

West Virginia Commission to Study Residential Placement of Children

Meeting Notes

Group Meeting: Quarterly Full Commission Meeting

Meeting Date: December 1, 2011

Location: Charleston, WV

Members Present: Susan Perry (representing Dr. Michael Lewis); Doug Robinson (representing Jason Najmowski); Nikki Tennis (representing Steve Canterbury); Frank Andrews (representing Joreau Marple); Susan Fry; Ghaski Browning (representing Pat Homberg); Denny Dodson (representing Dale Humphreys); Honorable Gary Johnson; Jackie Payne (representing Vickie Jones); Honorable Mike Kelly; Mike Lacy; Kate Luikart; Phillip W. Morrison II; Nancy Bazzle (representing Dr. Marian L. Swinkler); and Fran Warsing.

Members Absent: Honorable Jack Alsop; Nancy Atkins; Honorable John Hutchison; Kimberlee Sharp; and Honorable O. C. Spaulding.

Guests Present: Andrea Darr; Lisa Kaplan; Trudi Blaylack; Debi Gillespie; Tricia Kingery; Rhonda McCormick; Nora McQuain; Linda Kennedy; Janet Scarcelli; Raymona Preston; Jane McCallister; Scott Boileau; and Sharon Vealey.

Administrative Assistance: Deputy Commissioner Sue Hage (BCF); Carl Hadsell (CESD); Linda Dalyai (BCF); and Sharon Vealey (BCF).

Key Discussions

Key Decisions/Actions

Welcome and Introductions – Deputy Secretary Susan Perry welcomed all the members and guests and said that the Commission is making a difference – statistics are indicating that fewer children are going out-of-state.

The Meeting Notes of the September 1, 2011 meeting were approved, and will be posted on the Commission's website.

- ❖ Update the 9/1/11 notes to website.

Annual Report to Legislature

While the Commission is not required to file an annual report, a progress report for 2011 will be provided to the Legislature. The suggestion was made to include performance work (i.e., placements, percentages). This will be issued in January 2012.

- ❖ Commission members were requested to review an outline of topics for the report and submit suggestions for items to go under each topic.
- ❖ Commission Members were given a template for capturing their quotes regarding the Commission's activities, outcomes, progress, etc.

Three Branch Institute on Adolescents in Foster Care: Increasing Permanency, Reducing Entries Presentation

The Three Branch Institute represents the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government. It draws from existing plans and efforts of each of the three branches to identify points of intersection and opportunities for collaboration to work together towards the common goals of reducing entries, shortening length of stay, and improving permanency outcomes for older youth. They will implement an action plan whose goal is the safe reduction in the number of adolescents, age 13 or over, who are in foster care.

Sue Hage presented a power point presentation regarding a variety of foster care information (the presentation was in the Commission's packet). Older children in West Virginia are not as likely to be adopted as younger

- ❖ The WV Core Team of this initiative will bring back recommendations for the Commission to support.

children. The average age of West Virginia's adopted children is approximately 6.4 years, while waiting children are, on average, roughly 8.1 years old. Research shows that the likelihood of being adopted drops significantly for youth over the age of 9. This age group is more likely to experience multiple removals from home as well as move multiple times while in out-of-home care. In addition, the number of children entering the foster care system through juvenile delinquency proceedings is increasing.

A WV team went to Denver, Colorado, to attend the national Three Branch Institute. The Core Team is Commissioner Jason Najmowski, Deputy Commissioner Sue Hage, Judge Johnson, Judge Bailey, Laura Curry (provider), and Jeff Johnson (representing the WV Senate). When the three branches of government work together, a collaborated effort and strategic approach can reduce entries and improve permanency for adolescents in foster care. Goals that were set include:

1. West Virginia will safely reduce the number of older youth (13 and up) in-state and out-of-state care by 50% by 2016. To do this we need to try to understand each other and the target population. We need to work together because the youth services population is fragmented and, consequently, difficult.
2. West Virginia will reduce re-entry rates for all children by 7.5% by 2016. We are currently at 15%. Nationally it is at 9.9%.
3. West Virginia will reduce length-of-stay by 4.5% to improve permanency outcomes by 2016.

