



## JJPOC Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2016

2:00 P.M.

Hearing Room 2E

### Attendance:

Rep. Toni Walker

Sec. Ben Barnes

Lara Herscovitch

Erica Bromley

Hon. Judge Lisa Wexler

Martha Stone, JD

Hon. Judge Bernadette Conway

Stephen Grant

Linda Dixon, Ph.D.

Charlotte Russell Tucker

Francis Carino

Sarah Eagan

Rep. Robyn Porter

Deborah Stevenson, JD

Cheryl Jacques

Rep. Kelly Luxenberg

### TYJI Staff:

Bill Carbone

Kitty Tyrol

Kendell Coker, Ph.D.

Danielle Cooper, Ph.D.

### Consultants:

Laura Downs

Jeanne Milstein

Representative Toni Walker called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the March 17, 2016 meeting. There was a motion to accept the minutes which passed unanimously. Rep. Walker introduced and welcomed new legislative member, State Representative Kelly Luxenberg of the Town of Manchester.

### Update on CJTS Closure Plan

Deputy Commissioner Fernando Muñiz of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) provided an update as to the plan to close the Connecticut Juvenile Training School (CJTS) by July 2018, specifically addressing the impact on staffing from the recent state layoffs as well as the continued reduction of the CJTS population. As of April 21, 2016, the population at CJTS was down to 37 youths from 44 as a result of a number of discharges in the past month and a continuing decrease in the number of new delinquency commitments.

At this time, Deputy Commissioner Muñiz and DCF have started looking into the list of surplus state properties in order to determine if there is any location that would be suitable as a replacement for male youth in the future. DCF plans to have a report ready by June 2016.

Upon review of discharges, securing community placement, supervision, and services, a number of youth with original discharge dates for April and May were released 3-4 weeks early with treatment plans that tailor to specific needs being put in place prior to children being released from CJTS. DCF does not anticipate the population of CJTS exceeding 40 or 45 juveniles and the current the number of staff is appropriate for the number of individuals being served. The closure of CJTS is contingent upon finding locations suitable for replacement. Deputy Commissioner Muñiz clarified that no services have been eliminated but remain available on a smaller scale. He



further stated that there will need to be more intensive contact, more ongoing integration and better coordination in regards to the parole and discharging of the youth.

### **Update on Progress**

#### *Assignment of RBA Implementation Plan to Data Workgroup*

William Carbone shared that a next step for the JJPOC is the implementation of the Results Based Accountability report that was presented to JJPOC which calls for the JJPOC to regularly receive reports on both the progress of the recommendations that have been adopted as well as other measures of wellness that are important and were incorporated into the plan. In terms of its implementation, the data committee will be assigned the responsibility for regular reporting of RBA to JJPOC on the progress towards our goals.

Rep. Walker asked Mr. Carbone for an update pertaining to data collection, the research projects and data requests from the state agencies. Mr. Carbone responded that an MOU has not yet been finalized. In order to check the status of all agencies on data collection, Rep. Walker called for an immediate meeting with all of the involved agencies.

#### *House Bill 5642 – An Act Concerning the Recommendations of JJPOC*

Jeanne Milstein informed the committee that House Bill 5642, File #616 was passed through the Judiciary Committee and is on the calendar to be presented to the House of Representatives. The Bill will then be sent to the Appropriations Committee, back to the House of Representatives, and then to the Senate and Governor for signature.

#### *OJJDP Community Supervision- Implementation Grant*

Laura Downs provided an update regarding the implementation grant regarding Community Supervision. The OJJDP implementation grant solicitation was released on March 1, 2016 with an application due May 13, 2016. Originally, the planning grant was proposed to develop a comprehensive community supervision plan that would specifically target Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, and Waterbury. According to Ms. Downs, the grant is still moving in that direction with her having met with the four LISTS in the aforementioned cities. Focus groups have been held with probation and parole staff and these groups are looking at evidence-informed practices as they prepare to write the grant. The grant targets reducing recidivism for high and very high risk young people on probation and parole. The priority focus is on family engagement, DMC, and building on the approaches presented by Dr. Edward Latessa. Copies of the grant proposal will be provided to all committee members upon completion in May.

### **Presentation on Housing Instability and Juvenile Justice**

Alicia Woodsby, Executive Director of the Partnership for Strong Communities, and Stacey Violante, Esquire, MSW from the Center for Children's Advocacy presented on the correlation between housing instability and juvenile justice. In the State of Connecticut, there are approximately 3,000 homeless youth and/or youth with unstable housing and how to affect prevention and recidivism amongst juveniles who are homeless. Data demonstrates an overlap between system-involved youth and homelessness with significant risk for sexual and physical



abuse, involvement in the criminal justice system, illnesses, and suicide; indicating that the longer a juvenile is homeless, the more likely they are to become involved in the criminal justice system. Ms. Violante emphasized that in order to address this problem, there are three action steps are necessary: (1) Collecting and utilizing better data from state agencies; (2) filling the gaps within the housing continuum for youth; and (3) integrate housing solutions into discharge planning. While vital to ensure that youth are not being released into unstable or unsafe living conditions that may result in homelessness, it is necessary to identify and plan for housing needs immediately upon their entry into the criminal justice system.

### **Presentation on Harvard Kennedy School Study and Report on Governor Malloy's Proposal to Raise the Age of Juvenile Jurisdiction to 21**

Vincent Schiraldi, Kenda Bradner, and Lael Chester of the Harvard Kennedy School Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management presented their report, "Community-Based Responses to Justice-Involved Young Adults" to the JJPOC. Copies were provided to JJPOC members. The report supports Governor Malloy's letter to the JJPOC regarding the Implementation of the Second Raise the Age Initiative. Mr. Schiraldi focused on children that are quantitatively different from adults and that there is no discernable moment between one's immaturity and maturity. According to their research, the age of juvenile jurisdiction should be raised because neurobiology and developmental psychology research demonstrate that youth are "more volatile in emotionally charged settings; susceptible to peer and other outside influences; risk takers; and less future oriented" (Schiraldi, Western, & Bradner, 2015).

According to Kendra Bradner, Connecticut and Illinois are the top states leading the nation in reform on juvenile justice and raising the age. The State of Illinois has implemented efforts focused on improving services provided for youth after age 18. From a global perspective, Europe has advanced reforms for juvenile justice and young adults. Ms. Bradner specifically addressed juvenile justice reform in Germany, Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In Germany, 90 percent of homicide cases are kept in juvenile court due to the number of services and supports available. Less serious offenses in Germany are moved to adult jurisdiction. The Netherlands' family courts include those up to 23 years of age. The approaches being used in Europe are some of which can inform our efforts.

Lael Chester spoke about the Connecticut Reform Action Research Project as it looks at raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction to 21 per the Governor's legislation. The scope of work of includes: (1) Reviewing literature and research; (2) identifying most effective emerging practices; (3) working with the Tow Youth Justice Institute on implications of raising the age; and (4) working with a group designated by the JJPOC. The overall goal is to translate the scope of work into practical policies. The Harvard Kennedy School project will result in a draft of their report for review by September 30, 2016.

Presenters were thanked and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: May 19, 2016.