



JJPOC Meeting Minutes
December 17, 2015
LOB, Rm. 1C
1:30 – 3:30PM

Attendance:

Rep. Toni Walker
Sec. Barnes
Sen. Gary Winfield
Sen. Robyn Porter
Sen. Eric Coleman
Abby Anderson
Sen. Danté Bartolomeo
Hector Glynn
Martha Stone
Judge Patrick Carroll

Judge Bernadette Conway
Joseph D'Alesio
Christine Rapollo
Dr. Linda Dixon
Warden John Alves
John Frassinelli
Derrick Gordon
Sarah Eagan
Shawn Rutchick
Cheryl Jacques

John T. Finkle
Deborah Stevenson
Brian Hill

TYJI Staff:

William H. Carbone
Kendell Coker
Danielle Cooper
Chloe Williams

Rep. Toni Walker welcomed everyone to the meeting. She encouraged that the meeting concludes close to schedule, as there is another meeting afterward that many members would like to attend. Rep. Walker asked for a motion to accept the minutes. There were no corrections and the November JJPOC meeting minutes were accepted.

Bill Carbone began by introducing the result of PA 12-279 Sec. 79, which requires the JJPOC to do a report on the overlap of juvenile justice and mental health. JJPOC contracted with The Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI) of Connecticut to conduct a study and present their findings and recommendations to the committee today. Secondly, Bill explained that the four co-chairs of each Work Group (Diversion, Incarceration, Recidivism, and Cross-Agency Data Sharing) will give brief reports for ideas that are under consideration. Additionally, there would be a brief summary on the Raise the Age (RtA) study and to conclude, the Judicial Department would give a presentation on the process they use for juveniles who are referred into the juvenile probation system.

Rep. Walker thanked Bill Carbone and asked the members to keep Jeanne Milstein in their prayers for the loss of her mother that pass weekend.

“Improving Coordination between the Juvenile Justice and Behavioral Health Systems in Connecticut” by Vice President Jeffrey Vanderploeg, Ph.D. and Director Jeanna Bracey, Ph.D., CHDI

Dr. Vanderploeg said that he intended to leave plenty of time for discussion on the action steps and CHDI does not consider the report as a full work in progress until it has been presented to the committee, and the committee’s feedback and additional recommendation about the action steps are critical to completing the report.

Jeanna Bracey and Dr. Vanderploeg conducted the presentation on the overlap between juvenile justice and mental health.

Rep. Walker thanked CHDI on their presentation. Rep. Walker referred to the Venn diagram on slide six of the CHDI's PowerPoint, titled "Overlap of Mental Health and Juvenile Justice," and asked if Dr. Vanderploeg indicated that the number of children with mental health that go into the juvenile justice system is very small.

There was a continuing discussion on the Venn diagram and Dr. Vanderploeg explained that the Venn diagram is not drawn to scale, and that when the report is redone, the mental health bubble will more correctly illustrate the overlap. He explained that services and supports in place for when a juvenile leaves a detention center will be vital because behavioral health needs for the child will still exist.

Chris Rapillo wanted to issue a caution on requiring targeted screening and assessments of behavioral health needs upon intake to detention, secure facilities, or a correctional facilities. Her apprehension emerged from their privacies being infringed upon, which are constitutional rights and limitations that all youth (and adults) have.

Martha Stone commented on some of the recommendations as she agreed that there needs to be an expansion on the gender-specific and trauma-informed services but she is not convinced that the Child, Youth, and Family Support Center (CYSFC) model is working in the best capacity to make it be expanded at the present time. She believed that the home-based models may be a better place to do the expansion, and the facilities should not just be a sole purpose on CYFSCs.

Dr. Vanderploeg responded that those are great points and that in the full body of the report, CHDI made mention of many other service, home, and school providers in the state.

Deborah Stevenson agreed with some of the recommendations and believes that it is not right for parents to have to face the threat of having their children taken away to receive services. Her concern was that the committee had not yet discussed who decided what the behavioral outcomes and the values that are appropriate are. Deborah said that written permission from both the parent(s) and the youth needed to be sought and attained before children can receive these recommended screenings.

