



New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Patty Mojta, Co-Chair
Sanford Starr, Co-Chair

December 1, 2022
10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Virtual Meeting

Minutes

In Attendance:

Suzanne Conrad
Diane Dellano
Aldina Hovde
Corissa Kazar
Jeanne McMahon
Patty Mojta
Svetlana Shpiegel
Sandy Starr
Tiffany Tucker
Wendi White

Consultant
Advocates for Children of NJ
New Jersey Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
embrella
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network
Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey
Montclair State University
NJ Department of Children and Families
Pediatrician
NJ Department of Corrections

Guests:

Jessica Sauer
Robyn Acceturo
Leon Carelli
Victoria Levine

Child Advocacy Association of NJ
Child Advocacy Association of NJ
Child Advocacy Association of NJ
Montclair State University

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."

**Please note the meeting is being recorded for the transcription of minutes. Please be sure to state your name prior to making comments, motions and seconding votes.*

Welcome and Introductions

Patty Mojta welcomed members and each member provided a brief introduction.

Review September 1, 2022 meeting minutes



The minutes from the September 1, 2022 meeting were approved without edit.

NJTFCAN Updates

Patty informed members that as part of the September 23, 2022 meeting, NJTFCAN members discussed how the Prevention Plan is being promoted. This included the plan being included through the Mercer County Human Service meetings and their network, the NJ Department of Education (NJ DOE) adding a link on their website and newsletter about the plan, and the NJ Department of Community Affairs including the plan in the spotlight on their website and in their newsletter. Patty also informed members that she spoke about the Prevention Committee's idea to develop a recruitment committee and the other committees of the NJTFCAN expressed interest in combining efforts to develop recruitment materials.

Racial Equity/Racial Justice Panelist Presentations

Sandy explained that as the Committee begins to work through the priorities of the Prevention Plan, presentations will be planned to give members a sense of what is currently happening around addressing the issues that were identified. The hope is that members will make recommendations for either immediate next steps or bigger picture plans as we move forward. Through the use of the following presentations, members will get three different perspectives on some of the agency work around race equity and racial justice.

NJ American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Initiatives

Tiffany Tucker, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer, NJ AAP

- Most diverse Executive Committee that NJ Chapter of the AAP has had
- Prior to 2020 NJ AAP did not have a DEI Committee
- Formed DEI Committee in late 2020, a member of the DEI Committee sits on every other committee to ensure that there is a DEI lens at every level of NJ AAP
- Proposed a bylaw change that would include an elected DEI Officer that would be on the governing board. Once passed through the Executive Committee, the proposal was voted on by the members.
- One of the roles of the DEI Officer is to integrate best practices for DEI into chapter policies and programs
- Developed a mission statement to ensure that inclusion was part of the culture in NJ AAP
- Identified a list of opportunities at the first meeting of the DEI Committee, the two which have been worked on the most to date are:
 - To ensure diverse representation of program content and speakers
 - Sent a survey to membership to gain feedback about what the organizations were doing and what other practices were doing – both academic centers and pediatricians in private practice – in order to improve a culture of inclusivity and asked members to suggest topics and areas of focus that they wanted to see from the NJ AAP.



- The survey results informed every event and webinar that has been held by the NJ AAP over the past year.
- To identify opportunities to work with educational systems to address diversity in pediatrics and healthcare
 - Ask a Doc program – virtual physician panel targeting middle school students (7th and 8th grade). Includes a diverse group of physicians discussing what led them to medicine, challenges they had to overcome based on background or other social determinants, and what they do. Afterwards there is an interactive activity and an open question and answer session. The program has worked with two schools from Camden, two schools from Trenton, and two schools from Newark.
 - Residency education and programming.
 - Encourages physicians to look at how social determinants of health factor into a patient’s health during their morning report.
 - Resident retreats and resident career days

