

Joint Task Force on Children's Justice/Child Sexual Abuse

VIDEO CONFERENCE MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2021 – 10:00 AM

Attendees

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Allen, Sandra | Keoph, Marie | Stribling, Jennifer |
| Alexander, Denise | Knowles, Catherine | Talley, Jackie |
| Beckham, Pierce | Lowen, Deborah | Wade, Pat |
| Boshears, Marlene | Maifair, Sammi | Wilkerson, Jason |
| Bottoms, Delaine | Mason, Carrie | Woerner, Stephen |
| Boyd, Ellen | McGee, Melissa | Worsham, Billy |
| Cobb, Dana | Meise, Michael | Wyatt, Verna |
| Cooper, Tim | Miller, Stacy | UT Staff |
| Davis, Kristen | Miner, Thomas | Frierson, Stephanie |
| Dixon, Matthew | Murphy, William | Hadjiharalambous, Sissie |
| Ebert, Jon | Paisley, Lori | Lawal, Toni |
| Farrar, Lynne | Palmer, Mary | Regrets |
| Gentry, Annette | Perales, Marymer | Bevans, Rebecca |
| Hargrow, Craig | Randolph, LaShonda | Carter, Bobby |
| Harper, Dawn | Rutledge, Aleigha | Koslick, Amy |
| Hart-Curry, Marjahna | Sinback, Kathryn | Miller, Stacy |
| Johnson, Anthony | Smith, Rae Anne | Page, Jacque |
| Karnes, Lanis | Snodgrass, Carla | Seeman, Larry |
| | Stallworth, Virginia | |

Welcome

President Lynne Farrar welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting.

Warm Up Activity

Before introducing the warm up activity, Vice President Pat Wade began by reminding the group of their common goals. Wade also reminded the JTF of their charge for addressing existing child abuse and neglect problems, and making recommendations to DCS regarding the detection, prevention, intervention, and treatment of child sexual abuse, severe abuse, and other forms of abuse and neglect. Wade then provided instructions for the warm up activity, which was designed to build energy. The question for the activity matched the group work context: **“What positives came from living in a virtual world; what have you discovered about yourself and your customers?”**

Some of the takeaways were as followed:

- Trainings and learnings have been effective – learned a lot of technology and how to think outside of the box.
- Child welfare professionals became more creative in maintaining contact with families involved with DCS.
- Mental health has been very effective and less stigmatized.
- There has been more parental involvement in court hearings.
- Participation in meetings and trainings have increased.
- There has been an increase in opportunities due to the virtual world.
- The “reach” has increased – nationally and internationally.
- There has been more frequent contacts with community partners and increased engagement in multiple systems.
- The virtual world has opened our minds as to how services can be provided and the efficiency of the services.
- There has been more time for work/life balance.

McKinney Vento Homeless Program Presentation

JTF member and Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) Homeless Students Supervisor Catherine Knowles delivered a presentation about the Tennessee homeless students program. The presentation covered the following:

- Defining Homelessness
- Purpose of the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program
- National School Data Enrollment by Primary Nighttime Residence
- Tennessee Homeless Data
- Fast Facts Demographic Data for Homeless Education and Students in Tennessee
- Goals of the Homeless Education Program
- Tennessee Homeless Graduation Data
- Number of Homeless Children and Youth in Tennessee Public Schools
- Subgroups of Homeless Children and Youth in Public Schools
- Homeless Children and Youth by Type of Primary Nighttime Residence in Tennessee Public Schools
- List of Resources

To obtain Knowles PowerPoint presentation, please contact her at

Catherine.knowles@mnps.org or the JTF coordinator Toni Lawal at tlawal@utk.edu

Approval of the Meeting Minutes for June 10, 2021

Vice President Pat Wade asked if any members had corrections or comments for the JTF June 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes. None voiced; minutes approved in the present form.

Ad hoc Nomination Committee Appointments

President Lynne Farrar appointed a three (3) member ad hoc Nomination Committee to solicit and review nominations for Executive Committee positions – Stephanie Etheridge, Annette Gentry, and Jackie Talley. President Farrar also reported that the JTF coordinator would support the ad hoc committee.

