



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

September 2, 2021
10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Virtual Meeting

Minutes

In Attendance:

Jean Budd
Suzanne Conrad
Carla Davis
Diane Dellano
Corissa Kazar
Patty Mojta
Kim Pinto
Dodi Schultz
Dave Seegert
Svetlana Shpiegel
Sandy Starr

Montclair State University
Cape May County Ace Prevention Partnership
World Childhood Foundation USA
Advocates for Children of NJ
embrella
Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey
NJ CAP
NJ CAP
Brick Township SBYSP
Montclair State University
NJ Department of Children and Families

Guests:

Nya Earrusso
Advocates for Children of NJ

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

A brief welcome was provided by Patty Mojta.

Review June 3, 2021 Minutes

The minutes from the June 3, 2021 meeting were approved without edit.



2022 – 2025 Prevention Plan Discussion – Priorities and Strategies

Sandy reminded the Committee that during the previous meeting, members reviewed the initial draft of the plan. The initial draft was a result of the Committee’s previous discussions as well as the results of a visioning exercise conducted with the staff of DCF’s Division of Family and Community Partnerships. Sandy explained that subsequent to the previous meeting, an Ad Hoc group of Committee members met to consolidate comments and make revisions that were suggested by members. A revised draft was sent to the Committee for review prior to this meeting. Sandy stated that the Ad Hoc group consolidated a lot of the initial priorities and strategies, including adding some of the existing Prevention Plan into this draft. There are now 6 priorities, a goal for each area, and a set of strategies. The following are the priorities currently listed in the plan:

1. Promoting race equity, racial justice and reducing disparities across populations;
2. Ensuring family voice;
3. Trauma informed care and promoting developmentally based, trauma-informed, healing centered prevention practices.
4. Partner and collaborate with key stakeholders across systems to ensure access to a full continuum of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention services for universal, select, and indicated populations with an emphasis on non-stigmatizing strategies in a risk and protective factors framework.
5. Enhance data infrastructure and appropriate data sharing for decision making
6. Attract and retain a highly qualified workforce with ties to local communities to provide culturally competent and evidence-based prevention approaches

Sandy felt that keeping to larger themes and strategies indicates that this is the direction that we want prevention and child welfare to go. As we move along each quarter, we can look at specific aspects of this plan and tack and adjust the plan depending on what is actually occurring and what is not. The Committee discussed the necessity of emphasizing the use of evidence-based practice. We need to make sure that we are providing evidence-based services and determine how we establish if the services being provided are evidence-based. Suzanne stated that they had spoken about this previously and it brought about discussion regarding updating the Standards of Prevention to hold programs and people accountable. Sandy stated that there was discussion about whether we are looking at ensuring that there is data, evaluation, and clear outcomes rather than ensuring that a practice is specifically evidence-based. Just because a program or services are evidence based, does not ensure that it is appropriate for the population in which it is being offered. We do want research on evidence-based practices, but we also must understand what limitations may exist in terms of the target population for that practice. Research and evaluation are necessary to find out if we are applying a particular practice to a population that wasn’t part of that determination that it is an evidence-based approach. Patty stated that the workgroup scaled back on the evidence-based language and tried to talk more about programs working toward outcomes and whether they have goals and data collection. Aldina agreed that this is an



important first step, but it should only be the first step. There should be movement towards establishing evidence towards effectiveness. Sandy agreed that the plan should highlight effectiveness more and felt that it is important to have a strong evaluation component to our work and ensure that all programs include evidence for effectiveness.

The only other suggestion that was made regarding edits to the initial draft during the meeting was that adequate funding needed to be highlighted. Diane felt that, although the issue of funding is embedded within the action steps and strategies, a priority of any plan needs to have adequate funding and should be emphasized.

Sandy stated that the next step will be to give members time to review the draft. If members have any comments or changes, they can submit them within 3 weeks. Once comments have been received, the Ad Hoc group will meet again and consolidate the comments and/or edits and update the plan.

Task Force Updates

Patty provided updates to the Committee from the Task Force meeting that occurred on June 26, 2021.

Workgroup Updates

Evidence-Based

Svetlana stated that since the survey has been completed and the recommendations provided, the workgroup is looking for other evidence-based projects to engage in. Svetlana suggested work around school-based services that relates to evidence-based practices or other projects that would be useful for the Committee.

Communication & Outreach Workgroup

No update at this time. Corissa will reach out to Nicole to schedule a meeting and begin discussions regarding new initiatives.

Infrastructure and Resources

Diane stated that the workgroup had not had a chance to meet in the past few months. Diane spoke about the large amounts of funding that NJ is receiving from the Federal Government for COVID-19 relief. Diane stated that those funds can be used for family support services and prevention programming. The workgroup will be meeting over the next few months to look at these resources and make recommendations on how the state can utilize these funds to support families during the pandemic. Suzanne suggested that an Ad Hoc workgroup be created to discuss this issue as soon as possible. Diane stated that she will send out meeting information to all who would like to discuss the issue. Patty asked that after the Ad Hoc workgroup meets, they forward their recommendations so that they can be presented at the Task Force meeting on September 24, 2021.



Orientation Workgroup

Patty stated that they have been meeting to discuss the creation of a group charter that discusses the expectations for this group, make-up of the membership, meeting frequency, goals of the Committee, etc. Once that is complete, it will be shared with the Committee for comments. Aldina is also in the process of documenting the history of the Prevention Committee. Patty stated that she will forward the PowerPoint to the Committee for comments from members.

Patty explained that there has been discussion around these workgroups once the new plan is in effect. The thought is that, rather than having ongoing workgroups, the Committee can create Ad Hoc workgroups when a project arises. Sandy stated that there may be issues that arise where the Ad Hoc workgroup would have very direct involvement for a period of time. The Committee discussed the advantages of creating Ad Hoc groups when necessary rather than having ongoing workgroups.

Announcements

Corissa informed the Committee that embrella is presenting a virtual kinship conference on September 18, 2021. Corissa shared a link to the conference with Committee members and asked that members share this information with any kinship caregivers they might know.

Meeting Adjourned – Next meeting December 2, 2021