

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL CHILDREN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES, NOVEMBER 18, 2014

The Children and Domestic Violence Committee met on November 18, 2014 at 10 a.m. at the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families in New Castle County. Attending the meeting were Secretary Jennifer Ranji (DSCYF), Jerrica Boyer (PBHS), Jasmine Aviles (PBHS), Susanne Miller (Child Inc.), Ashlee Starratt (DSCYF), Rosie Morales (OCA), Rodney Brittingham (DSCYF), Sonya Tull (Child Inc.), Tara Andrews (Family Court), Addie Asay (Family Court), Karen Records (DHSS), Marcey Rezac (People's Place), Pat Dailey Lewis (DOJ), Natasha Smith (DVCC), Ellie Torres (DVCC).

Called to Order: Secretary Ranji called the meeting to order.

Introductions: Introductions were made by attendees.

Minutes from 5/27/14: Approved as written.

Old Business:

Family Court Enhancement Project:

Addie discussed the Family Court Enhancement Project -Technical Assistance Collaborative Meeting that took place in September 2014. The Family Court Enhancement Project has decided to focus on mainly two areas for this project. Differentiation in Custody Decisions vs PFAs (Safety vs. best interest factors) and Access to Justice (having a well- informed litigant). During this project they are looking at pulling together approximately 200 PFAs and following them throughout the process. Addie also discussed that there will be focus groups for various groups (ex. Attorneys, Commissioners, Judges, Advocates) with this project. Family Court is scheduled to submit a report on the progress of this project by end of 2014. Also, Tara Andrews has been hired as the Family Court Enhancement Project Coordinator.

Symposium on Domestic Violence and Custody Issues

The Widener Symposium is will take place on April 17, 2015. Dana Harrington Conner is working on an agenda for the Symposium and hopes to be able to release it soon. There will be a Panel Discussion during the Symposium which will include Judge Cooper and Carol Post.

Children & Domestic Violence Committee Planning Day Summary

Ellie discussed the Children & DV Planning Day Summary. During the all-day planning session, those present were able to create action steps for specific goals the Children & DV Committee hopes to accomplish over the next two years. One of the action steps included Dr. Vicky Kelly providing a training on "Understanding system-wide risk vs. attachment and protection factors (in relation to DV)." Dr. Kelly plans on presenting this training at the Children & DV Committee, the DVCC Quarterly Meeting and at the Protecting Delaware's Children Conference.

The Second Action Step was for the “Ohio Team” to explore best practices to help reach common expectations on cases in which DFS should respond and how. The Ohio Team consists of Ellie Torres (DVCC), Mariann Kenville-Moore (DCADV), Linda Shannon (DSCYF), Addie Asay (Family Court) and Rosie Morales (OCA).

The third action step was to look for shared training on how to hold perpetrators accountable for non-physical coercion and control and consider crossover with the Family Court Enhancement Project.

And the last action step involved stake holder education and training regarding Structured Decision Making and creating a common understanding of how DFS will handle DV cases. One option to accomplish this goal is to videotape the training on DFS Response at the Protecting Delaware’s Children Conference. Another option discussed was the creation of guides or fact sheets for stakeholders to better understand DFS operations.

Training Needs

The Children & DV Committee was asked to submit any trainings they thought would be helpful on how to hold perpetrators accountable for non-physical coercion and control. There was one submission, from Child Inc. for Ona Foster, Project Director of the Supervised Visitation Initiative, Center on Victimization and Safety at the Vera Institute. Karen Records (DHSS) will gather information from the Vera Institute regarding what kind of trainings they are able to provide. This training may be able to work along with the Safe Haven Project (creation of the Middletown Visitation Center) and the Family Court Enhancement Project. Also, Natasha Smith (DVCC Staff) handed out a list of upcoming DV trainings to the Committee. Upcoming DV trainings will now become a standard item on the Children & DV agenda. Please forward any knowledge regarding DV trainings around the state to Natasha Smith so they can added to the list.

Protecting Delaware’s Children Conference – DV Track

The Protecting Delaware’s Children Conference will take place on March 3rd & March 4th 2015. David Mandel (Developer of the Safe & Together Model) will be at this conference. Those on the planning committee for this conference are in the process of developing a domestic violence track. One option being discussed for the DV track is to have Mark Wynn conduct training.

Ohio Site Visit Report

The Ohio Team consisted of Ellie Torres, Mariann Kenville-Moore, Linda Shannon, Addie Asay and Rosie Morales. The purpose of this visit was to learn how Ohio had implemented David Mandel’s Safe & Together Model. Ohio has 88 counties, each operating a child protection agency and implementing Safe and Together slightly differently. The group visited both a rural and more urban county and learned how they implemented the model and lessons learned during the process. The Team learned that the training on the model lasts twelve days. Ohio

recommended from their experience that the twelve days of training be conducted over the course of six to twelve months. To fully implement the model, all DFS workers should be trained. In Ohio they found that a specialized unit was not as effective as trained workers were transferred or promoted out of the unit. One large county with 700 workers has committed to training all supervisors so that the supervisors, in understanding the model, can slowly shift the practices of the workers that have not been trained. Ideally, all workers would receive the twelve days of training. There is a train the trainer program, but trainers need to be recertified every two years.

Rodney Brittingham (DSCYF) recently attended a conference on the Safe & Together Model in Seattle. Rodney described that the Safe & Together Model supports having a child welfare system that is trauma informed and keeps the child with the non-offending parent. Rodney also stated that the Safe & Together Model focuses on offender accountability and looking at the offender's pattern of abuse and parenting choices. The Safe & Together Model also talks about different ways in which to capture information to provide more details for the record. This model also supports interviewing the perpetrator and documenting the patterns of abuse.

Secretary Ranji stated that the Safe & Together Model is a huge commitment and the individuals who visited Ohio noted that it is very expensive. It was agreed that the best plan of action would be to wait until after the Protecting Delaware's Children Conference for the concept to be introduced and then, with support, look at options for funding this kind of project.

Announcements:

Pat Dailey Lewis discussed possible legislation that would involve DOJ filing PFAs for people they may be working with who may be not be capable of filing the PFA petition on their own. The next DVCC Legislative Meeting will take place on Monday, November 24, 2014 at 11am.

Next Meeting Date: To Be Determined

Respectfully Submitted By: Natasha Smith – DVCC staff on 11/25/14.