

**JOIN HANDS FOR CHILDREN**  
**MINUTES FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND PRACTICE ISSUES**  
**FEBRUARY 2, 2010**

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**Committee Members Present:** Liz Mueller; Shala Crow; Kris Powell; Jeanine Livingston; Nancy Foll; Joanne Moore; Patrick Dowd, alternate for Mary Meinig; Samantha Evans; Gwendolyn Lawson Townsend; Steve Hassett; Roy Hogan

**Staff Present:** Julie Dunnington, Melissa Takade and Benjamin Berres, POC

**Others:** Jann Hoppler, DSHS CA; Marna Miller and Stephanie Lee, Washington State Institute of Public Policy; Carrie Whitaker, Braam staff; Scott Hanauer and Trudy Soucup, Community Youth Services; Lee Grogg, Ryther Child Center; Alexia Everett, College Success Foundation; Danny Howe and Makeba Green, Children's Home Society of Washington; Nancy Roberts Brown, Catalyst for Kids;

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*Brief Note: The Advisory Committee on Legal and Practice Issues and the Advisory Committee on Outcomes and Evaluation Issues met jointly on February 2, 2010 to coordinate efforts and to share information on the progress of each advisory committee. For the first hour and a half of the joint meeting, the two advisory committees met separately before joining in a group discussion and presentation. After noon, the Advisory Committee on Outcomes and Evaluation Issues committee adjourned and left the Advisory Committee on Legal and Practice Issues to continue their work independently.*

Co-chair Liz Mueller welcomed the committee and conducted introductions. New members of the committee, Kris Powell, the private social worker representative, and Shala Crow, the foster parent representative, gave a brief overview of their background as well as their experience working with the child welfare system.

**First Agenda Item: Addition to the Committee**

There was a discussion and vote to add a birth parent to the advisory committee's membership. There were two potential birth parent representatives submitted. After weighing the experience of the two candidates, the committee chose to vote and add Tamara May as a representative to the advisory committee. The choice to add May was based on her varied experience with the system. She will join the advisory committee at future meetings.

**Second Agenda Item: Update to the Legislature**

Julie Dunnington, staff to Partners for Our Children, briefly updated the advisory committee on the result of the presentation of the committee's recommendations to the Children's Legislative Oversight Committee and the Washington State Legislature. She reviewed the four recommendations and the reactions of the State Legislature to each one. The four recommendations were:

1. To add a foster youth as a voting member to the Child Welfare Transformation Design Subcommittee;
2. To request a contract phase-in period, not to exceed 6 months from the initial date of contract awards;
3. To request a random assignment model for the evaluation process of the demonstration sites; and

4. To request three years for the evaluation period of the demonstration sites.

Dunnington updated the advisory committee on the legislature's response to these recommendations. She stated that there was an initial bill introduced, HB3121, but there may be changes to that bill, and there maybe an entirely new bill introduced in the senate. Jeanine Livingston added that any new bill must be introduced soon because the first cut-off was rapidly approaching.

#### Third Agenda Item: Review of Core Values and List of Federal and State Statutes Documents.

The committee began to review summary documents from previous meetings: the Core Values document and the List of Federal and State Statues. Dunnington also described two new documents: one that had been created by Charlotte McCullough and Mary Armstrong that contained a suggested list of core services, and another that lists Children's Administration's Contracted Services and their corresponding statutory references, if applicable. The committee was also introduced to the most recent draft of the Outcomes Document and a glossary of terms to help translate some of the related outcomes terminology.

The advisory committee started with the Core Values document. They added new bullets to the list and made revisions to existing bullets. These changes will be reflected in the second draft of the Core Values document. New bullets were added that address racial disproportionality, timeliness of services delivery, parental trauma, and therapeutic modality. Revisions were made in the areas of service accessibility, manner of delivery, use of Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) and a couple more. The committee wrestled at length over what should constitute a core value and whether the document should incorporate areas of services that may lie outside the purview of the child welfare system. More specifically, the advisory committee wanted the document to address issues that stem from families' lack of basic needs.

The committee moved on to discuss the List of Federal and State Statutorily Required Services. Jann Hoppler spoke to the difficulty of creating a comprehensive document listing all the legally required services or practices. She explained that there are numerous other practices that have not been included on the list in front of the committee members. The committee wants to have more of the legally mandated practices. Committee members were also curious whether the CF SR process will also mandate additional services. Dunnington suggested that the committee think about the way in which they will create a list of services that will be included in the PBC.

