

Advisory Commission on Reducing the Disproportionate Representation of African American Children in Foster Care

Meeting Minutes
August 25, 2022

Meeting called to order by: Tim Snowden, Statewide Chief Deputy Director
Permanency and Intact Services, DCFS

Members in attendance: Deputy Majority Leader Mary Flowers
Rachel Turner, Public Member
Chrystal Wofford, Dept of Aging
Dagene Brown, Director, Office of Racial Equity Practice, DCFS
Latonia Byrd-Williamson, Dept of Juvenile Justice
Tiana McCall, Dept of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Heidi Clark, Dept of Public Health
Dr. Leslie Ward, IL State Board of Education
Michelle Shaver, IL Board of Higher Education
Janelle Washington, IL Community College Board
Pam Hudson, Dept of Human Rights
Abby Dompke, IL Capital Development Board
Dana O'Leary, Dept of Labor
Latasha Roberson, Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois
Denice Murray, Adjunct Instructor University of Chicago, Crown Family School of Social Work
Kara Hamilton, Associate Deputy Director, External Communications and Advisory Groups, DCFS
Lucretia Newman, Legislative Liaison, DCFS
Darnita Jackson, Administrative Assistant, DCFS

Non-members in attendance: Thomas Grippando, Attorney formerly of Cook Co Public Guardian's Office

Welcome:

- Welcome by the Chair.
- Introductions by all Members.
- Background on the legislation by Deputy Majority Leader Flowers and statistical data which prompted HB3267, ACLU report, Chicago Tribune article dated Feb. 21, 2022.
- Foundational data that will drive the work needed for the Recommendations report due 1 year from the commencement of the Commission.
- Review data and identify causes and factors.
- Coordinate and collaborate a full system in IL to address the issue to make structural changes and differences.
- Review data from DCFS specifically things that have happen over the last 3 to 5 years that would be helpful in this work.

Questions/Comments:

- Do we have data on how many youth-in-care have parents who are incarcerated?
- It would be helpful to understand what factors contribute to African-American youth being placed into the system. Examining data from CFCR, have staff from the School of Social Work come in to discuss and level set; discuss what they found, current work, what they are working on right now.
- Basic knowledge and information on the allegation system and the process of a child coming into care would be helpful for those that have zero knowledge. A basic overview of Procedure 300, the Mandated Reporter Book.

- Invite DCFS staff to meeting to discuss their role in the child welfare system.
- Discuss ways to protect children from being placed in foster care due to incarceration by parent.
- Invite group from HB2914 to meeting to discuss the discriminatory practices they are finding.

Action Items Before Next Meeting:

- Send data to members; break-down of yic, FY2022 Monitoring Report of BH Consent Decree, Chicago Tribune article, updated Mandated Reporter manual, the number of families with DCFS involvement that have incarcerated parents;
- Poll the group for frequency of meetings & upcoming meeting dates via Survey Monkey.