

Child Abuse and Neglect Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

March 8th, 2024, 1PM-4PM

In-Person Meeting, Families Forward Virginia

8100 Three Chopt Rd., Richmond, VA

Participation

Committee Members Present: Ginny Powell, Committee Co-Chair FACT Board Member; Ron Brown, Families Forward; Stephenie Howard, Norfolk State University; Jeanine Harper, Committee Co-Chair, GRSCAN; Eric Reynolds, OCO; Carol Wilson, Office of Children's Services; Kristen Pritchard, VSDVAA; Anya Shaffer, DCJS; Ellen White, JDR Judge (retired)

Remote Participating Committee Members: Beverly Crowder, FACT Board Member; Betty Wade Coyle, Prevent Child Abuse Hampton Roads (Retired) (arrived 1:23pm); Maria Altonen, VDH

Committee Members Virtually Present: Katharine Hunter, DBHDS (arrived 1:30pm)

Committee Members Absent: Kathleen Hollywood, VDSS; Melissa O'Neill, CASA-DCJS; Abigail Wescott, FACT Board Member; Betsy Bell, DCJS;

Other Attendees: Jane Lissenden, OCO; Michelle L'Hommedieu, FACT Counsel, OAG; Nicole Poulin, FACT; Taylor Hohle, FACT; Laurie Crawford, VDSS; Laurel Aparicio, Families Forward; Traci Jones, VDSS; Jenna Foster, DCJS (filling in for Melissa O'Neill); Brandi Peterson, VDSS; Eryn Clarke, VDSS; Kirby Baughn, VDSS

Meeting called to order by Ginny Powell at 1:04 PM

A quorum was present. All motions were passed unanimously unless otherwise noted.

A voice vote was taken to approve the requests to participate virtually by Beverly Crowder, Betty Wade Coyle, and Maria Altonen. There were no objections.

Approval of Minutes, *Ginny Powell*

- A motion to approve the minutes from the September 2023 Child Abuse & Neglect Advisory Committee meeting was made by Ron Brown and seconded by Ellen White.
- A motion to approve the minutes from the November 2023 Child Abuse & Neglect Advisory Committee meeting was made by Eric Reynolds and seconded by Ellen White.

Updates from the Office of the Children's Ombudsman (OCO), *Eric Reynolds*

- Legislative Update
 - [HB 893](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?241+sum+HB893) – effort to improve legal representation for parents or guardians in child dependency cases. <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?241+sum+HB893>
 - Bill summary (signed into law): "Requires the Judicial Council of Virginia, in conjunction with the Virginia State Bar, beginning July 1, 2026, to adopt standards for the qualification and performance of attorneys appointed to represent a parent or guardian of a child when such child is the subject of a child dependency case, as defined in the bill. The bill also requires the Judicial Council of Virginia, beginning July 1, 2026, to maintain a list of attorneys admitted to practice law in Virginia who are qualified to be appointed to represent indigent parents involved in a child dependency case. Prior to July 1, 2026, counsel must be appointed from the list of attorneys qualified to serve as guardians ad litem. The bill provides that beginning January 1, 2025, court-appointed counsel for a parent, guardian, or other adult in a child dependency case will be compensated in an amount no greater than \$330, or in a case for the termination of residual parental rights, \$680."
 - [HB 27](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?ses=241&typ=bil&val=HB27) / [SB 39](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?ses=241&typ=bil&val=HB27) – received widespread bipartisan support, effort to better support placements of children with relatives. <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?ses=241&typ=bil&val=HB27>
 - Bill summary (signed into law): "Establishes the Parental Child Safety Placement Program to promote and support placements of children with relatives by local boards

of social services in order to avoid foster care. The bill establishes the requirements for a parental child safety placement agreement, the procedure for assessing a proposed caregiver, and the process for terminating the placement."

- There was discussion around a new project focused on substance exposed infants. The OCO, and others on the committee, have found that response protocols involving Plans of Safe Care are inconsistent among medical facilities and vary from locality to locality.

FACT Updates, Nicole Poulin

- Problematic Sexual Behavior Project – FACT is still working through the procurement process to start the second phase and begin the multidisciplinary training curriculum. In the second year, they will pilot the training program with Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT).
- FACT is working on an analysis of child fatalities in Virginia and response protocols across the U.S. A data sharing agreement with Virginia Department of Health was recently signed to access data on fatalities for 0-5 year olds. Additional data will be obtained by VDSS to include in the report.
- A FACT Issue Brief on the subject of caretaker abuse within facilities (nursing homes, assisted living, etc.) will be released this summer.
- [SB 683](#) focused on administrative changes to FACT to allow more flexibility for the Board of Trustees as part of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan – the bill passed with a substitution that includes changes the appointment structure for the Board. <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?241+sum+SB683>
- FACT will be adding lunch & learn sessions to help educate professionals on topics related to its mission and the CAN Committee CAPTA report.