Racial Equity Impact Assessments

Diane Dellano – Advocates for Children of New Jersey

- Assessment tool to examine implementation of proposed and current policies and statutes to identify any racial barriers.
- Came about during the Pritzger Children’s Initiative to improve policies, practices, services, and funding related to infants and toddlers.
 - Ensure parent input to determine if the policies, programs, and services that are proposed are useful to parents, improve access, and provide expected outcomes.
 - Systematic examination of how a proposed program, action, or decision is going to affect different racial and ethnic groups
 - Can be used by decision makers for new or existing policies
 - Opportunity to engage diverse stakeholders
 - Assists in ensuring that child welfare policymaking occurs in an environment that is transparent and engaging of all communities and its constituents.
- Who should be using this tool?
 - ACNJ is using it as policy developers
 - Legislators to use it as they are identifying new laws
 - Decision makers and other advocates around the state
- Who should be involved?
 - Foster parents
 - Families
 - Service providers
 - Community members



- This tool is a combination of several different tools
- Must include a tracking mechanism and a plan to track outcomes

As a copy of the document was sent to members prior to the meeting, Diane briefly went through several of the questions that are included in the assessment tool and provided examples of how the tool can be used in certain circumstances.

Mandated Supporter Training

Patty Mojta, Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) NJ

Patty reminded members that a brief document regarding Mandated Supporter was sent to members prior to this meeting. The concept stemmed from social workers at Columbia University and has been replicated by Prevent Child Abuse chapters. The concept urges people to step back and examine the traditional mandated reporter training and think about it differently. Traditional training emphasizes reporting as the first course of action, sometimes threatening consequences if a report is not made.

There are several concerns with this method:

- Unnecessary reporting
- Racial bias
- Harm to families with false reporting
- Lead to slow response time for cases of actual child abuse due to high number of reports.

Mandated Supporter framework shifts to focusing on:

- Culture of supporting families rather than surveilling families
- Emphasizing referral to appropriate service providers
- Advocating for limitations on report mandates

The Mandated Supporter training that was provided to members prior the meeting includes:

- History and bias of mandated reporting – the intention of reporting and the potential for bias
- The role of CPS – what is a report, what is a need, and the difference between the two
- What happens when a report is made
- Skills development

PCA is in the process of making updates to their child abuse and neglect prevention training and looking at updates to their mandated reporter training. They are also looking to what other PCA chapters in other states are doing, including a “Lean on Me” campaign – a multi-year, thoughtful process of including families with lived experience to develop customized training for their state about how to protect children by supporting families.

Q&A with panelists

At the conclusion of the panelist presentations, committee members were given the opportunity to discuss the materials presented and ask questions of the presenters.



Group Discussion Questions

Patty and Sandy guided members through the following series of questions and discussions relating to the presentations:

- How do the efforts being discussed align with the Prevention Plan Strategic Priorities?
- Is there anything relating to how racial equity and racial justice are being addressed that gives pause or concern?
- To what extent would formal race equity training be beneficial to the system?
- What are the implications of this effort?
- What are the gaps or limitations?
- How can we move the needle on prevention?
- Next steps?
 - Mandated Supporter
 - Prevention Standards
 - Recruitment
 - Examine disparity data
- Recommendations to the Task Force?
 - Analysis of calls to the DCF State Central Registry regarding unnecessary reports (non-child abuse/neglect), include types of concerns and family data, if available.
 - Use race equity tool when making decisions about programming, funding, etc.

Agenda for next meeting

Sandy explained that the plan for the next meeting will be to address the second priority of the Prevention Plan - increasing opportunities for effective youth and family participation and partnership in policy, program planning, implementation, continuous quality improvement, and outcomes. Sandy asked for volunteers to provide a presentation or be a part of the planning committee for the next meeting. Patty stated that at the last meeting, a member suggested that the Committee reach out to the Annie E. Casey Foundation regarding their work with youth inclusion. Svetlana agreed to reach out to the foundation for more information. Svetlana also agreed to reach out to see if a representative from the Center for the Study of Social Policy would be available to provide a presentation at the next meeting.

Announcements

Svetlana may contact members of the Committee for assistance with a study examining how individuals that use illegal substances view the child welfare system and how fear of involvement with child welfare affects access to services as well as the how child welfare workers view substance use.

Meeting Adjourned – Next meeting February 2, 2023