

Illinois Children and Family Services Advisory Council

May 12, 2022, from 3:00 to 5:00 PM

Via WebEx / Conference line only

MINUTES

Attendance

Members: Marge Berglind (Chair), Gabriel Foley, Jennifer Hansen (Vice Chair), Brittani Kindle (Secretary), Nate Pietrini, Anita Weinberg,

DCFS: Kara Hamilton (Liaison), Lorena Hernandez, Kari Rogers, Dana Weiner

Public: Collen Conolly (Legal Aid Chicago), Nicholas Martin (pending member), Simone Weil (Casey Family Case Programs)

AGENDA

I. Welcome and Introductions

Marge called meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes from March 10th meeting

MOTION: Brittani Kindle moved to approve March 10, 2022 Minutes; seconded by Jennifer Hansen; Minutes unanimously approved.

III. Transition to New Officers at July 2022 Meeting

Marge's term expires July 2022. At March meeting, Jennifer Hansen elected as Chair; Brittani Kindle will be Vice Chair; and Gabe Foley will be Secretary.

Jennifer commented Marge left Council in great shape by getting it back on track and thanked Marge for her leadership. Proposed everyone share at July meeting one or two ideas about areas to focus for next year. If there are questions about a particular topic Kara/Lorena can reach out to DCFS staff to present at meetings. Discussion re inviting DCFS Director to an upcoming meeting to discuss Council's role. How can we help support the department in their effort to try to confront those challenges?

Marge thanked the group for trusting her to be the Chair for the last two years and will continue to be a member of the group at least until January 2023. Welcome Lorena Hernandez to assist Kara Hamilton on follow up: minutes, material, and announcements.

IV. Membership Discussion

Nicholas Martin and Joshua Travis still pending before Governor's Office for approval as members. Prospective members can join discussions but cannot vote. Council discussed

membership roster inconsistencies. According to the statute and the Council's bylaws, members should be appointed to a 4-year term.

Kara will make a recommendation to the Governor's Office to go with updated list dated May 21st. MOTION: By Jennifer Hansen to approve May 21st roster list; second by Nate Pietrini; May 21st roster list unanimously approved.

Discussion regarding Council's Bylaws – no reference to outgoing Chair as *ex officio*; discussion re amending Bylaws. MOTION: By Anita Weinberg to amend Bylaws to include outgoing Chair as *ex officio*; second by Jennifer Hansen; amendment unanimously approved.

Reminder of the required training and filing reports (Statement of Economic Interest and Supplemental Statement of Economic Interest) for members. All in compliance per Kara.

V. Family First Implementation Plan – Intact Services (Kari Rogers/DCFS)

Discussion re Family First Implementation Plan. What evidence-based practice will be added to Intact, or will it be kept separate? Per Kari Rogers of DCFS, DCFS is in the process of training all staff in the Motivational Interviewing which is an EVI. DCFS and POS will have access to a whole list of evidence-based interventions they can refer their clients. There is a requirement that it will be used by all clients in intake.

How to separate the profiles or types of family for Intact or other front-end services that get developed as part of the prevention plan - there is Child Welfare Services and Intact. Those are the hotline calls that do not have enough information to raise the level of abuse or neglect, however, service needs have been identified with the family. Families with previous contact with DCFS would benefit from services. Intact refers them to evidence-based interventions through the agencies that have those contracts. How is the department going to keep track of open cases versus cases that are entitled to Family First services, also, the nature of Family First is for families to get an array of services so families do not progress deeper into the child welfare system. Kari unable to answer; solely involved in Intact, not Family First.

Family First Coordinators will be reaching out to all evidence-based intervention providers in order to come up with a list of who can accept referrals outside of an open intact case. Will put together a catalog only for evidence-based opportunities of interventions and how they can be paid for it.

Council discussion that evidence-based programs have not proven to be as effective with black or families of color; other kinds of services are needed. Need to streamline resources available to families along with caseworkers understanding what is around the different areas they serve. Will continue discussion.

VI. COVID Concerns

Fayette Coleman-Gill joined meeting but had to end participation. Unable to answer questions raised at November 2021 meeting.

VII. Children’s Behavioral Health Initiative- Dana Weiner, Ph.D.

Dr. Weiner attended the Council meeting as a guest. She is a senior policy fellow at Chapin Hall University of Chicago; a clinical psychologist by training and researcher in practice. In March 2022, Governor Pritzker appointed Dana as Director of the Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Initiative in order to review how to fix system services and support for kids with mental health needs: 1) coordinating with 6 child serving agencies: DCFS, DHS, HFS, IDPH, IDJJ, ISBE , with a weekly intervention crisis staff call to work in individual cases; 2) gap analysis for availability of residential beds v. kids who need residential beds - looking at the availability of community-based services; 3) delivery of a blueprint for transformation to the Governor by the end of this calendar year.

VIII. Service Challenges Around State of Illinois

Council discussion regarding recent ProPublica article regarding the lack of resources to families in southern and rural Illinois. Nick commented re interagency cooperation; in southern Illinois areas, there is a general distrust in the government; how do we work with local communities using those trusted partners to build trust within the child welfare system? Further discussion regarding concerns about lack of transportation; volume of cases in Cook County; distance of services available in rural communities. Caseworkers are all trained in one model and solutions should be different.

The Task Force on Ratio Disproportionality was very active focusing on Poverty Issues with the General Assembly and Governor. Unknown if people have begun to be appointed for that Task Force. Kara to follow up and report back to Council at July meeting.

DCFS submitted list of bills that passed during most recent legislative session. Among the laws that were passed, there are 4 task forces and a commissioner. The following will have an impact on DCFS: Expanding the Child Care Assistance Program to youth in care who are parents regardless of income, a mandatory exit interview for every child aged 5 and over who leaves a foster home, and review of Extended Family Support Program.

IX. New Legislation Impacting DCFS - Identify Areas for Future Discussion

Discussion regarding federal law requiring foster family home licensing standards – to be adopted by all states. Has DCFS adopted, recommended, or kept track to accommodate the regulations? Does this apply to Relative Foster Homes? Kara to bring someone from DCFS for July 2022 meeting for discussion regarding this new legislation.

X. Proposed Agenda for July Meeting

- a. Gabriel Foley to speak on his new job responsibilities
- b. Membership Discussion
- c. Marge and Jennifer to work on Director’s invitation
- d. Marge and Jennifer to work on letter to DCFS/Governor’s Office re Membership Roster

- e. Kara to invite DCFS staff for discussions on: Family First Implementation Plan, New Legislation Discussion and Fayette Coleman-Gill for Covid Questions

XI. Public Comments

Nice to hear a robust discussion about Family First. Marge thanked Council for the opportunity to serve; looking forward to next meeting with new chair.

XII. New Business

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 14th, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. via WebEx

Meeting Adjourned – MOTION: By: Jennifer Hansen; second by Brittani Kindle.