

**Community Advisory Board Meeting  
March 14, 2016**

**Minutes**

**In Attendance:**

Nancy Dietz, Director, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services  
Tom Spell, Superintendent Ferris School for Boys  
Tricia Lyons, Youth Overcoming Obstacles (YOO)  
Lisa DiStefano, Chief of Community Services  
Barbara Riley, Division of Management Support Services  
Jack McDonough, Deputy Director, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services  
Mitchell Rock, Superintendent NCCDC  
Kathy Covelli-Reyes, Christina School District, Chair  
Kim Pepper, Quality Improvement Unit  
Tim Brandau, Child, Inc.  
Elisheba Respes, Parent Information Center  
Katie Kenney, Assistant Superintendent Residential Cottages  
Raheem Perkins, Superintendent Residential Cottages  
Michelle Brogden, Quality Improvement Unit  
Fay Whittle, League of Women Voters  
Judy McCormick, Delaware Council on Gambling Problems  
Shekinah Reynolds, Quality Improvement Unit  
Matia Bryan, Delaware Council on Gambling Problems  
The Honorable Barbara Crowell, Family Court  
Amy Herb, Quality Improvement Unit  
Donna Pugh, Civil Citation

**Welcome and Introductions**

Meeting started at 9:10 a.m. with introductions

**Residential Cottages Youth**

Howard is currently placed at Mowlds Cottage and has been there for nine weeks. He said that Barbara Riley, DSCYF Education Unit, has made several trips to Georgetown Del Tech campus for get him registered for college. He plans to take Criminal Justice and then attend Law School. He starts April 18.

Howard lives downstate. He said he has not had any visits from his mother at Mowlds because transportation is an issue, however; he has had home passes. He will be living with his mother when he gets discharged. His biggest challenge once he gets home will be the environment. He plans to stay busy with college and work so he will not have much down time.

Howard has been participating in the Culinary Program. He said Ms. Riley registered him for the program and he is enjoying it. He interns with a caterer and they cater many events. He also attends CrossFit two times per week. CrossFit is weight lifting and cardio training. He said he really enjoys this because it helps keep his head clear. Katie Kenney said the CrossFit trainer said he will try to get Howard into a gym downstate for free. In return, Howard will clean the gym two times per week.

Howard plans to lean on those that have helped him during his commitment to Mowlds Cottage. He said transportation could be an issue for him with getting to college and work but he was told the Residential Cottages can provide him with funds for Dart.

Howard expressed his gratitude for all of the supports that he has been given while at Mowlds Cottage. He said he's never been more confident about what he wants to do with his life than he is now. Fay Whittle said Prison Ministries provides back packs, bus passes, and has a mentoring program for youth. She provided Howard with her home phone number (302-731-1884) and instructed him to contact her if he ever needed anything.

### **Youth Overcoming Obstacles (YOO) 5K Fundraiser**

Jack McDonough introduced Tricia Lyons from YOO. Patrick and Jane Lyons have co-founded Youth Overcoming Obstacles (YOO), an initiative designed to assist youth that have been adjudicated delinquent by the courts and placed for services with DYRS to prepare for re-entry into their communities.

YOO to date has raised approximately \$9,000 for a re-entry fund. This fund has been used to purchase clothing, school supplies, sports equipment, GED testing, security deposits for housing, beds, and even paying for evaluations that the youth need to satisfy court orders. This population is in need and it's difficult to get support. If anyone on the Board has contacts for support, please send them to Mr. McDonough at [john.r.mcdonough@state.de.us](mailto:john.r.mcdonough@state.de.us)

The next fundraising event YOO is holding will be a 5K held on Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at the Wilmington Riverfront at 10:00 a.m. You can learn more about YOO on their website <http://www.youthoo.com/>

Tim Brandau asked that if these funds are needed to support the youth when leaving placement why isn't this a budget initiative for DSCYF? He said the re-entry fund is great but he feels it should be proposed as a budget initiative. Mr. McDonough suggested the community write letters, etc. to support such initiative. Mr. Brandau said the Board should definitely support YOO but also needs to support this being a budget initiative.

Mr. McDonough reported that our Second Chance Canine Program has been a success. Second Chance is a program that brings together youth that have been court ordered to Level IV placement in the Residential Cottages with canines in our state's shelter system. The program teaches the youth basic canine care, training skills, and compassion for dogs and the youth receive community service hours for their participation. The canines receive training that improves their behaviors which increases their adoptability. We are very excited to announce that all 21 dogs that have participated in the program have been adopted.

The next Canine Program begins April 18. If anyone is interested in observing the program, please contact Lauren Copeland at 302-633-2628 for the schedule. All Board members are welcome to attend the graduation ceremony on April 29, 2016 where there will be a demonstration of what the youth and dogs learned.

### **Problem Gambler Video Interview**

Judy McCormick from Gambling Prevention Services for Youth, shared a video of an interview with a currently incarcerated person in Delaware whose reason for incarceration is directly related to his gambling problem. It was very powerful and what was most interesting about the video was the recounting of his childhood experiences with gambling which ultimately resulted in robbing hotels and banks. His problem began at a very young age with making small bets in elementary school.

