

**DYRS Community Advisory Board Meeting
June 13, 2011**

MINUTES

In Attendance: Joni Silverstein, Barbara Riley, Rick Shaw, Barbara Crowell, Reinaldo Perez, Terry Senio, Shanena Davenport Fagan, Fern Joseph, Braunte Moubray, Lisa DiStefano, Chantel Vanderhost, Mitch Rock, Thomas Spell, Dory Zatuchni, Janet Leban, Kim Pepper, Ashley Biden, Alison McGonigal, Aileen Fink, Carlyse Giddins, Meedra Surratte, Rita Mishoe Paige

The meeting began with introductions at 9:05 a.m.

The Minutes from the April 25, 2011 meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

Boy Scouts

Benton Garrison, Assistant Superintendent, New Castle County Detention Center, gave a presentation on the Boy Scout Troop that has been created at the facility. Ben is a Scout Master/Crew Leader in NCC. The Troop at the facility has 13-21 boys and girls as members. The program is new so they aren't totally equipped; however, they have been able to accommodate some activities. These activities include:

- Safe way to start fires (fire pit in the common area outside the facility)
- Whittling (they use plastic knives)
- Camping trips (in the outside common area)

During the first round of sign-ups, 25 facility youth joined. These youth stay active for one year after they are discharged. Efforts are made to link these youth with Troops in their communities once they leave. There are 30 Troops in Newark but only two troops in Wilmington. Ben hopes that they will get more Troops going in the Wilmington area in the near future.

The participation has been awesome and the youth love it. Ben said this keeps the youth focused and allows them to be kids. The number of negative incidents in the facility has dropped since this program has been implemented.

If anyone would like to donate to the program, please contact Ben at 302-633-3152.

TARGET Youth Employment Project

Barbara Riley and guests presented information for the TARGET project. This is a three year grant funded by Vocational Rehabilitation and Department of Labor. This project will serve schools, detention and treatment facilities. A few things they work on in the program are:

- How to complete an application
- How to handle stress on the job
- Education/training
- Identifying their interests
- Provide resources to individuals in the community
- Assist with transportation (education and assist)
- Housing

There is a one page referral form that needs to be submitted to Daniel.Madrid@state.de.us. There is no wait time for referrals. Referrals are accepted from:

- Parents
- Self
- School counselors
- Boys and Girls Club
- West End
- YMCA

They distributed two brochures with a summary of the program.

Public Allies Internship

Ashley Biden present on the success of the paid internship for Cottage youth through the Public Allies and Delaware Girls Initiative. Ashley said her job is to work with businesses to solicit opportunities for our youth. Ashley has been working with the Public Allies to develop an opportunity for five Cottage youth to participate in a paid internship. There are 26 other states who participate.

This internship was a 4 week paid program. The application process was extensive. Each youth needed two references (teacher and treatment specialist). Each youth also had to complete an essay on how they would address a current issue in their community.

The money the youth earned went into a banking account near their home. However, they do not have access to the account. They are going to suggest that if they youth owe restitution and fines that they use it to pay that.

Jewish Family Services will be conducting exit interviews. Joni said the attitude from the two female participants was clearly different after their participation in the program.

Young at Art

Ashley also reported out on the Young at Art event where students' artwork was sold at the Trolley Bazaar. There were a total of 50 pieces of artwork. Half of the money goes

to the artist and the other half will be used to buy art supplies and pay for youth aging out of foster care to work the art show. More than 25 pieces were sold for a total of \$640.00 at this event. They hope to participate in 10 art shows by the end of summer.

Community Services Restructuring Update

Lisa DiStefano reported that the new Connections program, alternative to detention for youth in New Castle County, is opening later this month. Connections is currently training staff and preparing the facility. We will have 10 slots.

Wrap Around Delaware has been invited to join the Community Advisory Board meeting in September.

Assessments.com team has been training our staff on the PACT (Positive Achievement Change Tool) and this effort is moving forward. We have partnered with PBHS with Assessment.com. Harvey Doppelt has been actively engaged and supporting this effort. Staff have also been scheduled for motivational interviewing.

Carlyse said our partnerships with community providers are really helping with youth specifically with transition back in the community. This support is wonderful. These are good kids who made bad choices. Everyone's efforts are going to get them on the right track. YRS needs the community to do the best we can do with these youth. Carlyse thanks everyone for their support.

Division Updates

Carlyse introduced Thomas Spell, Assistant Superintendent at Ferris School. Mr. Spell retired from WPD. He has a wealth of experience that will benefit our team.

Carlyse said Alison is doing a great job building the programs in the Residential Cottages. We are pleased to have a new Program Manager for Snowden, Patrick Dimmerling. Stephanie Guiswite is the Program Manager at Grace. This new manager position will strengthen our internal programs.

The Department received 1.2 million in the new budget to support service provider increases of 2%. Providers have been challenged during these lean times and this is wonderful. YRS budget was reduced by \$625,000 but we will continue to manage it. We can be more effective targeting our resources on the front end. We are seeing better outcomes because we are doing more with the youth.

Carlyse said we try to keep kids home/in-state to engage families as part of youth rehabilitation. We use out-of-state resources when necessary but we focus on keeping them home and continue to strengthen our programs in-state. She also said that the YRS Team is fabulous.

Carlyse shared that she and Kelly Bachman, PIO for DSCYF, attended training on Moving Forward with Communication Strategies in Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare. Many issues were discussed related to our field. The Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice Information network has provided an opportunity for communication professionals in the field to have open conversations on issues they are facing and ways to share strategies with colleagues. Kelly was excited to have become part of the Network which includes representatives from across the country.

Part of the discussion included developing messages on juvenile justice reform – best practices and what has and has not worked well, data analysis from surveys in different communities, and using data to better position our agencies. It was a great opportunity to tout the great work being done in Delaware. Many were jealous of us as they have bigger issues than we do. Carlyse and Kelly have met and talked about developing a strategy or plan of what we can do.

Thank you to everyone on CAB for your continued support. Janet Leban distributed a great article in the News Journal. The reporter was an intern from Louisiana. Joni asked for everyone to reach out to more providers and have them join our September meeting.

The next meeting will take place on:

September 12
DSCYF Administration Building, Room 199
9:00 am