

Minutes of the JTF CPIT Subcommittee Meeting  
February 8, 2007

Attendees:

Karen Alexander  
Bonnie Beneke  
Delaine Bottoms  
Frankie Cowan  
Pamela Dickey  
Joann Gregory  
Marjahna Hart  
Joe Saladino  
Rory Alley

The general agenda for the meeting was to review the CPIT subcommittee strategies in the 2007 Tennessee Child Sexual Abuse State Plan and decide what steps to take next.

As one of the outcomes of the JTF meeting and subsequent state plan, CPIT subcommittee members noted a need to develop standards in CPIT team functioning. Historically, CPS classification status in concluding allegation or risk of child maltreatment has been referred to as indicated or unfounded on CS form 0740, and CS form 0561. TCA 37-1-607 refers to these same cases using the terminology “substantiated” and “unsubstantiated”. Rules of the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services Child Protective Services Chapter 0250-7-9-.02 (2) also use the terminology “indicated”, as does 0250-7-9-.05 Standards and Criteria for Review of Classification of Reports of Child Abuse/Neglect as “Indicated”. In an effort to standardize this terminology to meet statute, DCS forms and Child Protective Services Case Managers terminology, Bonnie Beneke noted that in a data collection/legislative report meeting conducted January 17, 2007 Stacy Miller, DCS Chief Legal Counsel agreed to look into this to change the language so it would be more standardized.

As for the DCS Rules that were brought up, since there was a revision in November 2006, Tennessee Chapter of Children’s Advocacy Centers Member Joe Saladino will contact DCS to obtain the disc that they use to train their staff on the revised Standards and Criteria for Review of Classification of Reports of Child Abuse/Neglect as “Indicated”.

Members of the subcommittee also identified a need for additional training of local teams to build working inter-agency relationships to improve investigation efforts. In an effort to strengthen relationships between Law Enforcement and CPS as well as other contributing agencies, they identified personal contact through local telephone use and regional collaboration as keys to assist in functioning more effectively. Local Child Advocacy Centers are currently working on improving this process and will further it through trainings and group meetings.

In order to positively influence the CPIT policy and curriculum draft that is currently under development by DCS, CPIT sub-committee members would like to have individuals from community agencies outside of DCS review it before it is approved. Member Frankie Cowan will confer with DCS Staff member Rachel Sharp about obtaining the specific CPS policies before final approval and forward it to CPIT members to enable diverse agencies to contribute to this document prior to approval and publication.

Though in the past few years there has been a steady increase in forensic interviewers in Tennessee Child Advocacy Centers, through DCS funding, this fiscal year funding was not available for this action. There is a desire to increase or maintain CPIT Coordinator positions in the Child Advocacy Centers, but CAC and CPIT members agreed that Forensic Interviewer positions were a higher priority. In order to request funding for those positions in the coming fiscal year, Frankie Cowan will connect with Rachel Sharp to explore issues related to this fiscal allotment. UT Staff will also contact Bridget Bandy to get an update on the Legally Defensive Interviewing (LDI) contract and report back to this subcommittee concerning training timelines.