Secretary Ben Barnes shared the concern on widespread screening and consent. His specific concern was on "juvenile justice" risk factors, and believed that taking children and screening them for juvenile justice risk factors may be inefficient in regards to how that information is utilized.

Dr. Vanderploeg specified that he was discussing children who were frequently sent to the office or suspended, and that if kids had needs that could benefit from treatment and we do not intervene, kids could ultimately be in the juvenile justice system or may often specific more and more juvenile health needs.

Sarah Eagan believed that we should think about specific recommendation on the service continuum and the continuing need for the two-generational support approach (caregivers and children), ensuring that the support system is multidisciplinary and with an acknowledgement that mental health in kids can overlap with functional skill deficits. She also believed that we should expand on the recommendations involving school supports for screenings and holding schools more accountable in how they are supposed to be doing with functional behavioral assessments and evaluations, and individualized, academic-service delivery settings that contribute.

Dr. Derrick Gordon said if diversion is necessary with going into the system, racial issues and personal biases need to be examined on how these assessments and diversion can be taught so that it will be equal across all youth.

JJPOC Subcommittee Work Group Reports

Rep. Toni Walker introduced the subcommittee Work Group reports, which is coordinated by Laura Downs. She spoke for Erica Bromley, of the Diversion Work Group, as she is attending a conference on diversion in Georgetown.

Diversion Work Group

Laura Downs said that the Diversion Work Group especially is working on the post-arrest and pre-court strategies. The Diversion Work Group is working on is expanding PA 15-168, which is the act concerning the collaboration between the Boards of Education and school resource officers (SROs), to make sure that this includes graduated sanctions (right now, the act says “may”). The group believed that graduated responses are very important and that there be some mechanism to report on the quality and impact of those Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs). The second issue they have spoken about was either strengthening the Child Find obligations of the Families with Service Needs (FWSNs) truancy referrals, or removing truancy as a ground for a court referral. The group had also discussed standardized Juvenile Review Board (JRBS) policies, practices, and broader case acceptance. Many JRBS have policies and procedures, but it is also community-driven, and they think that there is more that can be standardized while also being responsive to varying community needs and issues. . There is preliminary conversation about the feasibility of opening referrals to the CYFSCs by JRBS. Currently, one can only access the CYFSCs through court. They are also looking at school diversion programs and approaches such as School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI) and how to institutionalize these efforts within the Department of Education, which will be a conversation with the Department of Education, which has not yet happened. Additionally, they would like to expand the requirements for pre and in-service training for police (chiefs and officers) to use graduated sanctions, restorative justice, adolescent development, and the use of risk assessment tools.

Incarceration Reduction Work Group

Honorable Judge Bernadette Conway introduced the Incarceration Work Group Report.

To date the workgroup has:

- (1) Reviewed and discussed the predicate legal and procedural grounds behind detaining a child/youth. The workgroup is exploring, through a review of policies, statutes and practices, what changes should be made in the use of detention.
- (2) Discussed the use of a detention risk assessment instrument to help inform decisions about detention.
- (3) Reviewed administrative policies for ways to shorten the length of stay in detention.
- (4) Discussed the use of underutilized beds in the community to serve as respite, short term stabilization beds and/or investing in other community-based support services, such as intensive care coordination.
- (5) Explored the establishment of secure, community based residential beds to replace CJTS.

Recidivism Work Group

Chris Rapillo introduced the Recidivism Work Group progress. She says that the group has spent a great deal of time talking about arrest in secure and congregate care settings, and they are working on recommendations on how training and other restorative justice practices can be implemented to decrease

