



**Protection Committee**  
**Richard Stagliano, Chair**  
**Liza Kirschenbaum, Esq, Vice-Chair**  
**December 14, 2022**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**Minutes**

**In Attendance:**

Jacqueline Augustine	NJ Administrative Office of the Courts
Eileen Caraker	Gloucester County Prosecutor's Office
Martin Finkel	Professor Emeritus, Rowan University
Scout Hartley	National Foster Youth Institute, NJ Chapter
Liza Kirschenbaum	CASA of New Jersey
Lisa Landsman	Consultant
Nydia Monagas	NJ Children's Alliance/Montclair State University
Sonia Moticha	NJ Department of Education
Debbie Riveros	Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office
Rachel Silliman Cohen	CARES Institute
Jennifer Underwood	NJ Department of Community Affairs

**Guests:**

Robyn Acceturo	Former foster parent
Leon Carelli	Child Advocacy Association of New Jersey (CAANJ)
Brandi Harding	NJ Department of Children and Families
Clinton Page	NJ Department of Children and Families
Erin Frasco	NJ Department of Children and Families

**Staff:**

Daniel Yale	NJ Department of Children & Families
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**Introduction and Welcome**

The meeting was called to order and the Open Public Meetings notice was read. A brief welcome was provided by Richard Stagliano.

**Review and Approve September 21, 2022, Minutes**

Minutes were not approved at this time as quorum was not reached.

**Areas of Focus and Topics for Future Meetings**

**Committee Initiatives**

**The Digital Realm of Child Abuse Workgroup**

Sonia informed the Committee that as their previous project is complete, the workgroup plans to meet in the new year to discuss new projects. Sonia also invited anyone with interest in joining the workgroup to email Lorene Wilkerson and they will be included going forward.



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**Youth with Problematic Sexual Behaviors Workgroup**

Nydia informed the Committee that this group is currently working on developing a fact sheet for legislators and policymakers around what problematic sexual behaviors are, the appropriate response, etc. They are in the process of determining what information will be included in the handout before it is formatted and finalized.

**Update on Statewide Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse Response Workgroup**

The workgroup drafted a proposal/framework for a statewide response to child-on-child sexual abuse that is meant to be a framework to guide implementation. It is currently being reviewed by various partner agencies and stakeholders. The following is a listing of the subgroups and what they are currently working on:

- Clinical case manager - each county will have an individual that will provide case management services as well as screening and assessment of cases that are not DCPD or law enforcement involved. This subgroup is working to create a job description for those positions, what the screening template will look like, and what the training needs will be for those positions.
- Data subcommittee - quality assurance and quality improvement component. Collecting data about this process to see what is effective and pivot if necessary. The subgroup will be determining what data will be collected, how the data will be collected, how the data will be analyzed, and how the data will be disseminated.
- Referral process subcommittee – DCF has is in the process of developing a specialized unit within their State Centralized Screening (SCR) unit to respond to referrals of child-on-child sexual abuse as they require a higher level of assessment. This subgroup will look at what the roles and responsibilities of this unit will be as they transition cases to the clinical case managers once their assessment is complete. They will discuss what the assessment will look like, the process for transitioning cases to clinical case managers, what documentation will follow the case, and developing guidelines when referring cases back to DCF.
- Treatment and training subcommittee – in the process of rolling out training statewide as there are not many providers that are trained in providing treatment who have engaged in behaviors that have caused sexual harm. The subcommittee is also looking into maintaining a database of where available providers are located and tracking waitlists to be able to determine availability of services.
- Funding Subcommittee – developing parameters for the “Child Services Fund”, which will fund medical and mental health services for children when DCPD is not involved.

**Medical Evaluation and Referral Workgroup**

Rachel informed the Committee that this workgroup was previously working to assist DCF in creating sexual abuse training program for new investigators. Additionally, they created educational information for DCPD regarding the role of medical providers in sexual abuse cases. Going forward they will extend the education to other partners throughout the state.