VDSS Updates and Discussion on Issues Outlined in the 2023 CAN CAPTA Report, VDSS Family Services Staff

- Family First – <https://www.fact.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/FACT-03-08-2024-Family-First-Slides.pdf>
 - Virginia’s approved evidence-based programs:
 - Started with Multisystemic Therapy, Functional Family Therapy, and Parent-Child Interaction Therapy
 - Added in 2023: Brief Strategic Family Therapy, High Fidelity Wraparound, Motivational Interviewing, Homebuilders, Family Check-Up
 - VCU Center for Evidence Based Partnerships is doing evaluation on the fidelity of these program models.
 - Currently on the fourth cohort of training local departments with six cohorts scheduled – half of local agencies have been trained in motivation interviewing (13-week intensive training on MI)
 - Planning for implementation of Community Pathways
 - Listening sessions will be held for LDSS offices to identify needs
 - Hoping to launch in May
- Hotline Update – <https://www.fact.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Hotline-FACT-3.8.2024.pdf>

	August – December 2022	August – December 2023
Total number of calls	64,054	65,467
Average calls per week	2355	2138
Average wait time	8	5
# of calls abandoned	456 (average six minutes)	335 (average five minutes)
% of calls answered in 10 minutes or less	79%	86%

State Fiscal Year (SFY)	Mandated Reporter Portal Reports
2021	5,397
2022	9,572
July 2023 – January 2024	7,328

- Staffing Updates –
 - 45 hotline specialists – 64,453 minutes available per week
 - Vacancies - 3 Full Time Contractors, 1 Part Time Contractor, 1 Part Time Employee
 - Pending vacancies 1 Part Time Employee and 2 Full Time contractors.
 - Fully staffed would provide 77,815 available minutes per week to answer calls. At current staffing levels, only 64,453 minutes per week are available. Based on average calls per

week, 74,830 available minutes are needed to prevent extended wait times.

- Regional Child Fatality Review Team Update – <https://www.fact.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/CFRT-Presentation-FACT-CAN-CRP1.pdf>
 - Restructuring
 - Regional child fatality review is now organized by VDSS home office staff.
 - New criteria for deaths reviewed:
 - Child fatality investigation must be completed and closed.
 - Clear of criminal investigation and court action.
 - Open DSS referral/case at the time of fatality.
 - Valid or invalid CPS report within the last 12 months.
 - Child died while in foster care (not from natural death and no complaint in foster home).
 - Child died in foster care on a trial home placement.
 - Foster care case involving decedent or decedent's siblings was closed within the last 24 months.
 - The goal is improving recommendations through targeted and consistent review processes.
 - There was discussion around how members for the teams were selected which varies based on the regional team.
 - The Committee discussed concerns that the new criteria will limit the number of cases reviewed, which could limit the data available to more accurately determine contributing factors associated with these fatalities.
 - A recommendation was made to send out a survey to current team members to get input on the new process.
 - Updates on Citizen Review Panels (CRPs)– <https://www.fact.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/CRP-Update-FACT-Meeting-FINAL.pdf>
 - Met with Arizona and West Virginia peers to discuss how their CRPs function and met with current CRP leaders (FACT and CASA) to discuss needs.
 - Third CRP
 - Looking to hire a contractor to coordinate all the CRPs in Virginia who will focus on establishing a focus and recruiting members for the third CRP.
 - Planning to create an internal guidance document for CRPs.

Discussion of 2024 CAN CAPTA Report, Ginny Powell & Jeanine Harper

- Co-chairs led a discussion around effectiveness of previous CAPTA reports and recommend a focus on data and outcomes related to recommendations.
 - Recommendation – three areas (from previous six)
 - Family First – with increased focus on data/outcomes/evaluation
 - Child welfare workforce/hotline
 - Child death review
 - A motion was made by Eric Reynolds to accept the recommendations by the co-chairs to highlight the three areas of Family First, child welfare workforce/hotline, and child death review with a focus on data and outcomes in the next CAPTA report. Seconded by Betty Wade Coyle.

Update on VDSS's Office of Trauma and Resilience Policy Workforce Development Activities, Laurie Crawford

- Completed focus group and quantitative survey which included frontline workers and supervisors, benefits workers and supervisors, regional practice consultants, and added hotline workers to the survey.
 - Received almost 1000 survey responses which echoed the focus group trends.
- Developing a report using the data and a literature review of various models for workforce support to provide recommendations. This report should be finalized in April.

Home Visiting Funding Update, Laurel Aparicio

- The governor's budget included funding for home visiting, including a slight increase to help pull down more federal funding.
- Funding will be shifted out of TANF and to general funds which provides some additional security after facing the TANF cliff.

Next Steps, Ginny Powell

- Next meeting will be held virtually on May 23rd, 2024 10am – 12pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:54 PM