

Nebraska Children's Commission – Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee

Eighth Meeting
June 11, 2013
9:00AM-4:30PM
Country Inn and Suites, Board Room
5353 N. 27th Street, Lincoln, NE

Call to Order

Ellen Brokofsky and Marty Klein called the meeting to order at 9:14am and noted that the Open Meetings Act information was posted in the room as required by state law.

Roll Call

Subcommittee Members present: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Sarah Forrest, Judge Larry Gendler, Kim Hawekotte, Ron Johns, Jana Peterson, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker.

Acting as resources to the committee: Stacey Conroy, Doug Koebernick, Tony Green, Jerall Moreland, Liz Neeley, Dan Scarborough, and Amy Williams.

Subcommittee Member(s) absent: Kim Culp, Anne Hobbs, Nick Juliano, and Pastor Tony Sanders.

Resource members absent: Senator Kathy Campbell, Senator Colby Coash, and Hank Robinson.

Also attending: Liz Hruska, Legislative Fiscal Analyst; Julie Rogers, Inspector General for Nebraska Child Welfare; and Leesa Sorensen, Nebraska Children's Commission

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Corey Steel to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Sarah Forrest. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Sarah Forrest, Judge Larry Gendler, Ron Johns, Jana Peterson, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker. Voting no: none. Kim Culp, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Nick Juliano, and Pastor Tony Sanders were absent. Motion carried.

Approval of May 14, 2013, Minutes

A motion was made by Monica Miles Steffens to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2013, meeting, seconded by Jana Peterson. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Sarah Forrest,

Judge Larry Gendler, Ron Johns, Jana Peterson, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker. Voting no: none. Kim Culp, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Nick Juliano, and Pastor Tony Sanders were absent. Motion carried.

Chair's Report

Ellen Brokofsky and Marty Klein gave a chair's report. They reminded the committee that the role and responsibility of the Juvenile Services (OJS) committee changed due to LB561. Ellen gave a brief overview of the reporting processes required by LB561 and the timing of when youth will begin transitioning into the new process. A copy of LB561 was provided for committee members. The committee briefly discussed LB561 and how the proposed changes would impact families and youth.

YRTC Update

Jana Peterson and Dan Scarbrough provided information on the Kearney and Geneva YRTCs. Dan reported that YRTC-Geneva had eleven girls graduate from high school and would have an additional three graduating in July. He also reported on the equine program that is being done at a neighboring ranch. The girls in this program learn about general care of the horses, safety with horses, and training of the horses. Dan also reported that they are currently revising the drug and alcohol counseling.

Jana reported that YRTC-Kearney also has an equine project to do therapy with some individuals. YRTC-K is also looking at the installation of a confidence/ropes course to use for training and counseling. Jana also reported that one of the housing units was under construction for a heating and air-conditioning upgrade project. The housing unit is to be completed and re-opened in mid-July.

Introduction/Discussion of Nominees for Open Committee Position

Nominees for the open committee positions were asked to attend the meeting to meet committee members and to get an idea of the type of issues that will be addressed at meetings. Barb Fitzgerald, Mark Mason, and Dr. Ken Zoucha were able to attend the meeting in person. Jana Peterson introduced Mark Mason and Dr. Ken Zoucha to the group. Marty Klein introduced Barb Fitzgerald. Liz Neeley provided information about Tina Marroquin's qualifications. Each nominee present was given a few minutes to provide additional information on their current employment and other related activities. Committee members were also allowed to ask questions of each of the nominees.

