

## Children's Services Committee

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Location: **Microsoft Teams meeting**  
**Join on your computer or mobile app**

Date: Tuesday, 10/12/2021  
Time: 1:00 P.M. CST/2:00 P.M. EDT

**Staff Present:** Cory Bradfield, Kylie Burns, Katie Cannon, Jeni Davis, Craig Hargrow, Richard Kennedy, Bill Latimer, Russette Marcum Embry, Melissa McGee, Jonquil Newland, Gerald Papica, Steve Petty, Jill Stott

**Staff Absent:** None

**Commission Members:** Amy Jones, Glenda Terry, Randy Butler, Ella Britt, Charmaine Kromer

**Commission Members Absent:**

**Guests:** None

1) **Call to Order – Amy Jones, Chair**

After ascertaining there was a quorum, Jones called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Jones identified all members present for the WebEx meeting. Jones asked for any new persons to introduce themselves, Katie Cannon, TCCY intern, introduced herself to the group.

2) **Approval of August Children's Services Minutes (ACTION)**

Jones asked for a motion to approve the Children's Services minutes from the August Commission Meeting.

***Butler moved to approve the minutes from August 2021.***

***Britt seconded. Unanimously Approved.***

3) **Staff Updates**

**Home Visiting Leadership Alliance (HVLA)**

Hargrow, shared information on the Home Visiting Leadership Alliance (HVLA). They

held a meeting via WebEx on September 26th. Tennessee Department of Health (TDOH) updated attendees on the approaching September 2022 MIECV reauthorization date, with possible barrier to this of mid-term elections close to the same time. Hargrow also shared the emphasis on education about home visiting as a need for the Legislative Committee overseeing this issue as significant changes in composition have occurred since the last reauthorization.

Hargrow highlighted TDOH's work with the American Rescue Plan funding to allow additional funding to begin an infant and early childhood mental health consultation framework for Tennessee's Evidence Based Home Visiting. This funding will be competitively bid with details coming from Sarah Sanders (Early Childhood Section Chief) as this develops.

TDOH (Carla Snodgrass, Deputy Commissioner) and Kennedy led a discussion with Home Visiting Leadership on accomplishments and needs within their programs. The next HVLA meeting is scheduled for November 30 via WebEx.

Jerri Moore is overseeing HVLA during this time of transition for this council and leadership.

## **Youth Transitions Advisory Council**

Petty provided report on the Youth Transitions Advisory Council, most recently meeting on October 7, 2021. The Council heard a presentation from the Youth Opportunity Clinic at Vanderbilt Law School, providing services to teens and young adults with legal assistance on matters other than criminal issues. THDA provided information on Winter Competitive Housing Grants. DCS Office of Independent Living presented data on federal pandemic relief for former foster youth. Three of four Resource Centers were present and gave updates. Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services introduced new staff and told the council about recent expansion of first episode psychosis services to Anderson, Montgomery, and Rutherford Counties.

TDOH shared an update on Emergency Alert Decals for families with Children with Special Healthcare Needs. There was a discussion about new recommendations for the 2021 Annual Report. The Council agreed on one recommendation centered around the need for more internships and mentors and deferred one recommendation to rename Extension of Foster Care Services to DCS Young Adult Advisory Council.

## **Building Strong Brains Tennessee**

Kennedy reminded the committee members Jenn Drake-Croft's last day with TCCY was June 30, 2021, and that Sumita Keller, Director of Statewide Partnerships, resigned effective July 30, 2021. Hargrow and Kennedy spent time during July and August working with an organizational consultant and have developed a new agency organizational structure which will be presented at the full Commission Meeting on Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. An announcement about who will be assuming the BSB responsibilities will be forthcoming.

### *Training for Trainers*

McGee continues to oversee T4T responsibilities. Information regarding application process for T4T and ability to continue to adjust to changing needs remain a top priority. Kennedy reports TCCY has received confirmation of a return to full funding from DCS to continue the training for trainers efforts. This funding will provide three training for trainers' sessions and staff are considering the best opportunity for training statewide partners, via affinity groups, or other options. TCCY is also anticipating returning to in person trainings for the next round of events. Kennedy provided an update on the partnership with Trauma Awareness Network of Australia (TANA). Kennedy, McGee and Marcum Embry recently completed the two day training for trainers for the three founders of TANA and are preparing for a second T4T with a larger partner group in their area.