Ms. McCormick also shared information for several upcoming seminars about gambling that everyone can attend and they are free.

## **Partnering for Success**

Katie Kenney, Assistant Superintendent, Residential Cottages, provided an overview of the Department's Partnering for Success initiative. The 2013 Venn reports show a significant number of youth served by more than one Division and these multi-divisional youth tend to be older. National research indicates that youth involved with, or who "crossover" into, multiple Divisions have complex needs and could benefit from a multi-system response. Partnering for Success goal is to achieve better outcomes for youth with complex needs by creating more flexible and individualized services, and a consistent approach for authentic family engagement. We are implementing innovative strategies such as family and youth engagement, family assessment and planning, and expanding access and availability to all community based services.

The Board inquired about gaps found from working in ETF (Expedited Transition to Family). Ms. Kenney said Karen Triolo, Partnering for Success Champion, would be better to answer this question because she meets with the facilitators on a regular basis. However, one thing we've seen is that staff need to be more comfortable asking for services that are outside of our continuum. They have been so used to only being able to use certain services.

Judge Crowell said we need to identify if minimum-mandatory is counterproductive. If a youth is minimum-mandatory, we cannot work to get them home quicker because the statute states certain charges have the minimum-mandatory sentence. DYRS needs to build the evidence because it might show that minimum-mandatory are not effective.

## **SPEP (Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol)**

Amy Herb, JJRRI (Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment Initiative) Program Director, presented about SPEP. SPEP is an evaluation tool developed by Dr. Mark Lipsey at Vanderbilt University's Peabody Research Institute. SPEP assesses how well current program practice matches the profile of programs with research evidence for effectiveness. SPEP process includes identifying juvenile justice programs, sort programs into services and match with research-based categories, collect demographics, risk, qualitative and quantitative data for each service and enter data into the SPEP model to generate SPEP score. Once the score is determined, we work with the provider to ensure program optimization.

## **Human Trafficking**

Fay Whittle from League of Women Voters discussed human trafficking which includes child labor, immigrant smuggling, and prostitution. She has been reading from many sources to learn more about human trafficking, however; she is overwhelmed with the amount of information. She said it's important for us to improve our knowledge. Police are not trained to know the difference between trafficking, prostitution and domestic violence. There is lack of data and resources. She said billions of dollars are profited from human trafficking. It exists around the world, even in Delaware. In 2014, it was reported that approximately 2 million people annually are bought and sold around the world. You can find more information at [www.letsendhumantrafficking.org](http://www.letsendhumantrafficking.org)

Barbara Riley said she went to a Department of Education training last week. A teacher of special education was explaining that he had a 14 year old student in his high school courses who had not been in school since she was in second grade. This student had surgery for a problem in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and never returned to school. She was originally from Guatemala and has been in Delaware most of her life – living with relatives.

Her dad brought her into school at the beginning of last year (2015) and said he did not think she could learn because she was "dumb". She did not speak English and was not completely fluent in her native tongue. She was then evaluated by the school and it was learned that she was nearly legally blind and so she was given corrective lenses. She was also identified as a special education student with many deficiencies in learning. She was put on a certificate track in high school, meaning that she would not get

a regular high school diploma but a certificate of attendance when she graduates. This could be an advantage for her in the world of work because many employers would not know that she did not get academic high school diploma. The school system encouraged the family to keep her in high school, indicating that completion of same should result in higher wages for her when she graduates (vs. a high school dropout).

Apparently, the family needs her to be employed to pay for her living expenses and helping out within the family. Since she is a special education student, she has the right to stay in school until she is 21 years. Ms. Riley could not help thinking that this student might be a victim of the family's circumstances. She might not be competent to work a competitive job because of her disabilities and yet may be forced to work in some capacity to support herself and contribute to the family's income. A question to consider is, is this considered a form of human trafficking?

You probably don't want this level of detail – feel free to use some, all or none of it. It just got me thinking and worrying that this type of person could be used and if so, is that human trafficking?

Ms. Whittle said there are two upcoming meetings that anyone can attend – April 25 with Abigail Layton and June 27 with Abigail Layton and Commissioner McDonough. If anyone is interested in attending one of these meetings, please contact Kim Pepper for more information.

#### **Division Update**

Director Dietz reported that DYRS received positive remarks from the Legislature during JFC hearing about SPEP, Civil Citation, and the Canine Program. Director Dietz also mentioned to keep in mind that we are always interested in recruiting new members to the Board.

Donna Pugh said as of September 2015, all police can make referrals to civil citation. They have received 61 referrals. They are spreading the word with law enforcement. Ms. Roberts from the AG's Office is developing an MOU. Delaware is the only state that has civil citation statewide and we will be a model state.

Ferris School has been working on PbS reporting, PREA certification, and SPEP. They are 100% staffed with treatment workers. They held a great basketball banquet with 35 families in attendance. Larry Kuhn took photos for all the youth.

Residential Cottages are preparing for the 5K on March 20<sup>th</sup> and the Canine program will start again in April. He said they are also coordinating youth activities for Spring break.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Next Meeting:

June 13, 2016 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Administration Building – Room 199

1825 Faulkland Road

Wilmington, DE 19805