

**Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems Integration Initiative
Executive Committee Meeting
May 29, 2007**

Attendance: Chris Finch, Commissioner, DHS
Kimberley Gomez, Assistant Commissioner, DHS
Ada-Luz Rivera, District Manager, DHS, Office of Intervention Services,
Juvenile Unit
Evril Powell, Director of Treatment, DHS, YRC
Sasha Marohn, Co-Director, Childworth
Wanda Wright, Co-Director, Childworth
Clema Lewis, Co-Director, Women's Coalition of St. Croix
Dr. Denise Marshall, Director, Mental Health, DOH
Karen Hendricks, Child & Family Therapist, Mental Health, DOH
Tafari Tzaddi, Community Services Specialist, VIHA
LaShawn Soto, Director, Queen Louise Home, LSS
Jasmine Griffin, Esq, Assistant Attorney General, DOJ
Patricia Welcome, Esq, Legal Counsel, DHS
Dr. Rita Dudley Grant, Director, VIBS
Carolyn Forno, Project Coordinator
John Tuell, CWLA Consultant

Welcome & Introductions – Chris Finch

Administrative Issues – Kim Gomez

- Review of last Executive Committee Meeting notes
 - Goals of the Project: (1) to strengthen the partnerships in St. Croix in support of children and youth served by the child welfare and juvenile justice system; (2) to improve the outcomes for dependent and delinquent children/ youth receiving services and their families.
 - Project is supported through a grant from LEPC
 - Organizational structure of the project: One Executive Committee and three Subcommittees
- Intro of Project Coordinator
 - Carolyn Forno – previously worked as the Shelter Manager at the Women's Coalition and as the Executive Director for VICARE; Master's degree in Public Policy.
 - Primarily responsible for coordinating the Executive and Subcommittee Meetings.
- Professional Services Agreement
 - Wording taken directly from the grant; creates the framework for the partnership between LSS and CWLA
- Charter Agreement
 - Adds background information about the participating agencies and imposes accountability by defining timelines and implementation benchmarks. Participants will be asked to sign-off at the next meeting.

Project Overview & Target Population Identification – John Tuell

- Ultimate goal of systematic reform is to prevent juvenile delinquency

- Goal of this project is narrower in scope. It is to improve outcomes for youth with history of maltreatment who are entering the juvenile justice system (as defined by the grant).
- Recommended target population – ‘Dual-jurisdiction’ youth and their families; youth who has a history of abuse and have entered the juvenile justice system.
- Reasons for choosing this target population:
 - Best body of research on this population – lots of previous studies/ protocols
 - Best to start with a small population; makes the information gathering and tasks for the project manageable and accomplishable.
 - Can grow to include other populations in the future. Other jurisdictions have started with this population (i.e. Kings County) to create one protocol. Kings County now has seven protocols to address the needs of a variety of populations.
 - Creates meaningful partnerships for the future.
- The initial tasks for the subcommittees should be aimed at proving that there is a problem (i.e. gaps in the system/services) for this population. We must document the need for change.

Committee Progress Reports

- Data & Information Subcommittee
 - Co-chaired by Dr. Rita Dudley Grant and Evril Powell
 - Met on May 25th
 - Identified the need for a centralized database to track children and services provided. John reported that there were few models available and that we should deal with this issue at another time.
 - Also wanted to identify the agency data already collected (i.e. type of data and system for data collection)
- Resource & Assessment Subcommittee
 - Co-chaired by Dr. Denese Marshall and Michael Shea
 - Met on May 21st
 - Looked at assessment tools used at Mental Health and the Women’s Coalition
 - Identified services available and gaps in services. There is a need for the following:
 - Mandatory programs for parents
 - More beds in residential settings/ day treatment
 - More staffing/ therapists and private counselors
 - Training and accountability for staff
 - VIPD training
 - Enforcement of laws
 - Trained therapeutic foster homes/ more training for parents
 - 24 hr. safe house for teenagers/ drop-in center
 - Increase in open communication between the agencies (sometimes youth fall through the cracks- currently based on who you know in order to get services)
 - Formalize the structure on how youth move through the foster-care system

- Parents Responsibility Bill – legislation that creates more penalties for parents
- Legal & Policy Analysis Subcommittee
 - Co-chaired by Ada-Luz Rivera and Pat Welcome
 - Met on May 23rd
 - Identified the following needs:
 - Create universal information sharing policies and protocols (intra- and inter- agency). Need to find out what policies and protocols currently exist. Also need copies of all documentation (consent and confidentiality forms).
 - Move youth charged with a criminal offense to Golden Grove immediately upon arrest. Currently left at YRC. May need to re-write statute to rectify issue.
 - Create a non-emergency way to assist minors who are on the brink of maltreatment and/or juvenile delinquency.

Next Steps for Committees

- All information gathered at the subcommittee level must concentrate on the target population: dual-jurisdiction youth and their families.
- John will provide forms and documents from other jurisdictions that can be used as templates in completing subcommittee tasks.

➤ **Data and Information Subcommittee**

1. Determine what core data elements should be collected (i.e. demographics, offense information, maltreatment history, etc..)
2. Complete an inventory of all existing data systems.
3. Determine a timeframe for data collection.
4. Define what it means to ‘enter the juvenile justice system’ (i.e. at arrest, upon conviction), and what it means to have a ‘history of maltreatment’ (substantiated vs. non-substantiated).
5. Answer data questions provided by CWLA. Need to gather case files of youth in juvenile justice system and look back to determine if there is a history of maltreatment. Data questions that cannot be answered can inform preliminary recommendations for future data collection needs.
6. Document process of data collection.

➤ **Resource and Assessment Subcommittee**

1. Inventory and create a grid of existing resources and services for dual-jurisdiction youth and their families.
2. Map the decision-making process for this population. Create a flow-chart to show how this population enters the system, where they are referred to, and how their cases are managed. Identify any gaps.
3. Document type and number of professional staff currently working within the system.
4. Create an inventory of the assessment instruments used to move a client along the system (i.e. how are they assigned to particular services).
5. Document current partnership/ multi-agency agreements that provide services to the target population.

➤ **Legal and Policy Subcommittee**

1. Identify and create a chart of all existing relevant national and territory statutes.
2. Chart internal and external processes for information sharing. Gather confidentiality and consent policies and forms.
3. Document how the statutes and policies are ACTUALLY implemented.

Other Business

- Subcommittees should meet at least once to complete the aforementioned tasks before the next meeting.
- Subcommittees can invite other people to help with subcommittee work to their meetings.
- **NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, JULY 26th 12 noon – 3 p.m.** Place to be announced. Lunch will be provided.