

Family and Children's Trust Fund (FACT)
Child Abuse and Neglect Committee Minutes

The meeting began at 10:05 am on Thursday, August 14th and included Betty Wade Coyle, Hayley Mathews, Rita Katzman, Susan Heck, Janet Lung, Maribel Lauber, and Nancy Fowler. Ms Coyle, Committee Chair, welcomed Janet Lung as the new representative from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.

The committee reviewed the draft minutes from the meeting that took place on May 8, 2014. ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Heck) and seconded (Ms. Katzman) moved to approve the minutes as presented.

Ms. Mathews, FACT Executive Director, updated the committee on the 2013 FACT Report and Issue Brief and reminded members that the topic for the 2014 Issue Brief will focus on the impact of domestic violence on children. She also shared that FACT is focusing on enhancing its marketing efforts and thanked committee members who took the time to participate in the branding initiative survey that was disseminated via Survey Monkey.

Ms. Katzman updated the group on the development of the new domestic violence chapter for the VDSS Division of Family Services. A draft has been completed and has already been vetted through a group of volunteers from the statewide Domestic Violence Action Team.

The purpose of the new chapter is to provide an overview of domestic violence for local department of social services (LDSS) staff. It is not intended to serve as a training manual or best practice manual. There is no legislation and no regulation to require LDSS staff to do the suggested practices that are outlined in the chapter. In addition, the format for the chapter is congruent with all of the sections of the DFS Guidance Manual.

The chapter is based on research of similar policies from other states and was drafted in close collaboration with staff from the VDSS Office of Family Violence. Development of the chapter has been underway for approximately one year. The intent is to finalize the chapter by the end of the calendar year, but it will depend on the addition of key sections that relate to permanency that have yet to be drafted.

Specific feedback was provided by meeting attendees and through written comments of several committee members not in attendance. Then participants talked about how to promote the release of the chapter among both domestic violence providers and local child welfare staff. The chapter will also be shared and discussed with the CPS Advisory Committee in early September and the Permanency Advisory Committee at some point this fall.

FACT's Child Abuse and Neglect Committee provided specific feedback to the draft chapter. Ms. Katzman noted relevant changes as discussion took place.

Following discussion about the draft chapter, members of the committee provided agency and program updates relevant to FACT's work. DOE is working on an MOU in partnership with DSS for the reporting of child abuse and neglect in local school divisions. The last revision to the existing MOU was made in 2002. Revisions have been vetted by DOE and the Office of the Attorney General, and it is now being

reviewed by VDSS. Model interagency agreements will be provided to LDSS and local schools to assist them in their collaborative reporting efforts. It was also reported that the web resources on child abuse located on the DOE website are being revamped.

DJJ recently began a formal engagement with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to do a complete assessment of Virginia's juvenile justice system. This work will focus on institutional transformation and becoming a child-focused, trauma-informed system.

Ms. Katzman reported that many of the recent Code changes had been implemented for Virginia's Child Protective Services program. Several webinars and trainings have take place to educate LDSS staff. Data from all five regional child fatality teams is currently being reviewed and compiled. As a result of recent efforts to collect information, the state data has also been entered into a national database. This is the first year that data has been extrapolated; however, it has been determined that this process is a "work in progress" and data integrity could be improved. CPS staff are working with staff from the Office of the Medical Examiner to determine what efforts can be made to improve the quality of Virginia's data.

DBHDS continues to focus on children's issues in the current administration. There have been a number of policy, practice, and Community Services Board accountability changes as a result of Senator Deeds' son's tragedy. There has been an increased focus on trauma-informed care with trainings by Duke University of mental health professionals.

The next meeting date, which was scheduled for November 6th, has been rescheduled for November 5th. Notice of the meeting date change will be sent to all committee members. The meeting ended at 12:54 pm.