#### **BREAK – JOINT MEETING WITH THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON OUTCOMES AND EVALUATIONS ISSUES**

Mark Courtney, a member of the Advisory Committee on Outcomes and Evaluations Issues, presented the Outcomes document to the larger group. This document contains measurable indicators in the domains of Safety, Permanency and Stability, and Well Being. He described some of the other components of the Outcomes Document including the sections outlining the processes that will be used to address differences in outcomes by age or by race/ethnicity. He also elaborated on some of the difficulties in producing information on well being. He said that the committee had made the distinction between the outcomes indicators and the process and quality of care indicators, which is why there are no indicators that pertain to the standards of care. After speaking more broadly about the document, he read each individual outcome indicator to garner feedback from the larger group.

When reading through the Outcomes Document, the committee raised concerns about many of the indicators. For the Safety domain, the indicators will roughly approximate a picture of how

the system is performing in preventing child abuse and neglect. There were only a couple minor edits made to this section. On the fifth bullet of the Safety Indicators section, Nancy Foll commented that the “other” category among the types of perpetrators is likely to be too broad. She suggested that the indicator also measure abuse perpetrated by other, unrelated adults that may be living in the home. There was a suggestion to create an indicator to measure self-harm among foster youth. Committee members weren’t sure whether to add that indicator to the Safety or the Well Being domain. Courtney added that there is a measure contained within the National Youth in Transition Database that tracks risky behaviors that could potentially answer this question.

In the Permanency and Stability domain, committee members were curious why the seventh bullet, the indicator measuring out-of-home placement instability, used six months as the length of time to be measuring multiple placements instead of twelve months, per se. Courtney responded by saying that there is a categorical difference in the types of moves that occur in the first six months of care than in the second six months.

In the ninth bullet that measures compliance with ICWA laws, committee members also wanted to include compliance with “tribal-state agreements.” Steve Hassett suggested that the committee also add a component the bullet that would measure *timely* compliance with these laws.

For the Well Being domain, there were a few suggestions for revision. The first revision changed the term “fictive kin” to “relatives as defined by law.” For the next change, like the revision made to the indicator measuring ICWA compliance in the Permanency and Stability section, the committee added “tribal-state” compliance. In the very last section of the document, there are three bullets that state the continuing hopes for measuring aspects of child and family well being. In the last of those bullets, there is a statement that says that there is “some interest in considering some measure(s) of culturally competent service provision.” The committee suggested that the word “some” be omitted to reflect the fact that there is substantial committee interest in this issue.

There was a discussion whether bullets can be included in multiple sections, with particular reference to the bullet measuring ICWA and tribal-state agreement compliance. Gwendolyn Townsend asked why some bullets could be included in multiple sections, but others, like a indicator measuring self-harm, cannot. Some committee members responded by saying that the bullet pertaining to ICWA should be in both categories because there are components of ICWA that have statutory requirements that pertain to well being and some that pertain to permanency and stability.

The conversation switched over to the issue of self-harm. Hassett and Courtney said that this issue shouldn’t be ignored, but that it is likely to be beyond the capacity of the current data collection system to reliably measure the incidence of self-harm. Courtney reiterated that the inclusion of any outcome indicator should be predicated on the existence and availability of reliable data. Other committee members were concerned about unintended consequences whereby this could inadvertently create another label, much like the Sexually Aggressive Youth, that would follow children as they grow older.

There was also a discussion whether the outcomes measures should look at the individual practices and models of contractors. Some committee members as well as members of the public were concerned how it would be possible to measure the success of the individual contractors’ models. Hassett said that it is probably too early to be able measure some of these differences.

## Public Comment

Alexia Everett of the College Success Foundation hopes that at the end of the evaluation, the state will be able to determine to the effectiveness of services for children. She also was curious whether we would be examining the effectiveness of the programs, or just how well services are rendered.

Makeba Greene of the Children's Home Society of Washington asked how the state would be able to produce data on the services rendered. Committee members agreed that this will be an issue that has to be addressed. Jann Hopper did say that the case management activities would be entered into FamLink by private agencies.

After finishing this presentation, the Advisory Committee on Outcomes and Evaluation Issues adjourned for the day.

