
Illinois Children and Family Services Advisory Council

November 10, 2022, 3:00 PM
Via WebEx / Conference line only

MINUTES

Attendance

MEMBERS: Jennifer Hansen (Chair), Brittani Kindle (Vice Chair), Marge Berglind (*Ex Officio*), Gabriel Foley (Secretary), Kim King, Nate Pietrini and Anita Weinberg

DCFS : Kara Hamilton (Liaison), Lorena Hernandez, and Carrie Long

PUBLIC: Lauren Beard (Chicago Student), Theresa Costello (SAFE Model), and Dar'tavous Dorsey (Applicant)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Jennifer called meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and introductions were made.

II. Approval of Minutes from September 8th meeting. MOTION: Marge Berglind moved to approved minutes; second by Kim King; minutes unanimously approved.

III. Membership Discussion

a. Potential Member. Dar'tavous Dorsey, Associate Director of Strategic Engagement with University of Chicago Crime and Education Urban Labs. Has overseen all relations with City Hall, CPD, and a Case Manger (private agency) working with DCFS. As a lived experience in the child welfare system, would like to join the council to support and make sure there is a compound pathway for young people, believes its every one's responsibility.

Approval of recommendation for Dar'tavous Dorsey to be a member of the Illinois Children and Family Services Advisory Council. MOTION: Nate Pietrini moved to approved; second it by Brittanni Kindle; all in favor, no oppositions or abstentions, motion carried. Kara will reach out to Governor's Office to move forward with application.

b. Proposed Amendment to Bylaw. Approval of proposed amendment to bylaws. Motion: Nate Pietrini moved to approved; second by Brittany Kindle; unanimously approved. Kara Hamilton will send all members approved Bylaws with date revision.

c. Required Trainings. As a reminder everyone is supposed to complete their annual trainings to be compliant. DCFS Liaison will send the OneNet link to all members.

IV. Foster Family Licensing Standards by Carrie Long, Foster Care Licensing Supervisor/DCFS

Carrie Long attended as a substitute for the Regional Foster Care Manager to answer questions relating the topic. Reiterated the foster licensing rule was amended in 2020 and is still in need of updating to match the language in the childcare act regarding the criteria for a waiver.



Currently, pending the removal of two words to match the childcare act. Also, implemented the 402 Non-Safety Waiver Training to all staff. The actual waiver process is monitored by the assigned permanency worker and assign a licensing representative from DCFS agency.

Q. The committee has been looking at the Family First Act and the federal requirements for Standardized Foster Home Licensing that all states need to follow to comply with the federal legislation. Has DCFS done a robust review of the standards as compared to what we anticipated the new standards are going to be? Are there any deficiencies or gaps? And if so, what needs to be done from a policy standpoint to correct those.

The council has agree not to pursue for the time being this line of inquiry with DCFS due to not responding correctly after several requests have been made to the agency. Carrie offered to seek for correct answers and will relate information to Kara.

V. SAFE Model Presentation by Theresa Costello, CEO of Action 4 Child Protection (<https://action4cp.org>)

Is a nonprofit organization since 1984 with headquarters in Charlotte, North Carolina. There are about 22 staff members that live all over the United States. The SAFE model, which stands for safety assessment and family evaluation. They work strictly with the public child welfare system doing several different things: training, programming evaluations, organizational reviews, policy work and quality assurance. Have an evidence-based practice called Family Connections primarily for child abuse prevention. The Primary product worked in many states is the SAFE model. A safety comprehensive decision-making model that covers the life of a case and Illinois has made the decision to replace CERAP. This process starts at the point of the hotline taking the referral and gathering information. Making sure asking the right questions are asked when the investigators are going out and making the decisions. Their goal is to make sure they are identifying unsafe children in need of protection. The model is based on a philosophical and practical approach. That is least intrusive safety management by creating and sustaining as needed; building on families, networks, and using providers to create resources. Also, returning children home as soon as possible if they have to be removed. A big practice model shift like this takes somewhere between 3 to 5 years to be fully implemented and seeing a high percentage of fidelity in practice impacting all the players in the system. Different DCFS steering committees have already been created, it is critical to a successful implementation.

Q. What would be the ideal caseload for each case worker to be effective? Have worked in different jurisdictions and one of the things they know is there's some uniqueness based on areas and hearing schedule therefore about 12 is do able. Also, it is recommended 6 or 7 staff members to 1 supervisor on average.

Q. Is there a special flowchart or anything that deals with domestic violence? It is included within the definition and the danger threats, have different descriptors that capture the dynamics of domestic violence in child protection cases. Have done special trainings, workshops, and supports of things related to the application of the model in domestic violence situations. SAFE model is supposed to work with existing jurisdiction in Illinois. If it doesn't exist it can be looked into it.

Q. Does the team have any unique considerations or approaches for the state? There is a need to create Support Team members (experts/champions). Illinois is a big state needing a lot of support and expertise on the ground. In Florida, the agency created Safety Practice Experts devoted to support the staff, this recommendation was made to the agency as well.

Q. Have other states taken 3 to 5 years to complete SAFE implementation as well? The practice will start with CCWIS in 2023 with Case Management. However, in terms of fidelity, training, coaching and to reach all components of the model it would take that time frame.

Q. Are there any kind of metrics that have been used in other states to determine this has met the goals for effectiveness for safer children and families? For example, Arizona used their CFSR data. However, SAFE can define the metrics that will reflect success of the model.

Q. Can DCFS find out why CERAP deteriorated? Besides paperwork there should be a meaningful intervention with the family and extended support services. Theresa commented there was a report made by Chapin Hall and analysis of CERAP as well. It had comparison of different safety decision models to replace CERAP.

VI. Identify November's Meeting Agenda

The Tentative Agenda is as follows: CCWIS Presentation, Chapin Hall Report Presentation, Unauthorized Placement Data, Family First overview by Marge Berglind.

VII. Public Comments

None

VIII. New Business

Meeting Adjourned at 5:01 PM – MOTION: BY: Gabriel Foley; second by Marge Berglind

Next Meeting: Thursday, January 12, 2023, 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM via WebEx