DCS Updates

Pierce Beckham, DCS OCS Director of System Integration and Innovation, provided the following updates:

- **OCS Organizational Leadership Changes:** Amy Koslick was promoted from Senior State Director of Investigations to Executive Director and DeShawn Harris of Shelby County was promoted from CPS Statewide director to Executive Director as well. Also, Beckham was promoted from Deputy Senior Director of Investigations to Director of System Integration and Innovation.
- **CPS Redesign:** The rollout of the redesign has been completed in all of the DCS 12 regions. Specialized teams for the redesign include **CPIT** which handles severe abuse, child death/near death; **Physical Abuse Immediate Response (PAIR)** respond to allegations of physical abuse on child 8 years or younger reported by a school, medical/mental health provider or day care provider; **Triage** handle intakes involving allegations of PAIR that would typically be screened out and respond to determine if intervention is needed; **Rapid Response** handles non-severe allegations to assess safety and determine intervention, Additionally, the **Drug teams**, located primarily in 49 counties in the East Region; and the **Family Protection and Preservation (FPP)** teams, are responsible for handling non-severe abuse/neglect allegations.
- **Listening Tours:** The Department is conducting listening tours in an effort to re-connect with staff in all three programs areas (CPS, foster care, and juvenile justice) and gather information from their perspectives about what is working well and not so well. It also has been an opportunity to regroup after a pandemic and statewide implementation. Also, the regional tours are expected to be completed by

September 30, 2021 and the results will be used to determine priorities and strategies.

- **Severe Abuse Allegation Legislation:** Senate Bill 1530 expanded the definition of severe abuse. to “knowingly or with gross negligence allowing a child under either (8) years of age to ingest an illegal or a controlled substance that results in the child testing positive on a drug screen, except as legally prescribed to the child.” It covers the following drugs: includes all Opiates and Opiate Derivates (i.e. Heroin); Hallucinogens (LSD, Peyote, etc.); GHB; MDMA; some compound amphetamines, Cocaine; Methamphetamine, and Fentanyl. The implications to DCS practice is that it expands what falls under CPIT protocols and jurisdictions and what situations the petition will include in a request for a severe abuse finding. For foster care, it expands what situations DCS have for severe abuse increasing potential of being released from reasonable efforts and what situations form the grounds of the severe abuse factor for termination of parental rights proceedings. The law went into effect on July 1, 2021.
- **Statewide Human Trafficking Data:** The following data was provided:
 - In 2019, 78 Counties Reported a Case to DCS. Alleged Child Victims (ACVs) were 571; and confirmed ACVs in a CSEM case were 232.
 - In 2020, DCS had a 20-30% reduction in calls to the Child Abuse Hotline for CSEM due to COVID-19.
 - In the first half of 2021, 69 counties reported a case to DCS; ACVs were 393; and confirmed ACVs in a CSEM case were 133.
- **Domestic Violence Allegation:** Beginning October 1, 2021, DCS will start having investigative responsibilities for domestic violence allegations. The Department’s computer system, Tennessee Family and Child Tracking System (TFACTS) has been updated to include this maltreatment type.
- **Sentinel Injuries Pilot:** Shelby County was chosen to pilot this initiative that focus on prevention and medical issues related to children in custody and those who are at-risk of entering custody. The collaboration is between DCS CPS workers and nursing staff. The child safety nursing staff will provide consultation to workers pertaining to injuries and medical records involving children 0 to 3.
- **CPS Redesign 2.0 (Next Steps):** DCS is gathering feedback and information regarding the redesign and is doing this in consultation with the Casey Foundation. DCS is looking at the impact of Covid-19 on their work and if expectations were met. Also, DCS is addressing issues for retaining and supporting staff as well as recruiting new staff and partnering with consultants for guidance and expertise.

Following the updates, Judge Meise commented about two of the updates – drug screens and staffing issues. Regarding the drug screen, Judge Meise stated that his court oftentimes encounter an issue related to obtaining quick results when screening parents for dependency and neglect cases. Judge Meise also stated that when they can produce and want to do a swab test, they are not always accessible, noting that this may just occur in his area. Beckham stated the swab tests have to be send off and that sometimes there is back up issues. Beckham also stated that he would follow up on the timing of swabs and availability in Judge Meise’s judicial district area as well as if there is lingering issues across the state. Judge Meise also noted that the issue of getting a quick response becomes a concern especially when dealing with issues of visitation.