A motion was made by Ron Johns to recommend to the Nebraska Children's Commission that Tina Marroquin be added as a voting member of the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee. The motion was seconded by Monica Miles Steffens. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Sarah Forrest, Judge Larry Gendler, Ron Johns, Jana Peterson, Corey Steel, Monica Miles

Steffens, and Dalene Walker. Voting no: none. Kim Culp, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Nick Juliano, and Pastor Tony Sanders were absent. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Marty Klein to recommend to the Nebraska Children's Commission that Barb Fitzgerald be added as a voting member of the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee. The motion was seconded by Corey Steel. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Sarah Forrest, Judge Larry Gendler, Ron Johns, Jana Peterson, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker. Voting no: none. Kim Culp, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Nick Juliano, and Pastor Tony Sanders were absent. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Ellen Brokofsky to recommend to the Nebraska Children's Commission that Mark Mason be added as a voting member of the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee. The motion was seconded by Jana Peterson. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Sarah Forrest, Judge Larry Gendler, Ron Johns, Jana Peterson, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker. Voting no: none. Kim Culp, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Nick Juliano, and Pastor Tony Sanders were absent. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Dalene Walker to recommend to the Nebraska Children's Commission that Dr. Ken Zoucha be added as a voting member of the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee. The motion was seconded by Ellen Brokofsky. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Sarah Forrest, Judge Larry Gendler, Ron Johns, Jana Peterson, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker. Voting no: none. Kim Culp, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Nick Juliano, and Pastor Tony Sanders were absent. Motion carried.

Committee members were reminded that a position still remains open on the committee and that nominations are still being accepted. Any nominee suggestions should continue to be sent to Leesa Sorensen at Leesa.Sorensen@Nebraska.gov.

The “Deep End” of the Juvenile Justice System

Sarah Forrest provided a presentation entitled *A look at the “Deep End” of the juvenile justice system*. The presentation provided information on the history of the YRTCs in Nebraska; juvenile incarceration rates of the United States versus other nations; and research on youth outcomes. Sarah also provided information on national youth incarceration trends, with specific statistical information about Redeploy Illinois and RECLAIM Ohio.

Strategic Recommendations Facilitated Discussion

The OJS committee continued their review of the juvenile justice system through a facilitated discussion. The committee began the discussion by reviewing the planning notes from May 14, 2013. The committee reviewed the focus question and agreed that the following question to guide the strategic recommendations process should remain as written: “What changes (or things to remain the same) will effectively improve and support a comprehensive, culturally competent, continuum of care; and accountability for youth and families involved in the juvenile justice system, while maintaining public safety?”

The committee further agreed that the following vision elements should be slightly revised:

1. Right youth, right services, right time
2. Consistent, stable, skilled work force
3. Transparent system collaboration with shared partnerships and ownership
4. Family ~~focused~~ centered/youth ~~entered~~ focused
5. Data driven decision making
6. Reducing social and system disparity

Committee members then reviewed the goal statements for each vision element that were created by the sub-groups on May 14. The committee reviewed, discussed, and added or revised items as needed. Notes from the June 11 meeting are noted in blue text.

Sub-group 1: Right youth, right services, right time –

- Appropriate screening/assessment and TARGETED systematic response, based on that assessment
 - Validated/evidenced-based screening tool
 - Develop concept – Juvenile Intake Assessment Center (JIAC)
 - Criteria for referral
- Continuum of care, close to home, that is accessible (finances) to all youth being served
 - Analysis of current systems and holes in those systems
 - Identify what system responses should include (see diagram)
 - No system response “out the door”
 - Diversion
 - Court involvement
 - Identify services available and holes in each of these systems
- Getting screening/assessment and services in place in an expedited, age-appropriate, timely manner
 - Develop/research guidelines for each system response
 - Educate system “players”
 - Change law

June 11 Notes: The OJS Committee recommendations need to further clarify “accessible (finances)”:

- means that services aren’t delayed because money is an issue; work with the family to ensure there is equal access/pooling resources/cost sharing
- need to connect the dots between county funding, state funding, behavioral health regions, etc.
- ability to access services without having to get involved in the system
 - (we need to identify what we mean by “system” and when the “system” begins – engaging new partners = local physicians, education, behavioral health, Senator McGill Pilot project)

On 3rd bullet, 3rd sub-bullet – not only change statute, but also change/develop policy and procedures.