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## **DCP&P Initiative Update**

### ***Erin Frasso, DCF Office of Operations***

Erin Frasso provided a presentation on Solution-Based Casework (SBC) - an evidence-based, family-centered, case practice model. SBC helps the family team organize, prioritize, and document steps that it will take to help rebuild safe, healthy, and connected families. It requires DCP&P caseworkers to be partners with the families that they serve as well as with providers of the services that families need the most. Since January 2022, all families involved with DCP&P are supported by caseworkers trained in SBC. Erin provided the Committee with a detailed overview of what is included in SBC.

SBC is based on 3 theoretical foundations:

- Family life cycle theory
- Relapse prevention cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) theory, and
- Solution focused family therapy.

These three tenets form the foundation of SBC which are:

- Building a partnership rather than adversarial
- Defining problems based on difficult situations in the family's everyday life so that DCP&P can be practical and useful to the family
- Focusing on celebrating skills and routines that individuals and families use to increase safety and reduce risk rather than focus on service completion and compliance.

The SBC Framework is organized into four milestones. By using these milestones, caseworkers are able to begin with partnerships, set meaningful goals, target specific behavioral changes, and keep families motivated to achieve outcomes.

- Milestone #1 – building consensus for change
- Milestone #2 – developing the outcomes
- Milestone #3 – create specific action plans with the family
- Milestone #4 – Editing the action plan to make it smarter, celebrating change, progress, and outcome achievement

### ***Brandi Harding, Assistant Director, DCF Central Office Operations Team***

Brandi Harding provided an overview of the DCP&P Collaborative Quality Improvement (CQI) process. The CQI is designed to measure and improve the quality of work that DCP&P is providing to the children and families they serve. The CQI process includes:

- Evaluation of quantitative and qualitative key performance metrics to identify systemic barriers and areas of improvement within DCP&P
- Key performance metrics are organized around critical outcome demands: safety, risk, health and wellbeing, permanency, and teaming.
- Ensuring overall efforts are aligned with DCF's vision



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- DCPD frontline and leadership will be analyzing key performance data metrics to inform improvement planning
- Leverage collaborative problem solving between DCPD leadership, frontline staff, and partners at the Office of Quality to develop plans that address the local offices identified areas of improvement
- Develop staff capacity around analyzing both qualitative and quantitative key performance metrics – become data focused, data driven
- Enhance collaboration and shared accountability to shift improvement efforts towards supportive processes that will encourage staff development and proactive problem solving.

The CQI cycle is a two-pronged approach of developing and implementing improvement plans over a 12-month cycle for all local offices. These processes are referred to as “rapid improvement plans” and “annual improvement plans” and make up the CQI process. Both happen simultaneously throughout the year with the goal being that all local offices are working on an integrated rapid and annual CQI process at all times. All meetings throughout the process are co-facilitated with the local office manager and Office of Quality staff.

***Clinton Page, Deputy Director, DCF Division of Child Protection and Permanency***

Clinton informed the Committee that he has recently been examining the decline in the number of resource parents across the state, specifically the shortage of placements for children with complex needs. The current effort is to recruit more resource parents through grassroots efforts. Clinton partnered with Rutgers to modernize the recruitment efforts to utilize social media and other methods. The Office of Resource Families will also revitalize training efforts for resource parents to be able to better understand and manage placements, difficult behaviors, etc. Additionally, the Office of Resource Families will focus on retaining resource parents.

**Announcements**

Rachel reminded the Committee that the CARES Institute will hold their quarterly lecture on January 17, 2023 at 12:30 p.m. CME Certification is available. The focus will be on recognizing and responding to trafficked youth and young adults.

Rachel also announced that the CARES Institute is continuing to work toward creating a medical and mental health program for youth and young adults engaged in sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

Liza announced that the CASA of NJ Annual Report was released and put a link to the report in the meeting chat for members.

Members were asked to review the proposed meeting dates for 2023 and reach out to Daniel if any changes to the scheduled were required.



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**Meeting adjourned – Next Meeting March 15, 2023.**