### *Building Strong Brains – Collaboration*

Kennedy reported TCCY continues to oversee and organize meetings of the State Coordinating Team and the Public/Private Sector Steering groups. McGee is in process of identifying a date for an extended meeting with the State Coordinating Team. These groups all continue to meet regularly, contributing to the Strategic Plan and furthering the reach. State Department Commissioners provided input to the strategic plan and opportunities for continued partnership and engagement. Kennedy has been invited to speak at the National Governor's Association to present a keynote at their Mid Atlantic summit, a group of about six states, to speak on maintaining and embedding this work through administration changes as well as lessons learned through collaboration and managing resources.

### *Building Strong Brains – Department of Health*

Kennedy shared an update regarding the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funding. Kennedy, reminded committee members of the summer meeting with TDOH to discuss how TCCY can support and participate in the work proposed by the Department using

the ARP funds. TCCY developed a partnership plan with a request for \$28 million over 4.5 years. Kennedy reported at present the proposal presented did not meet immediate needs identified by the Governor's office to prioritize direct citizen work or an infrastructure project. TCCY will continue to work with TDOH on future opportunities.

## Second Look Commission

Hargrow reported on the Second Look Commission (SLC) met virtually on August 10, 2021. Courtney Matthews, DCS Director of Independent Living, gave an in-depth presentation about extension of care services provided by DCS. In general, to qualify for extension of foster care services, the youth must age out of foster care and be in a foster placement when they age out. If a youth who meets the qualifications does not elect to received extension of foster care services, the youth and change his/her mind before turning 21. Additionally, the youth must do one of the following to qualify for services:

- Completing high school or an equivalent program; or
- Be enrolled in college, community college or a vocational program;
- If the youth is not unable to meet one of the above requirements due to a medical condition, the youth may also be eligible for services and supports.

During the August 10<sup>th</sup> investigatory meeting, SLC members reviewed three cases and made preliminary findings, observations and recommendations which include the following:

1. SLC members questioned the appropriateness of assuming a drug test result was a false positive. Additional testing should be done to determine whether the child was exposed to drugs;
2. Non-family members who have been substantiated for child abuse or neglect should not have access to children unless appropriate protective measures are put in place;
3. There must be an appropriate response when individual violate no contact orders;
4. There were opportunities for higher levels of intervention earlier in the cases, for example, additional services, involving attorneys or filing a petition;
5. Child abuse prevention stakeholders need to take additional steps to determine the facts of the case and provide safety for children when alleged perpetrators refuse to cooperate with the investigation; and
6. Child abuse prevention stakeholders need to consider the potential impact of domestic violence on the child even when the violence is not directed toward the child.

Hargrow also reported briefly on the most recent SLC, happening earlier today. Senator Page Walley, Executive Director of Omni Family Foundation, and Nathan Harmony presented on this new Foundation. During today's meeting, no cases were reviewed due to time constraints. Focus turned toward preparation for the annual report due at the end of the year.

## **Council on Children's Mental Health (CCMH)**

McGee reported on the most recent CCMH meeting, Thursday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, focused on updates from TCCY and TDMHSAS regarding CCMH progress in reengaging legislatively identified members and SOCAT close-out report from the federally funded SAMHSA grant ending in September 2020. The next CCMH meeting will be October 21<sup>st</sup> with a focus on Youth Justice.

McGee continues to participate in TDMHSAS/SOCAT Network events, including SOCAT orientation and trainings for Certified Family Support Specialists. She also continues to participate in support activities to ensure optimum SOCAT Network execution and expansion. She provides various trainings to SOCAT Network on healthy professional boundaries and early childhood development, among others.

Dates for 2022 are being finalized at present and will be distributed once confirmed.