Sub-group 2: Consistent, stable, skilled work force

- Foster working with youth as a professional and career choice
 - Incentivizing college students to enter the profession by offering tuition remission and/or reimbursement
 - Engage private and public colleges as a “front door” to educating employees of the juvenile justice system in best practices in working with youth and families
 - Encourage continuing education to be in best practices that will enhance abilities of employees to serve youth and families
- Provide adequate support, training and mentoring that allows for success and career advancement.
 - Strong supervision and mentoring translates into higher quality services for youth and families
 - Development of strong, formal mentoring programs to enhance transfer of education and skills into competencies in working with youth and families
- Ensure the highest skilled and most experienced employees case commensurate equal to their abilities and compensated accordingly
 - Identify core skills and abilities needed to work with specific populations
 - Provide incentives for employees who have specialized, high risk caseloads (e.g. – speak certain language)
- Ensure cultural competency, reasonable caseload sizes and measure the quality of service and supervision provided
 - Investigate and adopt standards appropriate to relative caseload size
 - Develop internal controls that define quality of service utilizing EBP/best practices models
 - Set standards for competency expectations of supervisory personnel
 - As part of the mission, focus on developing cultural competency at all levels

June 11 Notes:

- Make stronger recommendations on adequate compensation
 - Loan repayment - partner with student loan organizations (Leesa)
 - South Dakota model with attorneys (Liz)
- Emphasis on filling gaps in rural areas
- Formalize Continuing Education Unit (CEU) requirements/expectations for continuing education
- Does this require statute change?
 - Maintaining/keeping good people
 - Retention data driven (CCFL study)
 - Getting rid of the bad people

- Leadership/management development

Sub-group 3: Transparent system collaboration with shared partnerships and ownership

- Developing and sustaining public/private partnerships for strategic planning efforts
- Increase capacity for leadership development in the juvenile justice system
 - Identify current juvenile justice leaders and develop network opportunities
 - Partner with NJJA and other stakeholders to develop juvenile justice leadership academy
- Information sharing
 - Common definitions of key system points (i.e. – entry, exit, etc.)
 - Develop and define common outcome measures (i.e. – recidivism, case processing, etc)
 - Work with Nebraska Children’s Commission data efforts to include juvenile justice
 - Develop information sharing agreements across systems (education, justice, etc)
 - Utilize technical assistance from national experts
- Develop public/private partnerships
 - Identify and document existing collaborations and initiatives at state and local level
 - Partner with Nebraska Children’s Commission Community Ownership workgroup
 - Educate juvenile justice to get involved
 - Uniform way of informing the state on this work

June 11 Notes:

- Public/private partnerships (4th bullet)
 - Educate juvenile justice to get involved
 - Juvenile justice needs to be at the table during community planning/strategic planning work
- Coordination across commissions & boards
 - Judge Inbody is starting to coordinate
 - Emphasize this is really needed
 - Somehow streamlining the committees work & that are all doing similar work
- Enhance county and state partnerships
- Replicate what the Panhandle Partnership has done with collective impact (Children’s Commission has a workgroup on this)

Sub-group 4: Family focused/youth centered or Family-centered/youth-focused

- Youth & family (broad definition) involvement (engagement) at every juncture and throughout the case
 - Workforce trained and educated on importance of family and tools to engage them

- Agency, placement, facility and court policies that actively encourage family involvement and supportive relationships
- Youth and family knowledge of rights and responsibilities
- Family and youth involved in decision making pre-filing onwards
- Family finding
- Developmentally appropriate approach to youth, services and programs
 - Workforce training (staff, providers, judges) on adolescent behavior and development (trauma?)
 - Access to legal representation/quality counsel
 - Juvenile cases start in juvenile court
- System responses ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of families and youth
 - Aftercare and re-entry planning
 - Investment in prevention and supports to families outside of juvenile justice system
 - Correct referral of families and youth to services outside system
 - Services and case plans, etc. address needs of whole family, not just youth

June 11 Notes:

- Change heading to Family-centered/youth-focused
- Plans and services
 - Always individualized based on needs of youth and family
 - Need flexible funding
 - Stakeholders need to welcome innovation and creative approaches
 - Families have an opportunity to tell their story and are listened to
 - Courts should insist on this
 - Youth and family both have opportunity separately and together to tell their story
- Families are engaged through their own history (3rd bullet)
 - Build trust with families
- Add Restorative Justice

Sub-group 5: Data driven decision making

- Information should follow a youth/family through timely common data sharing system
- Data is accessible at the individual level and policy level
 - Review current statutes and agency policy to determine what can be shared
 - Educate/explain to family and youth why we want to share data (prevent duplication-increase coordination)
 - Explore legislative responses to sharing data for public policy/research
- Build a workforce culture that relies on data
 - Inform staff on reasons for quality data
 - Increase accountability/quality assurance
 - Use data on a daily basis in agencies

June 11 Notes:

- Don't overburden frontline staff with data collection
 - Minimize duplication of data recording
 - Adequate case load standards
- A focus on meaningful data
- Make data easily accessible, use technology
- Disseminate to placements, service providers, etc.

Sub-group 6: Reducing social/racial and system disparity

- Data driven approach to identifying/understanding disparities
- A commitment to evaluating to what extent assessment tools, policies and procedures are implemented equitably
- Juvenile justice workforce is educated about social inequalities (race, class, gender, language, etc.) and cumulative disadvantage

June 11 Notes:

- Diverse workforce
 - Evaluate standards that prevent this
 - Leadership and frontline staff
- Broad education on disparities

Parking Lot Strategies:

- Education – as a system
- Education – provided to youth
- Consumer Representation on boards/commissions
- Quality Assurance
- Collaboration across state level boards/Commissions/agencies
- Prevention
 - Coordination with coordinated case processing/management
- Cost savings reinvestment
- Definitions for systems work (i.e. – collaboration, juvenile justice, etc.)

June 11 Notes:

- Consider providing more information or training on:
 - Medicaid
 - IV-E
- What's happening at NCYF, YRTCs, and Hastings
 - what do they look like?
 - Information on programming
- Perspectives from youth and families (rural and urban)
- Characteristics of what works in incarceration
- Lancaster re-entry report/Anne Hobbs
 - Can we do this for other counties?

- Characteristics of kids in the system
- Key Points
 - Rehabilitative
 - Needs Based
 - Community Based
 - Access to Services
 - Deliberate Implementation of Changes
- Rehabilitative and Needs Based (not facility based)
 - Numerous failed IOP and OP
 - Increased levels of substance abuse; chronic criminal behavior to support substance use; weapons; gang involvement: intensive long term txt is needed for healing and sobriety – careful transition back into community is needed

Who are the right youth for the higher/highest level of care?
versus

How do we serve youth with highest needs?

- Kids currently in deep end of adult system (detention/NCYF)
 - Who are these youth?
- Kids who are a risk to public safety?
- Repeat offenders?
- People we're scared of vs people we're mad at?

The committee discussed the process that will be needed going forward to finalize the recommendations and get a report completed for the Nebraska Children's Commission and for the Judiciary committee of the Legislature.

A motion was made by Corey Steel to have the OJS Committee work with the Nebraska Children's Commission to find a facilitator that can help the OJS Committee with the LB561 evaluation process. The motion was seconded by Sarah Forrest. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Sarah Forrest, Judge Larry Gendler, Kim Hawekotte, Jana Peterson, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker. Voting no: none. Kim Culp, Anne Hobbs, Ron Johns, Nick Juliano, and Pastor Tony Sanders were absent. Motion carried.

The committee then discussed the need for additional information from DHHS concerning the youth being served at the YRTCs. Tony Green, Jana Peterson, and Dan Scarborough were then asked to prepare information for the next meeting that will provide the committee with details about the youth at YRTC-Kearney and YRTC – Geneva.

New Business

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2013 from 9:00am to 4:30PM.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Dalene Walker to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Corey Steel. The meeting adjourned at 4:35pm.