The strategic plan is a work in progress which can be changed or updated. The national Three Branch Institute would like WV to set realistic benchmarks and measurements annually.

The WV Three Branch Institute Core Team will be setting annual measurements for the three goals and determining ways to measure well-being.

The WV Three Branch Institute wishes to have the Commission adopt the goals of the Three Branch Institute once the strategic plan has been fully developed with refined data. This will be brought back to Commission.

On November 30, 2011, we had 4,022 in out-of-home care; of these, there were 1,402 in OOH care who were 13-17 years of age, and 192 in OOH care who were 18 years of age and older.

West Virginia is among three states that have more than 9% children of the total population in out-of-home care. These figures include the children that come in through juvenile proceedings

Data charts provided at the meeting listed the number of children in care, length of stay rates, re-entry rates, and improvements for re-entry rates from 2005/2006 to 2010/2011. Data from the Mountain Force meetings is being used to discuss with BCF management those areas needing improvement. Mountain Force is a joint effort of the WV DHHR's Bureau for Children and Families (BCF) and CASEY Family Programs. The

<p>Mountain Force team includes BCF local, regional, and state management staff working together to find creative and effective ways to use WV Child Welfare data to improve service delivery. The first meeting focused on: Recurrence of Maltreatment; Timeliness; and the Fidelity of SAMS (Safety Assessment and Management System). It is important to note that West Virginia's outcomes will be different from other states because WV has a court process that is unique from other states.</p>	
<p>Performance Benchmarks/Definitions & Data Analysis Discussion</p> <p>WV SB 636 requires that we decrease the percentage of children in out-of-state placement. Performance Scorecard charts provided to members showed both the total children in congregate care and those placed 50 miles or greater. WV is unique in comparison to many states as our data reflects youth who come into DHHR custody through juvenile proceedings as well as the CPS population. Data of other states is often CPS population only. However, the federal government does acknowledge that WV is more comprehensive.</p> <p>We started measuring “building” local capacity through System of Care (SOC) and service array development plans. When funding is state run or county run, they can determine where the money is channeled.</p> <p>Having a trained, credentialed workforce is one of the primary challenges in WV. For instance, money was available to build a substance abuse facility in McDowell County, but it was difficult finding a psychiatrist willing to practice there. Consequently, the facility had to be built in Beckley. Transportation is another barrier to capacity.</p> <p><u>Automatic Placement Referral System</u></p> <p>Lisa Kaplan provided an overview on the status of the Automatic Placement Referral (APR). The task team met with the Service Delivery and Development Committee. The task team membership was recently expanded to include probation officers. There is a lot of data that is being extracted from the APR system, and it is the task team's intent to present this data in a useful manner.</p> <p>The APR task team will follow up with Judges on their satisfaction of the 4 questions card, which consists of four questions Judges should ask prior to placing children out-of-state. One of the questions is related to the Child Placement Network (CPN). The CPN provides daily information on the open “slots” for each provider. The CPN website http://www.wvdhhr.org/wvcpn/ is available for anyone to review. To be considered compliant, providers need to enter their own data by 10AM each morning. Some providers who do not have a contract with BCF are submitting data. Data is only counted during the week (Monday through Friday). Weekends and some holidays are not counted. The APR is restricted to DHHR staff (to make referrals) and providers (to respond to referrals). Probation Officers were asked to be on the task team so they would know what is involved when a placement is required. To date, 150 4 questions cards are being made. They will be distributed in May 2012 at the Judicial Conference. Sue noted that electronic versions of the cards are also available. The cards were an outgrowth of the Commission's work.</p> <p><u>Legislative Requests for 2012 Inquiry</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Laura Curry, Chair of the APR task team, has taken another position, and Denise Halterman will be assuming the responsibilities as the new Chair. ❖ Implementation strategies are being developed and will be provided at the next Commission meeting. ❖ Commission members were asked to provide direction to the task team regarding the data that is being extracted from the APR system. ❖ Provide the 4 Questions cards to those who asked for copies in the meeting so others know about them and how they are used.