those arrests, which would be recidivate arrest because those are children who have already entered the juvenile justice system. There was also extensive discussion regarding the need for an independent agency that does annual tracking and reporting on juvenile recidivism data, across Judicial and DCF similar to what happens in the adult system. Result First gave a presentation on tracking outcomes and recidivism rates to the Recidivism Work Group. The Workgroup also discussed the arrest of kids while they are out on supervision, (AWOL from probation or DCF facility or out on community supervision), that those be reviewed, and the responses to those arrests be investigated to see whether they align with national best practices. The committee is still gathering information on what other states do, and whether there are practices that could be put in place for Connecticut that would address those issues. Chris also said that in light of Governor Dannel Malloy's recommendation about the exploration of raising the age of juvenile court jurisdiction to age 21, the Recidivism Work Group has recommended that the JJPOC engage a study made to the Department of Correction (DOC), age 14 – 21, and those on adult probation to identify their recidivism patterns and what evidence-based approaches are working or not working for that population, which will be similar to the study conducted on the 16 and 17 year-olds.

Brian Hill indicates that we do have the data. Chris says that as the data gets received, that the researchers should be able to look through the data and give the Recidivism Work Group information on specific populations, and then they will be able to make more specific recommendations. The Work Group believes that they will need to work on subsections of the population of kids who are in the juvenile justice system, because much progress has already been made in reducing recidivism. The study will give valuable recommendations on where efforts need to be targeted in under to meet the goal of decreasing recidivism by 10%.

Cross-Agency Data Sharing Work Group

Brian Hill, who represents the Cross-Agency Data Sharing group, wanted to recognize the agencies that have been providing support to the JJPOC Work Groups. The work on Cross-Agency data issues began with gathering example MOAs. The group has looked at approximate thirty different example MOAs, and created an inventory of different issues and confidentiality statutes. Additionally, the Work Group has begun discussions to establish of a juvenile justice data-sharing group, both leveraging existing legislation with some minor revisions, and also leveraging existing technology structure that is already in place. A second idea that they are working on is exploring the possibility of limited release of client-level data-sharing for purposes of cross-agency case management, to focus on a larger analytical and data sets between agencies and case workers. An issue with these various MOAs that are in place, is that there is no standard template that is in place for the content and execution, and it largely depends on what agency is doing this. Therefore, another recommendation that they are working on is a standardized data sharing template for MOAs. The group is also looking to operationalize PA 14-186, to ensure that there is sharing of common case records across agencies for the purpose of tracking recidivism.

Rep. Walker thanks all of the groups for their presentation. Bill Carbone says that we are moving forward with Laura Down's effective management for a meeting on January 21st, to have formal recommendations from each Work Group, the mental health study, and the study from last month on educational barriers. Bill Carbone then explains the format of each recommendation.

Sen. Danté Bartolomeo voiced a concern that about the future closure of CJTS, on what else can be done within the setting in the facility in serving the children and wanted to know where the children are going to go.

Sen. Ben Barnes made clear that Governor Malloy wants to close CJTS, but he has been unequivocal that this closure is not an indication of the governor wanting to send youth into the adult justice system. Additionally, Sen. Barnes made clear that they are aware that there will still be some youth who are sentenced as adults because of serious offenses, and this will have to continue, but that the governor is extremely reluctant to rely on Mason Youth Institute. Sen. Ben Barnes specified that they are discussing ways to treat children in the most important and less restrictive environment, which is hopefully in the community or is less restrictive than what we have now.

Rep. Toni Walker says behavioral health is entwined within all of the JJPOC Subcommittee Work Groups. Rep. Walker agreed with Sen. Barnes and said that the closure is not just to close a building, but to change the way that Connecticut's youth are worked with.

"Referral Process" by Court Support Services Division (CSSD)

Brian Hill said that this presentation is a follow up from questions that arose from the October 2015 JJPOC meeting. The group thought it would be helpful to provide an overview on how a child progressed through the court system, through probation, and through the court services in the community.

Julie Revaz and Tasha Hunt began the presentation on the court process of juveniles for arrest and disposition, and also on the programs and the treatment matching processes.

Rep. Walker thanked Julie Revaz, Tasha Hunt, and Brian Hill for their presentation. Rep. Walker was curious about kids with low-risk, in which Julie Revaz responded that those youth are still at-risk and still need services.

Bill Carbone informed the committee that the next meeting will be at 2:00 PM on January 21st. Rep. Walker ended the meeting by thanking everyone for coming.