

Community Advisory Board
April 19, 2010

Attendees

Aimee McFarlan	Rosemary Szczechowski
Mitchell Rock	Kim Pepper
Lisa DiStefano	Frank Farrera
Stephanie Guiswite	Carlyse Giddins
Alison McGonigal	Dory Zatuchni
Annette Miller	Christopher McIntrye
Ashley Diedoardo	Terry Senio
Renee Iacovelli	Sean Keblen
Joni Silverstein	Keith Zirkle
Charles Madden	Rick Shaw
Leslie Newman	

The meeting began at 10:10 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Introductions were completed and the minutes from the December 8, 2009 meeting were approved as written.

Inappropriate Sexual Behavior (ISB)

Sean Keblen, Supervisor, and Renee Iacovelli, Regional Administrator, gave a presentation about the statewide Inappropriate Sexual Behavior unit. There are currently 100 cases statewide. Historically, ISB youth were sent to residential programs. It was determined it was better to service youth at home in their communities when appropriate. Reoffending sex offenses are lower than criminal reoffending.

DYRS received a Federal grant to fund ISB training to DYRS, CMH, and community-based providers. The training was conducted by Dr. David Burton from the Smith College of Social Work, focusing on treatment modalities, therapeutic techniques, risk assessment, and probation supervision. The training was completed in May 2009.

The youths' risk level is determined by the use of formal and informal assessments. The formal assessments include the ERASOR and J-SOAP. The informal assessments are completed by the probation officer in conjunction with the community-based therapist, family, school, and anyone else involved with the client.

The supervision level will be determined by the level of risk. Youth who have been assessed as high-risk are sent to a residential setting first. All others are

placed in an appropriate community-based treatment. We currently have the following community-based treatment specifically for ISB:

- RTC
- Day treatment
- Intensive out-patient
- Out-patient
- Family therapy
- GPS
- More intensive probation supervision

The following services are non-ISB specific:

- PCS family services (all counties)
- Abraxis (Kent/Sussex only)
- Project Stay Free (NCC only)
- Vision Quest, FCICM (NCC only)
- MST (all counties)

There are three Tier levels – Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III. Level placement is determined by the adjudicated charge and not an assessed level of risk. Anyone listed on Tier I will not be listed on the Delaware State Policy Sex Offender Registry. Only Tier II and Tier III will be placed on the public registry. Here is the link to search the registry - http://sexoffender.dsp.delaware.gov/sor_search.htm

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

Debra O'Neal gave an overview of PREA.

In the mid 1990's, the issue of prisoner sexual violence and staff sexual misconduct took on increased public attention and concern. Reports by Human Rights Watch, Government Accounting Office, Amnesty International, several high-profile law suits, and prison research raised the alarm.

PREA was established to bring this subject under federal law since not every state has institutional abuse agencies or policies. Delaware Institutional Abuse and related Delaware Code on abuse and neglect remain in place. PREA standards were released on 6/23/09 and sent to the Federal AG for final promulgation. However, PREA law has been in affect since 2003. If you are interested in the Commission Report, log onto www.nprec.us

The data from the 2004 Bureau of Justice Statistics Survey of Sexual Violence found juveniles at the highest risk. State, local and private juvenile facilities had the highest rate of sexual victimization reported of all types when compared to prisons and jails. The number of allegations of juvenile sexual violence was 931 for State juvenile systems and 1,890 for local/private facilities.

State operated juvenile facilities had the highest rates of alleged staff sexual misconduct (11.34/1000). Local/private juvenile facilities' rate of staff sexual misconduct was nearly three times greater than in state and federal prisons.

DYRS received grant funds for PREA training. DYRS conducted training for all staff that works directly with our youth (regardless of division affiliation). One incident is one too many.

Community Services Restructuring Update

Lisa Distefano reported that there are several workgroups.

- Alternatives to Detention – this group submitted their final list to their members.
- Level 2, 3 and 3A – These groups have merged because of the work they are currently doing.
- Assessment and Evaluation – This group has reviewed many assessment tools and they were able to narrow it down to two.
- Community Resources – This group is drafting a report of services currently available in the community. This will help determine what is needed. This report will be used by the probation staff.
- Level 4 and 5 – This group is seeking a grant for Gun Court and will submit a job function proposal for the current Serious Juvenile Offender officers.
- Diversion – This group is looking for options to divert youth from the system. They are looking at gender specific sentencing.
- Community Programs – The next meeting is June 8th.

If anyone is interested in joining a committee, please let Lisa know.

Cleveland White School

Terry Senio reported that the new Cleveland White School opened on February 1. There are currently 61 students enrolled. She said 27 students left with a plan to return to school. Of those 27, 19 have stayed in school.

The concept of the new school is to focus on transition to school. The behavior model has changed to Cognitive Behavior Training. There has been a lot of collaboration with YRS. The youth receive academics in the a.m. and electives in the p.m. They will be coordinating public speakers to talk to the youth about job development.

Terry reported that they have a partnership with Del Tech. They meet with the youth once per week. They have DVR for lower functioning youth.

An Open House is scheduled for May 17th.

Division Update

Carlyse reported that YRS has completed the reviews and assessments of our facilities. We also completed our partnership with University of Delaware leadership program with Myrna Bair.

We recently established two partnerships for mentoring. One is with Big Brothers Big Sisters, Delaware Center for Justice, YMCA, and Delaware Girls' Initiative for youth in secure care. The other is with Goodwill and they will focus on families and youth on the front end.

We completed Cognitive Behavioral Training for the Cottages and the education unit. Ferris will be completed prior to the end of 2010. As youth transition throughout our facilities, they should be subjected to one behavioral model not several. We plan to train probation staff to use some of the same tools.

In January, the Family Court Liaisons were transitioned into YRS. They continue to be a DSCYF resource. They are also a big part of our restructuring.

We are working aggressively to get secure care positions filled. There is a gap in Community Services but we do have some to fill.

We have fewer youth coming into the system. NCCDC is averaging 57 youth – capacity is 64. In 2001, the average was 118. Stevenson House is averaging 39. In 2001, the highest was 50. Today, NCCDC has 50 and Stevenson House has 21.

We still need to build community resources. Youth do better when they are served in their communities. YRS staff are working hard. There is so much to be done. We have an obligation to better the lives of Delaware's children.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Next meeting is June 7th 10:00 a.m.

Mission: To support public safety and positive change of children, families, and communities through guidance, education, and empowerment.