<p>Commission members and others present were asked if any bills were being considered during the 2012 legislative session that might have an impact on the Commission. DHHR has been looking at several issues that others are endorsing, but has not determined if these will be a part of a plan to support or oppose.</p> <p>A bill to study Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) to provide services is being reviewed. The Board of Social Work Examiners is also looking at this bill for Master Social Workers.</p> <p>DHHR is currently in an extremely difficult financial situation and will not be endorsing anything requiring funding.</p>	
<p>Key Updates</p> <p><u><i>Out-of-Home Education Advisory Committee</i></u> A meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 2, 2011 to develop a new plan for education of children in out-of-home care. The Committee has been working under the plan “<i>Reaching Every Child.</i>” For the upcoming year, the ABA (American Bar Association), <i>Blueprint for Change: Educational Success for Children</i> will be the guide for putting together goals and strategies. The Committee needs collaboration with DHHR and the Court, and the Court Improvement Program will be a part of the planning process. A Memorandum Of Understanding is being updated and put in place to share comparison education based data between children in out-of-home and those that are not.</p> <p><u><i>Status of Funding of Special Education for Children Placed Out-of-State</i></u> Ghaski Browning provided an update that all children in custody and in out-of-state placement were now enrolled in the WEVIS system. Schools have been told how they can apply for funding they recently lost when they became responsible for children from their counties placed out-of-state. The counties that submit applications and are approved will be eligible to receive the first round of funds in January 2012.</p> <p><u><i>Status of Key Actions/Changes (Levers) Work</i></u> Sue Hage provided an update regarding the small group that is working to determine what actions have the greatest potential for making the most positive change to reduce out-of-home placements. Initial work suggests that more detail data analysis will be needed to better understand the out-of-state population.</p> <p><u><i>Facilities Matrix</i></u> Comments and updates to the Facilities Matrix were requested from providers by February 15, 2012. The information is essential to determine what services/criteria service providers offer. Once the document is finalized, it will be posted on the BCF and Commission’s websites. The letters to providers and the corrective actions being taken by providers in order to be in full compliance will also be posted on the websites.</p> <p><u><i>Out-of-State Site Visits</i></u> The Out-of-State Site Visits Summary has been updated. The last of the original five site visits with the most placements has been completed. The</p>	<p>❖ Providers to offer updates, corrections, and comments regarding the Matrix by 2-15-11.</p>

full report is available upon request. The site visits are scheduled next year in January, April, and two in June; a date for the 5th site visit has not yet been determined. The Committee is refining the process and is still looking at a way to do desk top reviews. The 2012 site visits will include five new facilities where WV has the most children placed.

Permanency Roundtables

The first round of the Permanency Roundtables will be March 26 through March 30, 2012 for Region II. The site for the Roundtables will be at the Kanawha County DHHR Office. The Regional Clinical Coordinators will provide facilitation. Preschool/head start attendance will be tracked to see if there is any correlation to permanency outcomes.

WV Comprehensive Behavioral Health Commission (CBHC)

Jackie Payne, representing Commissioner Jones of the Bureau for Health and Health Facilities (BHFF), provided an update on work being done within the behavioral health. A statewide plan for addressing substance abuse has been issued. There is a Governor's Task Force working on this through regional efforts across the state. Jackie said that the Governor will have task teams with technical assistance from SAMSA to do community forums to address community concerns on substance abuse and treatment issues. There was a request for Commissioner Jones to provide more specifics of this work at the March meeting. Jackie indicated that the same consultant who worked with BHFF on substance abuse will be assisting with planning on the mental health side with the adults.

Carl Hadsell, who works with the CBHC, gave an update on this Commission. The CBHC has been reviewing specific areas of their initial report having reviewed progress to date at the last meeting this Fall. The Intellectual Disability Program will be working with Jackie regarding waiver services and developing a program to support those that do not receive a waiver.

