal definition for sex trafficking:

“Human Trafficking is a crime that involves exploiting a person for labor, services, or commercial sex.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and its subsequent reauthorizations define human trafficking as:

- a) Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- b) The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. (22 U.S.C. § 7102(9)).”

Source: <https://www.justice.gov/humantrafficking>

Virginia Criminal Code also refers to trafficking in section: 18.2-357.1

Child Abuse Hotline

VDSS has been working on reducing the wait time for child abuse reporting calls. They have done this with training, hiring more staff, shift supervisor oversight, cutting down on the time spent on each call (35 minutes from 45 minutes), building a cushion of staff for when people call out. They've seen improvement in the percentage of calls that are taken within 10 minutes. The majority of time waits are between 10-20 minutes, this is an improvement from a year and a half ago when the average wait time was 1 ½ hours. However, they need more staff. They are asking for more staff this year, however are not sure if that will happen. Every year call volume has increased: in 2017 the call center received 121,000 calls, in 2018 132,000 calls and they are on track for that number to increase in 2019.

More updates:

- VDSS has a Prevention Redesign Work Group to accompany Families First.
- Mandated Reporting Website is still on hold. They are currently looking at other states that have really great mandated reporting sites to make sure they develop a useful tool.

- Compass Mobile Application is equipping all DSS workers with iPads and has begun roll out. VDSS has trained 74 agencies on the mobile application and 704 individual workers. 400+ individual users are using it day to day which is a positive result for 2-3 months into an app roll out. They will be training and rolling out the app through January. Structured decision making tools will come out in January and Spring 2020 and will be available on the mobile app.

Committee discussion: In response to the CPS update, the committee agreed that the FACT Board should consider formally supporting the VDSS proposal to the governor to increase financial support to increase the capacity of the child abuse and adult protective services hotline.

Update on Services to Prevent and Address Child on Child Sexual Abuse

Kate Monusky leads the Movement Strategies Team (prevention and community wellness) at the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance.

Examples of prevention activities include:

- Serve teens and “tweens” (youth) for sexual violence and dating violence prevention.
- Provide support for local programs
- “Do You” is an example of a curriculum program housed at the Action Alliance-
 - 10 session curriculum that uses creative expression to teach teens and tweens protective factors outlined by the CDC such as empathy building and healthy sexuality. Venues for the program include Boys and Girls Clubs, YWCA, Faith Based Programs, Community Service Boards and after school programs (although most programming is community, not school, based)
 - “Do Something”- an extension of the program where youth are empowered to do their own community advocacy
 - Local programs are interested in doing prevention work in their communities with younger children. Usually thinking about child sexual abuse around adults who harm children. Most programs focus on risk reduction techniques such as “good touch bad touch”. Kate is interested in bringing in strategies that bring in primary prevention strategies that focus on parents and families protecting adults. Some programs use the Care for Kids curriculum for young children.

Janice Dickens-Davidson is the Executive Director of the Children’s Advocacy Center of Virginia. Everyone at the local level is dealing with child on child sexual abuse or “problematic sexual behavior”

- 20-25% of cases across the state are problematic sexual behavior (for children who are served by CAC’s) Virginia CACs see about 5,500 children per year.
- However, the way data is entered is not consistent. About half of local CAC’s will not interview children about this unless they make a disclosure; and about half will interview them about problematic sexual behavior regardless
- There are questions that try to weed out normal sexual developmental behavior
 - Examples of questions are “Has the child used force”; “Did the child use an object”; “Has the witnessed adults having sex or porn” However, only about 30% of local CAC’s ask these type of questions.

- Goal and challenge is getting services for children with problematic sexual behavior without charging the child.

Next Steps:

Committee Co-Chair, Ginny Powell, led a conversation about next steps.

March 18th meeting topics:

- How to use the VDSS Prevention Conference to drive discussion and prioritize issues.
- Determine priorities for next year's CAPTA letter.
- Update on RPE- Potentially invite Heather Board to give an update.
- Develop a sub-committee to determine the gaps- Ginny, Shannon, Ali,
- Shannon Hartung will have more information on Legislation soon.
- Betty Wade Coyle Children's Ombudsman information—will send to Nicole

Meeting was adjourned at 1:02pm