Regarding the issue of retaining and recruiting more staff, Judge Meise asked if the issue is more of a funding or recruitment issue or both. Judge Meise also asked what the JTF can do to help. Beckham stated that DCS is being more creative in their efforts to retain/recruit staff. *(Following the meeting, Beckham agreed to continue this discussion for coming up with strategies DCS could possible use to retain and attract works at the next quarterly JTF meeting on December 2).*

Breakout Meetings

Before the Committees’ breakout meeting sessions, President Farrar gave instructions for the virtual breakout meetings. Farrar also asked the Chairs to submit their minutes to Toni Lawal, JTF coordinator by September 16.

The Committees’ meeting discussions were as follows:

- **CPIT.** Chair Tom Miner reported that Pierce Beckham updated the group on the status of DCS proposed five year plan that is being prepared in compliance with the Families First Prevention Services Act. Beckham also briefly addressed pending legislation that might be of interest to the CPIT Committee. The Committee then discussed the status of the update to the CPIT Best Practices Manual. Chair Miner reported it appears that the content changes to the manual have been completed and that the updated manual is now being formatted for printing.

Following the discussion of the status of the Best Practice Manual, Chair Miner reported there was discussion of whether the Committee should undertake a project to establish more detailed standards for conducting forensic pediatric examinations in the areas of sexual abuse, physical abuse and child neglect and

whether those standards should be incorporated into the best practice manual or developed as a separate product. Chair Miner reported this led to a discussion of the fact that there are currently only four physicians in the state who are board certified in the field of child abuse that are actively seeing patients and that, as a result, access to this type of professional is limited everywhere and virtually nonexistent in some areas of the state. Chair Miner went on to report there was a discussion of why this problem exists and what might be done to help alleviate it. The Committee members agreed to give further consideration to these issues in the hope that the matter could be more fully discussed at the next quarterly meeting.

- **Court Improvement.** Chair Kathy Sinback reported the Committee began with welcoming Dr. Carrie Mason of the AOC to the meeting followed by introductions. Chair Sinback reported Dr. Mason and her intern developed four templates for the Pro Se Petition varying in length and detail. The Committee reviewed each template. Judge Meise shared with the committee the Pro Se Petition utilized by Dickson County Court. Judge Meise commented that detail is important in the petition. The Dickson County petition will be circulated with the Committee members for in-depth review. A final Pro Se Petition for Dependency & Neglect will be developed combining the best elements of each template.

Chair Sinback also reported to the Committee that a group in Nashville is doing in-depth study of the Immediate Protection Agreement (IPA) process. This group includes DCS attorney Shay Jolly, and Magistrates Mike O'Neil and Alan Calhoun as well as representatives from CASA. DCS attorney Sammi Maifair has been providing guidance and information on the process. Chair Sinback also reported that Maifair and Stephanie Etheridge of the AOC reported that training was provided to the juvenile judges in August at their conference about the IPA process and best practices including non-custodial cases. Lynne Farrar, executive director of CASA asked that similar training be provided to the CASA network.

Chair Sinback also reported on the progress of the booklet about what happens in juvenile court for dependency and neglect cases. Nichole Robinson of the Arts Commission is securing a grant to have an artist help with the illustrations. Input will be requested from system-involved youth. Courtney Matthews, DCS Independent Living director, has been asked to connect the Arts Commission with

youth who could help with the art, wording, and general effectiveness of the book. The Arts Commission is developing the proposal and timeline for the project.

