



New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

SUBCOMMITTEE ON POVERTY AND NEGLECT

Katie Stoehr, Chair

July 25, 2023
2:30 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.
Virtual Meeting

Minutes

In Attendance:

Larry Brasch
Mary Coogan
Natasha Johnson
Sonia Moticha
Patricia Risch
Katie Stoehr

NJ Department of Human Services
Advocates for Children of New Jersey
NJ Department of Human Services
NJ Department of Education
NJ Department of Human Services
NJ Department of Children and Families

Guests:

Katwana Noble

Communications Workers of America 1037

Staff:

Daniel Yale

NJ Department of Children and Families

"In compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Trenton Times and the Newark Star Ledger and posted at the Department of State, 125 West State St., 1st Floor, Trenton, New Jersey."

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order and the Open Public Meetings notice was read. Katie Stoehr welcomed members and each member provided a brief introduction.

Review Minutes from June 20, 2023 Meeting

Members reviewed the minutes from the June 20, 2023 meeting. Natasha Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes. Mary Coogan seconded the motion. The minutes were approved without edit.

Recap of June 20, 2023 meeting

Katie provided a recap of the previous meeting and reminded members that the slides from the previous meeting were sent to members prior to this meeting. The following were accomplished at the previous meeting:

- Discussed the preliminary scope of this subcommittee and the ideas members may want to work on in the future



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- Developed an initial statement of what the subcommittee seeks to accomplish and initial ideas of projects
- Areas of recommendation that resulted from the Four Branch Institute and discussions at the previous meeting
- Changing the name of this group to the Subcommittee on Race, Poverty, and Neglect
- Katie discussed emerging research about the intersection between neglect and poverty and agreed to share the citations that were in the slides that were presented

Regarding changing the name of the subcommittee, procedurally a recommendation needs to be made to the Task Force for their approval. A motion to change the name of the group from the Subcommittee on Poverty and Neglect to the Subcommittee on Race, Poverty, and Neglect was made by Sonia Moticha. Patricia Risch seconded the motion. Members voted to approve the motion. Katie will send an email to the Task Force co-chairs communicating the recommendation of changing the name of the subcommittee.

Proposal for action following Fall 2023 Task Force conference

Katie informed members that the 2023 NJTF CAN Biennial Conference will be focused on the intersection of poverty and neglect. Katie prepared a proposal regarding how this subcommittee might intersect with the conference or leverage the opportunity that the conference creates as a launching point. Mary provided a brief update on the planning of the conference. The goal of the conference is to both educate people and motivate people to take action. Mary discussed the plan to ask attendees to have table conversations or group conversations and get people to commit to take action. The goal is to receive feedback from attendees that will inform an action plan.

Katie presented the proposed plan on how this subcommittee can organize their work leading up to the conference. As the conference is well-attended, they can use it to publicize the work of the subcommittee to engage people to do some workshopping around the ideas over the next year. Katie's proposal included the following:

- Share the scope of what the subcommittee will be working on
- Use "table talk" time to obtain feedback on the scope
- Pledge to organize a series of workshops over the next 12 months to discuss ideas (possibly those that resulted from the Four Branch Institute) with specific stakeholders. The goal being that there is a deliverable at the conclusion of each workshop.

Mary suggested having an initial meeting with the stakeholder groups that are identified for each issue area. Part of the workshop should first clarify misunderstandings that people may have about a certain system or issue. Oftentimes, people have misconceptions about what can change and who has the authority to change things. Natasha added that it will be important for stakeholders that attend workshops to understand that the workshops are not to discuss personal case situations but rather to



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discuss systemic issues. Katie discussed developing a cycle for each workshop that would include a pre-engagement meeting, the workshop, and then a post-workshop wrap-up.

Members agreed to discuss how they will determine what will be included on the issue list for workshops with stakeholders and how it will be presented at the conference.

Mapping out the “as is”

Sonia spoke about determining what resources and services are available and putting the information into one place to educate others. Sonia suggested using the conference to conduct a brief survey of the attendees to obtain information about resources they utilize.

Katie shared a document with members that was prepared as part of DCF’s Family First Prevention Plan. Katie proposed that the subcommittee organize their work around the same principles. The document is organized from a family’s perspective and identifies what they might need from their community or public system – based on their family situation. The premise is that all families go through varied levels of stress. Depicted in the document is a line which indicates when elevated stress levels indicate that a child may be in danger. There are not good families and bad families, rather there are families that are able to deal with elevated levels of stress and then there are families for which situations bring their stress levels above the “danger line”. How can we reduce the frequency with which a family is getting to and above the “danger line”? How can we help a family to repair and heal once they’ve gone past the “danger line”? In the Family First Prevention Plan, DCF mapped out what is already available regarding population level prevention.

Katie offered to email this document to members if they thought it could be a starting point for the larger conversation. Katie agreed with Sonia and suggested sharing this document at the conference and obtaining feedback from attendees. Members agreed that this document is a good starting point. Other issues that were raised during this conversation:

- Marketing of resource and service information and how people would be able to access it in a way that is easily digestible
- Putting the responsibility on stakeholders to be present as a resource for people and be an advocate for the services that are available

Katie will email this document to the group for review and for members to make additions regarding services or resources that are missing from the list and to begin developing a list of priorities. Regarding how the members would like to use the issues identified during the Four Branch Institute, it was agreed that those issues would be used as the base and then amendments can be made if necessary.

Membership

The subcommittee discussed whether it was necessary to add representatives from many different agencies when the actual work will be completed during the planned workshops. Specific stakeholders could be invited to attend workshops for issues on which they have specific knowledge rather than joining the larger subcommittee. Mary suggested that if stakeholders agree to join a workgroup but later



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decide to join the larger subcommittee, they are able to do so. Members reviewed the categories that they would like represented on the subcommittee as discussed at the previous meeting. Those categories were separated into those that should attend workshops and those that should become a regular member of the subcommittee. Katie suggested that the subcommittee revisit membership at the next meeting. Katie asked that members email her with the information of individuals that have agreed to join the subcommittee and she will update the list of prospective members.

Announcements & Closure

The subcommittee discussed holding a meeting during the second half of August with a date to be determined. At the upcoming meeting, the subcommittee will discuss in more detail what they would like to accomplish at the upcoming conference as well as what they will be setting up to do after the conference.