Jacob's Law Implementation Status

Sue Hage provided an update on Jacobs Law (private/public) partnership. One of the challenges will be keeping children close to their home and meeting the intent of the statute. The WV CANS (Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths) will be used as the assessment. Foster parents are being trained, and one of the focuses will be on providing support for kinship providers. The pilot program is scheduled to be implemented in Region I on December 1, 2011.

CAPS/CANS

Susan Fry provided an overview on CANS. The Children's Home Society had many of their staff trained at their annual conference.

Susan Fry stated she recently signed an agreement with Clay Foundation for a web-based training site at a very small fee (approximately \$5.00 per person). Susan will be providing training for Super Trainers to supervise CANS. An overview will be developed for those who will be using CANS, but not scoring the assessments. Judge Johnson is using CANS in all truancy cases.

- ❖ Jackie Payne will ask Vickie Jones, Commissioner, BHFF, to present at the next meeting.

CFSP (Child and Family Services Plan) Workgroups

Jane McCallister provided an overview of the CFSP workgroups. The Program Improvement Plan has been rolled into the IV-B Adoption Plan. With this completed, the CFSP workgroups will reconvene in January.

National leadership Conference on Commissions on Children (Salt Lake City, Utah – September 2011)

The following Court Improvement Program members attended this meeting: Francis Pack, Judge Johnson, Sue Hage, and Jason Najmulski. This conference was an excellent opportunity to hear what other states are doing, and reflect on the fact that WV is doing a good job.

Child Welfare, Education and the Courts: Collaboration to Strengthen Educational Successes of Children and Youth in Foster Care (Arlington, Washington DC - November 2011)

This collaboration provided an opportunity to develop two short-term and two long-term goals for West Virginia. These goals will be the goals for the WV Blueprint for Change. Attending from West Virginia were Laura Barno, BCF Program Manager of Licensing; Kathie King, BCF Program Manager of Policy Unit; Sue Hage, BCF Deputy Commissioner; Judge Cookmen; Dewayne Duncan, WVDE Assistant Director of Programs; Beckey Derenge, WVDE Coordinator of McKinney-Vento, Attendance, and Student Support; and Attorney, Kathern Munster.

Best Practice Community Forum

The next set of Community Forums is being scheduled. The next one will be in January 2012 in Huntington. Commission members are asked to encourage individuals from their agency or organization that work in the Huntington area to participate.

Joint Task Team for Children Issues

Sue Hage, with BCF, and Jackie Payne, with BHCF, met last week. Jackie will be meeting with a provider to help support recruitment of more members for representation across the state. The biggest challenge will be to not duplicate what is already taking place.

Other Initiatives

Ready at Hand Checklist has been posted on the Internet at <http://www.itsmymove.org/index.php>. Online tutorials are available for downloading and using the tool.

The Honorable Mike Kelly reported that Kanawha County will have its first drug court in the near future.

Two Court Improvement Program cross-training sessions have been scheduled for July 2012.

The next Judicial Conference presentation will be on reducing the number of children in care and Cold Case. Judge Johnson provided a brief overview for Cold Case and stated we may be able to use IV-E funds to support this.

Judge Johnson inquired about past Governor's Summer Youth Programs.

<p>Judge Johnson stated that these programs were beneficial to young people providing them with the opportunity to have a job and gain work experience.</p> <p>At a Regional Directors National Conference, West Virginia was commended for its COGNOS system, which allows us to review various pieces of data in real time via dashboards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sue Hage will ask someone from her staff to report on the Governor's Summer Youth Program at the next meeting. She said there had been a summer youth program under TANIF with the American Reinvestment Act, but funds have not been available.
<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>The 2012 proposed meeting dates are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 22nd, • June 7th (<i>community meeting</i>), • September 6th, • December 6 (WV Prosecutors Attorneys Conference conflict – will need to be changed) <p>Burlington, Beckley, and River Park have offered their facilities for the June 2012 community meeting. Members also suggested Marshall University Forensic Science Building and the Beckley Center.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Members were asked to review the proposed 2012 meeting dates for any conflicts as well as suggestions for the location of the June community meeting. ❖ An e-mail will be sent to the Commission members for a vote on the proposed locations for the June 7th community meeting.