## LUNCH BREAK

When the Advisory Committee on Outcomes and Evaluation Issues reconvened to create a list of core services, they began to review some of the documents introduced earlier in the day. They then began to think about how they would formulate a service array that the system should have available for all children statewide. After debating a number of approaches, the advisory committee decided that they would use the suggested list of services provided by McCullough and Armstrong as a reference. From there, they would apply those services to a number of categories that represent the full range of services from preventing placement, to services for transitioning youth. The discussion ranged widely in scope and frequently hinged on services that straddle what are considered services and what would be considered contractual obligations.

Hassett suggested that the service array be broken up into the following categories:

- Front-end services provided to families in the home to prevent placement;
- Services provided to a parent after a child has been removed to remediate parental deficiencies;
- Services provided to a child;
- Services provided to facilitate reunification in addition to particular deficiencies; and
- Services provided to placement providers.

From here, the advisory committee began to place services under each category. For the services that would not be provided by contractors, the committee added referral services in a number of categories.

The advisory committee began the process by identifying the services array provided to families to prevent out-of-home placement:

- Family search and engagement;
- Intensive family preservation;
- Safety planning;
- Home-based services;
- Child Care;
- Emergency flex funds;
- Infant/toddler/early child intervention;
- Respite care;

- Transportation;
- Interpreters and translation services;
- Crisis stabilization and in-home crisis response;
- Engagement of the child's tribe with case plan;
- Mental health services;
- A range of therapeutic, skill building, and informational services designed to enhance parenting;
- Referrals to public health services;
- Referrals to community and tribal services (i.e. legal services, housing, public health, food banks, domestic violence prevention, income eligibility, maternity services, sexual assault programs, law enforcement, etc.);
- Referrals and coordination with state services (i.e. CSO, developmental disabilities, employment, vocational rehab, TANF, mental health assessment and counseling, drug and alcohol assessment and counseling, WorkSource, etc.); and
- Engagement of the child's tribe with case plan

The committee then shifted focus to building an array of services to promote reunification. The following list of services include:

- Mental health assessment and services;
- Drug and alcohol assessment and services;
- Individual, group and family counseling;
- Domestic violence intervention;
- Child care;
- Therapeutic services for families;
- Visitation;
- Referral to immigration and citizenship services;
- Transportation to obtain services;
- Visitation;
- Interpretation and translation;
- Intensive family preservation/family preservation services;
- Family search and engagement;
- Family to family support (parent to parent support); and
- Engagement of the child's tribe with case plan.

The committee then created the preliminary service array for adolescents/youth transitioning out of foster care. This list included:

- Mental health;
- Employment;
- Independent living;
- Responsible living skills;
- Educational assessment and support services;
- BRS services;
- Family connections;
- Visitation;
- Transportation;
- Medical services;
- Housing;

- Transition services; and
- Healthy relationship skills training

The advisory committee also created a list of contractual obligations that will be applied across all the categories. These obligatory actions include:

- Make sure necessary required staffing ratios take place (CPT, LICWAC, FTDM, etc.);
- Placing siblings together;
- Family team decision making;
- Safety planning;
- Tribal notification;
- Translation and interpretation services;
- Placement preference;
- Visitation;
- Active efforts;
- CHET Screens; and
- Culturally competent services

### Public Comment

Mueller opened up the floor to public comment. Nancy Roberts-Brown of Catalyst for Kids commented on a few different topics. First, she requested that the committee add, “Services will be strength based and family focused,” to the core values document. She also requested that the advisory committee look at the services array through the lens of the Children’s Services Family Review. She advocated for services that use parents as system navigators. She also requested that the committee examine the Family Reunification Program in which the housing authority and the child welfare system works collaboratively for youth aging out of care and families. She asked if it were possible to use this same interface.

Scott Hanauer of Community Youth Services spoke next. He added three thoughts to the conversation. First, he requested that assessment services be added to family services and all categories. He requested that under the “promoting reunification” category, the Foster Care Assessment Program be added. Lastly, he commented that he is concerned about the timeline to implement the master contracts. He is concerned that the RFP process is rapidly approaching and wants to make sure this committee’s recommendations are completed in a timely manner.

The committee then chose dates for upcoming meetings of the Advisory Committee on Legal and Practice Issues.

- April 12<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- June 7<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

After this, the meeting was called to a close.