

Joint Panel Meeting
Minutes of the Meeting
June 13, 2014

Attendees:

ECRP:

Lance Jackson Carrie Smith Mary McCarthy
Ed Blatt Angela Baris

WCRP:

Ellen Kennedy Paula Mazur Stefan Perkowski
Sarlyn Tate

NYC:

Marion White Wayne Ho Jocelyn Brown
Jorege Saenz De Viteri Mathea Rubin Carmen Ortiz Hendricks
Elba Montalvo

SCAA Staff: Diane Mastin

OCFS Staff: Laura Velez Renee Hallock Lisa Gordon

Handouts:

Agenda

Child Welfare and Children of Incarcerated Parents

A Public Health Approach to Child Welfare

Confidentiality in Child Welfare

Child Welfare Workforce

Media and Child Welfare

Review of NYS CRP Recommendations from the past

Ensuring Safety, Well-Being and Permanency for Our Children. Findings, Practice and Policy Implications from LONGSCAN: the 20-Year Longitudinal Studies of Child Abuse and Neglect.

UNC Injury Prevention Research Center

Minutes of the Eastern Panel, April 30th

Minutes of the Western Panel, May 9th

Minutes of the NYC Panel, May 13th

OCFS Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Child Welfare & Community Service, Laura Velez, began the meeting with an update of various initiatives within OCFS. Regarding FAR, she stated that this year OCFS staff were reviewing FAR practice, talking with county departments of social services that do not offer FAR, and building the capacity to offer the training that was once provided by the Butler Institute in house. Small rural counties continue to find it difficult to dedicate some of their small staff specifically to the FAR approach. The FAR approach is now used throughout Queens for educational neglect reports and some inadequate guardianship cases. The new ACS administration is committed to FAR implementation. Tensions still remain between those staff who provide investigations and those who provide FAR. Leadership provided by each county's commissioner of social services and others is key to successful implementation of FAR. Within two years, all OCFS training and core values will

fully incorporate FAR along with investigative techniques so that counties can decide on their own how best to assign workers.

OCFS's work to build supervisory skills continues after the three year grant period ended. This work will be incorporated into ongoing practice. In addition, OCFS has worked over the past year to develop a model of practice. They continue to see workforce turnover due primarily to retirements.

Ms. Velez stated that a newly revised format for Child Fatality reports will be released by the end of August. The revised version will capture much more data and a short narrative with a summary and required improvements aimed at practice. The information collected will go beyond the federal requirements. She indicated that OCFS is highly involved in Erie County practice decisions.

She noted that the number of children placed into foster care are now increasing after years of decline which she attributed to opiate abuse. Sibling groups are entering foster care as a result of parents being arrested. Some foster care agencies now have waiting lists. Another trend is the number of unaccompanied minors coming into the United States. Five years ago, New York had about 150 beds for these children. Now they have over 1,000. Over 47,000 children have entered the United States this year alone. Previous years' numbers were far lower. By law, these children can be in federal placements for only a few days. Then they have to be moved, not where family members are, but where there are beds. New York State is being asked to house more. Three hundred foster homes are going to be established in NYC for these children.

The transition of foster care youth to Medicaid Managed Care requires a great deal of attention by the agency. OCFS formed a Foster Care Advisory workgroup to help. OCFS is looking forward to having better data in the future around health and behavioral care that can lead to improved mental health and dental care. The transition will be completed by 2016. The work on trauma-informed practice is proceeding with the development of a CANS NY screening tool, an assessment of interventions needed and whether or not they are available, and the development of data and performance measures. All OCFS staff will be trained by a national expert on trauma. Training for the CANS will be available online. The assessment tool is developed for caseworker use and will be used in Bridges to Health statewide soon.

Panel Chairs provided reports outlining each panel's 2014 activities and interests. Panel members discussed their plans for the 2014 Annual Report and Recommendations, discussed interests in advocacy for their 2013 recommendations and received updates.