

Youth Camp Safety Workgroup
of the Child Protection and Accountability Commission
October 15, 2013 Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Dr. Har Ming Lau, DPH	Beth Kramer, DSCYF/OCCL
Matthew Ritter, DNREC	Ivone Bernal, DSCYF/OCCL
Mark Sparagna, City of Wilmington	Tania Culley, OCA
Ivy Harlev, JCC	Cabinet Secretary, Jennifer Ranji, DSCYF
Jane Rattenni, NCCo Dept of Com. Services	Erika George, U of D student (observing)
Karen DeRasmo, PCAD	Rachel Schwartz, Uof D student (observing)
Janice Tigani, DOJ	Victoria Arthur, U of D student (observing)
Cara Sawyer, DSCYF	Katarina Garced, U of D student (observing)

I. Welcome/ CPAC Abuse Intervention Subcommittee report and recommendation on youth camps.

Secretary Ranji called the group to order and provided some background on the issue of camps and background checks. Secretary Ranji informed the group that the Child Protection and Accountability Commission had assigned an ad hoc group to look into the issue of background checks and the youth camps. The group came out with a final report in February 2013. The report created by the group recommended that background checks be required for all employees and volunteers at youth camps.

Four questions will need to be answered as we work through these issues: Should the state require background checks for employees and volunteers of youth camps; what crimes or circumstances should make an individual ineligible for hire (as a paid employee or otherwise) in youth camps; what is our best guess of the number of individuals that would need to be checked; and what are the fiscal implications.

II. Statutes/Regulations

The group discussed how the Kids Department, through the Office of Childcare Licensing (OCCL), has the authority to license and monitor (which includes background checks) all childcare providers unless otherwise exempted by law. The OCCL Regulations governing child care centers exempt camps that receive a permit to operate through the Division of Public Health (DPH). DPH has authority to monitor camps' sanitation and certain safety measures, but does not require background checks. An issue that the group discussed was that there are many different "camps" defined in the regulations governing the DPH. These definitions may need to be addressed so that it

is made clear when there is a camp that is subject to these regulations. Presently, there is no charge for camps from DPH for plan reviews or permitting.

Secretary Ranji mentioned that camps very often look very much like day care, but there are also camps that are very unlike day care (i.e. one week sports-focused camps). It would seem that parents would have expectations for background checks to have been completed when the camp looks much like day care. The question is do we have different expectations for safety when the camps look different than day care?

The group discussed the policies of groups that run camps, and what they do as far as background reports. Many organizations have internal processes to prevent any one on one alone time between adult and camper. However, most groups do not require fingerprinting to determine whether someone has a criminal record, there is also no check done of the Registry. Most groups contract with a private company to do background checks.

III. Next Steps

The group also discussed who else should be present at the table to discuss any changes made to the law. The group mentioned Church Camps, 4-H, Cab Calloway School and the Boys and Girls Club. They discussed finding these camps through the Tower Hill Camp Fair and the *News Journal* and *Metro Kids*. The group discussed that Insurance Companies may be helpful to also have at the table since the camps are insured, these companies may have certain rules related to what they must do regarding background checks of employees/volunteers.

There will be circulation of dates to schedule the next meeting.