

NYC CRP
May 6, 2008
Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

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|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| David Lansner | Eric Brettschneider | Wayne Ho |
| Elban Montalvo | Mathea Rubin | Jocelyn Brown |
| Jorge Saenz DeViteri | Yvonne Plummer | Marion White |

ACS: Commissioner John Mattingly, Joe Cardieri, Elysia Carnevale

OCFS staff: Terry Palumbo

SCAA staff: Karen Schimke

Handouts:

Agenda

Elba Montalvo bio

Questions for Child Welfare Organizing Project Staff

Chart: 2008-09 New York State Budget

Chart: 2008 Child Welfare Legislation

Bills: Restoration of Parental Rights

S7404 Vacatur of Termination of Parental Rights

S7216 Bill to give consideration to incarcerated parents or those in substance abuse treatment programs.

A10667 Aging Out of Foster Care bill

What Will Be Lost: a case for CHAMP funding

Proposed meeting dates and topics

Minutes of the March 4th meeting

The Annie E. Casey Foundation 2007 Kids Count Essay and Data Brief

An Examination of Oversight and Review in the Child Welfare System: The Many Watch the Few Serve the Many, Wendy Whiting Blome and Sue Steib, Journal of Public Child Welfare, Vol. 1(3) 2007, The Haworth Press, Inc.

Public Health Surveillance of Fatal Child Maltreatment: Analysis of 3 State Programs, Patricia G. Schnitzer, PhD., Theresa M. Covington, MPH, Stephen J. Wirtz, PhD., Wendy Verhoek-Oftedahl, PhD., and Vincent J. Palusci, MD, MS. American Journal of Public Health, February 2008, Vol.98. No. 2

Stopping Infant Deaths, Dale McFeatters

Family members from the Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP) provided an overview of the organization's work and gave their thoughts regarding the panels' 2007 recommendations.

The organization works in three communities. Their work includes participating in case conferencing with family members, providing parent education and support, and sponsoring conferences on child safety. CWOP staff persons sit on various ACS workgroups. CWOP staff often work with parents to prevent their involvement with the CPS system, and when they are involved, offer them needed support and information along the way so that they can effectively navigate the process.

Discussion followed regarding educational neglect cases. Some improvements have been made with these cases and the communications between CPS and schools. Commissioner Mattingly stated that the city's Department of Education now reaches out to families after a student misses ten consecutive days of school and the hotline now asks the reporter calling the hotline how the school

has reached out to the family. ACS is now assigning a high level person to link with schools and offer support to help link families to services. ACS is also hiring 20 master's degree level case workers who will be assigned to work with the school districts in their area.

Schools are more focused on truancy and improvement is measured by school attendance. They are not as attentive to linking families to needed services that will help with underlying causes of poor attendance. Policy makers seem to be focused only on the mandated reporter who did not report a case instead of what is needed to help families. The CWOP model could be used as the model for prevention and for supporting families. Many stated their belief that ACS has the right policies in place but they have not yet trickled down to line staff.

New panel members provided their assessment of the panel's 2007 report and recommendations. They stated their belief that the recommendations were on the right track and discussed their interest in seeing future recommendations address specific concerns and needs of the various ethnic communities in New York City and both documented and undocumented immigrants. These include addressing cultural competence, increased support for bilingual staff, translation of education materials and other documents, and specifically targeted media campaigns. Particularly difficult for immigrants: kinship care and the cultural differences that exist over leaving children alone and corporal punishment. Some solutions will be low cost or no cost, others will require building relationships with UFT and CSA, DOE, Mayor's office and Governor's office to access additional resources. It was noted that the raids happening around the state are very damaging for children and a possible strategy would be to fund civics courses to help immigrants become citizens. When addressing cultural competence, also have to address bias that exists based on assumptions, class, race and ethnicity that enters into decision making.

Panel members noted the new ACS ad campaigns and complemented Commissioner Mattingly on their quality. He reported that the workforce ads are resulting in four times the applicants for child welfare positions. Commissioner Mattingly discussed with panel members the need for Family Court reform, child welfare funding, and gaps in the Permanency legislation out of concern for families and the well-being of children. Discussion centered on the change in leadership with the retirements of Judges Kaye and Lauria. While additional family court judges will help, work needs to be done to develop consistent standards, more speedy trials, and stronger management. It now takes four months to get a hearing.

Regarding child welfare funding, additional budget cuts are possible. The State's share of the preventive funding is now at 63.7%, down from 65%. To date, ACS has been able to maintain funding for the initiatives but the City's DOB staff has asked that he find the money within his own budget. He plans to expand his IOC initiative to 19 communities. RFPs will be issued soon and ACS will look for proposals to support family case conferencing and parent advocates in every foster care agency. He has asked the state for more flexible funding to accomplish these initiatives. In addition the Child Welfare Financing law is up for renewal next year. Panel members expressed their interest in protecting funding for 65/35 preventive funding in the city DOB.

Panel members asked that their next meeting extend to 1:00 to allow more discussion. SCAA staff was asked to 1) arrange guest speakers for this meeting who could address issues around cultural competence and/or family court, 2) pull budget advocacy agendas from NYC coalitions together, and 3) to propose next steps regarding advocacy for the panel. The panel approved the minutes of the last meeting and thanked SCAA staff for their work on the Panels' 2007 Report and Recommendations.