- **Outreach and Awareness.** Chair Sandra Allen reported the Committee discussed the following agenda items:
 - **DHS Keeping Kids Safe curriculum for child care providers:** A subcommittee was formed to look at what training is currently provided to Child Care providers, what they are required to complete related to child abuse and neglect, and what is available to them that is optional, as well as what curricula do providers use to train kids.
 - **Providing feedback to the new child abuse law:** Chair Allen reminded everyone to share their concerns to the new child abuse law that went into effect in August 2020 to Stephen Woerner at director@tncac.org by **September 15**. The law created a procedure for school teachers, school officials, and other school personnel to follow in regard to reporting suspected child abuse or child sexual abuse.
 - **Updating Practice Guidelines and Resources for Erin’s Law:** A subcommittee was formed to work on updating the Erin’s Law child sexual abuse prevention document.
 - **Discussion of CBCAP funding for schools to address child sexual abuse prevention:** Marie Keoph, DCS CBCAP Program Coordinator informed Chair Allen that the RFP will be coming out in November and that in order for an agency to receive CBCAP funding, they must also be licensed by DCS per Tennessee Code Annotated 71-3-501. The required license for this service is Child Abuse Prevention Agency. Child Abuse Prevention Agency (defined as “child abuse agency” in the law) shall mean and include any person, corporation, or agency which undertakes to or does provide any services of any nature, whatsoever, including but not limited to emergency shelter care, homemaker services, or parent training services designed to prevent or treat child abuse neglect or to protect children from child abuse or neglect.
- **Treatment Committee.** Chair Jon Ebert reported that the Committee began with a check in of members, and then reviewed previous meeting minutes followed by a discussion of the below action steps.

Action Step: Finalizing Cover

- Bill Murphy reported work continues to be done to identify picture for CSEM: A Review of the Literature report cover. Murphy reports conversation has not been finalized.
- Pat Wade refreshed the Committee on comments about pictures suggested to date.
- Ebert agreed to spearhead identification of graphic and move to approval with Committee and then approved version on to Executive Committee.
- Ebert, Tim Cooper and Melissa McGee will work on approval of cover and then move for dissemination.

Action Step: Next Steps

- Wade reviewed how this Review of Literature connects with tangible next steps. Committee then discussed importance of building a foundation of information in effort to better support next steps in practice.
- Ebert also identified that, at present, there is no randomized controlled study to establish best practices for this population.
- Murphy reminded the Committee that origination of this document was to answer the question of how to help victims of child sexual exploitation. Murphy also emphasized the importance of providing succinct information on the next steps.
- Ebert recommended valuable first next step may be to identify what is known about treatment of CSEM from broader definition of evidenced informed practice in this area as well as evidenced based treatment for trauma as a consequence of CSEM and provide “brief” on effective interventions. Ebert noted that by beginning here, there may be steppingstone for more specific following actions.
- Cooper shared that some providers report specialty services for CSEM, however use more broad trauma-informed programs. This document may help provide more specific steps toward implementing specific treatment for CSEM.
- Murphy suggested first document focus on Cooper’s identification on the unique treatment characteristics of a CSEM program and a specialized fundamental knowledge base for staff working with CSEM.
- A suggested second document could be what a system would need in place to best meet CSEM treatment needs. What does the state of the art treatment continuum look like for CSEM?

Action Step: Document Dissemination –

- *Upon cover approval, start with DCS* - Cooper will bring the document to DCS [Training Division, Pierce Beckham & Rebecca Bevans] and Ebert agreed to disseminate document to Centers of Excellence (COE) and to other best practices network. Website access. Consult with Toni Lawal about other avenues for dissemination. Utilize TCCY Melissa McGee.
- **Outcomes:** Received by DCS, (COE), and CACs, will be posted on a referenced website, "Getting it to Mental Health" – The Committee will ask for feedback from these initial groups.

Chair Ebert also reported the Committee discussed Strategic Planning Objective 2: **Strategic Planning Objective 2:** Develop a *DCS document* regarding Children with Sexual Behavior Problems (CSBP) that outlines appropriate language, types of assessment and interventions.

- The Committee will continue with this objective as previously stated.
- Jacque Page "Start with Language" - Children with Sexual Behavior Problems
- Murphy review ATSA paper & Meta-Analysis Treatment Effectiveness
- Language - terminology [non-technical]
- Assessment - specialized evaluation for children [vs Forensic/Psychosexual]
- Healthy Sexual Development
- Treatment
- Future Risk

ACTION STEPS: Ebert & Page agreed to look into infographics or illustrations already established. Murphy asked if the information need to be tailored to specific groups [e.g. judges].

FOCUS: Education for this population - Pat Wade.