

**Domestic Violence Coordinating Council**  
**Children and Domestic Violence Committee**

**April 24, 2017**

The Children and Domestic Violence Committee met on April 24, 2017, 10a.m. at the Department of Services for Children Youth and their Families in New Castle County. In attendance were Linda Shannon (DFS), Marianne Kenville-Moore (DCADV), Secretary Josette Manning (DSCYF), Regina Johnson (DSCYF), Susanne Miller (Child Inc.), and Natasha Smith (DVCC staff). Present via phone were Blanche Creech (Peoples Place), Claire DeMatteis (Family Court), Trenee Parker (DFS), and Ellie Torres (Family Court).

**Called to Order:** Secretary Manning called the meeting to order.

**Introductions:** Introductions were made by those in attendance.

**Minutes from March 6, 2017:** Minutes were approved as written.

**Old Business:**

**Family Court Enhancement Project**

Claire DeMatteis (Family Court) and Ellie Torres (Family Court) provided an update on the Family Court Enhancement Project. Family Court Mediators will be attending training on the dynamics of domestic violence on May 5, 2017. The training will be presented by Dana Harrington Conner (Widener Law School). Also, Family Court is working on developing a Pilot Program for Protection from Abuse hearing days in New Castle County. This pilot will include Family Court Commissioners providing instructions to litigants regarding the PFA process. Mediators will receive additional training in fall 2017.

**Next Steps – Safe and Together Model**

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council is awaiting final approval of a one-time funding award for an assessment and evaluation of the Division of Family Services by David Mandel and the Safe and Together Model. This item is on the agenda for the next DVCC Quarterly Meeting, scheduled for May 8, 2017.

**Definition of a Perpetrator of Domestic Violence and Rebuttable Presumption**

Ellie Torres (Family Court) is drafting options for possible changes to the definition of a perpetrator of domestic violence and rebuttable presumption statute. Once the drafted language is completed it will be circulated to the DVCC Children and Domestic Violence Committee.

**Divorced and Separating Parents Curriculum**

Regina Johnson (DSCYF) gave an overview of the Separating and Divorcing Parent Education Program (SDPE). Regina stated that there are 27 Providers in the program and each program is monitored quarterly. Regina also stated that the SDPE providers send all pre/post surveys to her office for review.

Those present at the meeting discussed ways to determine the effectiveness of the course as well as barriers that could prevent litigants from completing the course. Those present also examined the SPDE curriculum and the inclusion of domestic violence information in the basic course and the domestic violence SPDE course. The possibility of having the same domestic violence information for both the basic and domestic violence separating and divorcing parenting education course was also discussed.

Secretary Manning (DSCYF) asked if Regina could provide examples of a current SPDE program's presentation for a parent education course. Natasha Smith (DVCC) will provide this information to the committee once it is received.

### **Announcements**

Linda Shannon (DFS) will be retiring effective July 1, 2017.

**Next meeting Date:** August 28, 2017 at 10am University Plaza Conference Room