## **Ombudsman Program**

Papica reported twenty-nine new referrals were received for the months of July, August and September. For the same reporting period, there were 30 new referrals in 2020 and 38 new referrals in 2019. As of 09/30/21, 42 cases remain active or open in the Ombudsman Program database.

He also participated in one Second Look Commission meeting on August 3 via WebEx and attended two FCRB #3 on July 26 and September 27 via Zoom from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Eight to nine hours of hearing foster care cases has become the norm for the past year partly due to increased number of children entering the foster care system. Papica also participated in eight CFTMs via WebEx. Details of these child and family meetings are provided in the Director's Report,

Papica continues to participate in daycare licensing board. One case was heard on August 9 and Papica chaired the BOR. An administrative judge was present and guided

the process. On August 31, a brief polycom discussion was made about an incoming chair for the BOR. The outgoing chair has taken on another position within her department and another designee from the TN Department of Education was appointed. To assist the incoming chair in this new role, Dr. Papica volunteered to chair daycare licensing hearings alternately with him and offered to chair the first BOR that comes up.

Dr. Papica's term as the USOA Vice President, Liaison for USOA Chapters and DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) Ad Hoc Committee Chair have ended last month (September). For the last 20 years, he has actively represented TCCY and served as Conferences and Training chair/committee member (9 years), Vice President (2 terms or six years), New Ombudsman Training co-instructor (8 years), Children and Families Chapter co-chair, lecturer/presenter and host of the USOA annual conference in Nashville (2005). He is still a part of the New Ombudsman Training instructors.

## **Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council**

Bradfield reported on the last general meeting of the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council (TNYCWC) in current fiscal year, held via WebEx on September 29th and featured presentations from TennCare, United Way of Greater Nashville, the Tennessee Department of Health, and Tennesseans for Quality Early Education. The quarterly meetings have been scheduled through 2022 and were announced at the September meeting, with the next meeting occurring on December 15, 2021. Bradfield also shares that TDOH has restored funding to support a full-time employee for the Council through a two-year contract. The Steering Team continues to operate as the Core Team of the *Building Strong Foundations For Families* project. The Steering Team met on August 5<sup>th</sup>, September 2<sup>nd</sup> and October 7<sup>th</sup>, and the next meeting is scheduled for November 4<sup>th</sup>.

### *Zero to Three Technical Assistance Opportunity*

Bradfield shared more information on the council's work with the ZTT on the *Building Strong Foundations for Families* (BSFF) project continues. The goal of the project is to support a cohort of states in building and strengthening comprehensive policies, programs and systems that ensure families with infants and toddlers have the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. The Director participated in a virtual meeting with the other state team leads on 05/27, and meets with ZTT consultants as necessary, in addition to the consultant's participation in the monthly Steering Team meetings. The funders recently extended the project for all states in the cohort, making funding available through February of 2022.

As part of the BSFF project, the TNYCWC will host an Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health I/ECMH) policy summit on December 8, 2021. The summit will familiarize policymakers with the basics of I/ECMH, the positive impact of I/ECMH-focused policies and programs and establish the TNCYWC and its partners as resources for I/ECMH policy expertise. The Director, in collaboration with the Executive Director and the Director of Statewide Partnerships, has gathered input from stakeholders within the TNCYWC, including the Policy Action Team, to create a policy agenda. Planning for the summit is underway.

As the result of collaboration stemming from this project, the Director and other members of the TNYCWC are engaged a project with Building Strong Foundations for Families counterparts in KY. The project will explore issues surrounding accessing maternal care in neighboring states when such care is unavailable locally, utilizing focus groups of consumers and providers. The teams from KY and TN are currently identifying communities in their respective states from which to pull providers and families for the focus groups and interviews.

#### 4) **Behavioral Safety Net for Children**

Commission member Ella Britt shared a video and information on the services of the Behavioral Safety Net for Children through TDMHSAS. Assessment and evaluation, individual therapy, group therapy, family support services, medication management, pharmacy assistance, are services provided by this grant.

#### 5) **Additional Items or Comments**

No other items identified.

#### 5) **Motion to Adjourn**

*Britt moved to adjourn the meeting. Butler seconded and all approved.*

Prepared by: Melissa McGee