

**DYRS Community Advisory Board Meeting
September 12, 2011**

MINUTES

In Attendance: Joni Silverstein, Barbara Riley, Rick Shaw, Barbara Crowell, Reinaldo Perez, Terry Senio, Janet Leban, Kim Pepper, Shannon Holiskey, John Stevenson, Krystyn Niski, Annette Miller, Lisa DiStefano, Tom Spell, Carlyse Giddins, Frank Farrera, Keith Zirkle, Desiree Lowery, Chantel Vanderhost, Mitch Rock, Alison McGonigal, Rosemary Szczchowski, Julia Pearce.

The meeting began with introductions at 9:02 a.m.

The Minutes from the June 13, 2011 meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

PACT Process (Positive Achievement Change Tool)

The Division, in partnership with the Juvenile Justice Collaborative, approved a plan to restructure Community Services. The restructuring plans are aligned with national trends, best practices and the Administration's commitment to provide services more efficiently.

DYRS, and other jurisdictions throughout the Country, are shifting from a corrections oriented model to a stronger rehabilitative model. Research demonstrates that by focusing on treatment and engaging families, we can achieve better outcomes.

In order to successfully shift to a true rehabilitative model, we need to ensure youth are provided services that match their individual risk and needs and promote strengths. Therefore, it was determined that a reliable risk and needs instrument must be incorporated in the supervision and case management process.

Susan Burns, Pre-Trial and Low Level Services Manager, presented in detail the PACT process and statistics in which support its success. The online assessment will go live on September 19, 2011. This presentation is available by request to Susan.Burns@state.de.us or 302-633-2676.

Promote Peace Now

Joni reported that money was received from PBHS and youth from community-based services were asked to send their groups ideas on how to reduce violence. There were about 20 ideas submitted. They selected the top three ideas. The first place group won \$3000 and 2nd and 3rd won \$1000 each. All other teams won \$500. Joni was excited to report that Grace Cottage was one of the top three winners. There was a team from Project Stay Free and Ferris School.

The youth had to give a presentation to a panel of judges. They did a great job. Now, all the teams are bringing all their ideas together. There will be three meetings statewide that will include breakout sessions about violence.

Grace Cottage idea was to work with elementary school youth and produce posters that relate to violence for posting in schools. Project Stay Free idea was a gun exchange program where guns can be exchanged for gift cards.

Joni said it was a great program.

Community Services Restructuring Update

Lisa DiStefano said Community Services held a statewide Re-entry Conference on Friday, 9/9. All Community Services staff participated and staff from Ferris, Cottages, and both Detention Centers.

The guest speaker was Andre Norman. Lisa said he was amazing. He is very big into leadership and has spoken around the world. Lisa said he was motivational for the staff.

Lisa said Community Services will also be conducting Family Engagement training in the spring. Aileen Fink and Harvey Doppelt will be doing Wraparound training, as well.

Probation caseloads are starting to go down. Lisa announced that we have two of our new providers at the meeting today. Krystyn Niski from Wraparound Delaware and Desiree Lowery from PCS. We are glad they joined us and have been invited to be members of the Board.

Krystyn said it's great to see that we are all on the same page. She said the PACT is a very important part of the process. Working with families will also be a great benefit. Wraparound Delaware has a great variety of youth in their program so far. Krystyn said they are receiving a lot of referrals.

Desiree said PCS serves Kent and Sussex counties. They are very passionate about helping youth. The program focuses on engaging the parents. They help them learn how to implement appropriate consequences and rewards. They are there as a support not judge. She said sustainability is the key. They help parents gain skills and work with them for four months. The progress thus far has been good.

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 said she met with our new programs' staff and spoke about what was driving these youths' behaviors. Relationships are important but it's important to know why youth got involved with criminal activity.

Carlyse said we need to get to the trauma in these youth's lives. Change is hard and getting everyone on the same page. We took our time to ensure we did it right. Carlyse said negotiation skills matter. We've made a switch to be rehabilitation and not correctional. Punishment alone doesn't work. We often get Court Orders for youth to be sanctioned in detention but it doesn't work.

Secure Care has completed the installation of the Ferris security system. We have requested new systems for Stevenson House and NCCDC also. The cameras have been installed in all three Residential Cottages. This was not only for youth safety but staff safety as well.

The next meeting will take place on:

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