



FINAL

DHS Children, Adults and Families
Child Welfare Advisory Committee
July 12, 2006

Members

<input type="checkbox"/> Dana Ainam	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Darland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phil Lemman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Angela Sherbo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruth Taylor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Janet Arenz	<input type="checkbox"/> Sara Gelser	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nancy Miller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Becky Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nan Waller
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Balter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mickey Lansing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pam Patton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christine Stetzer	
<input type="checkbox"/> Leslie Currin	<input type="checkbox"/> Jean Lasater	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doug Poppen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judy Stiegler	

DHS Staff

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ramona Foley	<input type="checkbox"/> Jim Neely	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toni Peterson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patricia Feeny
<input type="checkbox"/> Mickey Serice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nancy Keeling	<input type="checkbox"/> Madeline Olson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Debbi Kraus-Dorn

Guests: Kamala Shugar – AAG, Michelle Cole – *The Oregonian*, Pamela Anderson – citizen

Minutes Recorded By Pam Pearson

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Judy Stiegler reviewed the agenda and handouts and explained that Bruce Goldberg was rescheduled to the September meeting because he was unable to attend today.

MINUTES

The May 10, 2006, CWAC minutes were approved. The following subcommittee and work group minutes were presented:

- April 12, 2006 Teens Subcommittee
- April 19, 2006 Future Issues Work Group
- April 28, 2006 Legislative Subcommittee

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Ramona Foley

TANF Reauthorization

The interim regulations were received on June 28, 2006. Though interim, they must be implemented. We have a 60-day time period to comment on the interim regulations. Go to the handouts from the 7/11/06 House Interim Task Force on DHS Review for more information.

Effective Oct. 1 of this year, the federal government is implementing a more restrictive definition of acceptable work-related activities and requiring at least half of all adults participating in TANF to engage in those activities at least 20 hours a

week. In a response to a General Accounting Office survey on what they considered as “work participation” states described a wide range of activities. Very few states (approximately three) are currently meeting the federal definition.

Jack Tweedie, National Conference of State Legislatures, visited Oregon and talked about possible alternatives for Oregon. We focus our efforts on moving work-capable families off TANF as quickly as possible, which skews the remaining recipients toward those who face barriers to engaging in work-related activities. If not enough of those remaining adults in TANF are able to meet the new work requirements, Oregon could face significant financial penalties. Governors did not get the flexibility they sought. It is unknown what the response will be to the comments about the interim regulations.

The penalties are quite significant and cut off millions of dollars for other programs, so states cannot choose to not participate.

Drug and alcohol treatment does not count as a work-related activity now. People will need to get into treatment sooner so that they can complete the treatment and get into the workforce sooner.

We lost the waiver of the 60-month time limit retroactively. People can receive a maximum of 60 months public assistance in a lifetime. Oregon has some families coming upon their three-year mark and we are working on what kind of notification and caution to give them. The time limit counts across state lines.

An update on how these changes impact child welfare will be given to CWAC at the September meeting. We will also give an update on Targeted Case Management and BRS reductions. If we receive additional information before the September meeting, it will be shared with CWAC.

There have been discussions of instituting a CETA-type program, but funding for those projects would be needed. It may be worth pursuing though. Illinois did a project several years ago in which they hired mothers as therapeutic foster parents. That allowed the mothers to stay at home and also filled a need for these foster parents. It may be beneficial to have interested CWAC members connect with the Family Services Review Commission to discuss such ideas.

Citizenship

The Oregonian had an article today written by Michelle Cole on citizenship verification requirements. DHS is moving forward, but trying not to penalize individuals. Historically the documentation of citizenship was required to receive Medicare and SSI benefits, but not other DHS assistance. However, foster children would not be eligible for Medicaid without proof of citizenship. States will have to absorb the costs unless proof of citizenship is ultimately provided.

Another issue is disparate impact in that people currently receiving Medicaid have a period of time to provide the proof. However, as of July 1, 2006, new applicants are required to show proof at the time of application.

The issue of whether copies of proof already in a client's file are sufficient or if originals are required has not been resolved.

OYA and county juvenile justice face the same impacts for youth in shelter care, residential care and BRS. Institutionalized youth cannot receive Medicaid so these requirements do not affect them. A child must be eligible for Medicaid in order to qualify for BRS and must be a citizen to receive Medicaid. There is some confusion about whether permanent legal residency is adequate or if citizenship is required. Michelle Cole has researched the legal residency requirements but is unsure how it applies to minors. She believes pure citizenship is not required, but a high level of residency is required.

Nancy Miller asked that Ramona update the judges on the citizenship issues at the next Judges Conference.

APHSA has a fact sheet on how the requirements apply to the under 18 population. It will be sent to CWAC.

Nancy Miller suggested that if a court can grant permanent resident status, it may comply with these requirements.

An update will be given at the September meeting.

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)

Oregon is scheduled for October 2007. We are currently within the time period of the review.

Oregon Safety Intervention Model

Field staff will receive training on the model during September to December 2006. The National Resource Center on Child Protective Services trained 20 of our staff to be trainers. We expect the procedure manual chapters on safety will be ready in December and training on those chapters will occur at that time.

The National Resource Center on Organizational Improvement will be conducting its second visit next week. They are looking at how we assign staff and who does what. Before we can request additional staffing, we must show how efficiently we use the staff we have. The NRCOI's work to date has shown that there is much flexibility at the local level on how staff are utilized.

The NRCOI has studied the NRCCPS report and their recommendations concerning the lack of consistency across field offices. They are also looking at best practice issues of how to assign workers. The case reviewed by the Sensitive Review Committee showed changes in caseworkers had occurred but there was no indication for why the changes were made. We have asked for guidance on assigning workers and when not to change assignments. The information collected from focus groups will help explain the reasons for some changes of assignment, such as when a worker leaves a position.

- Miller: She, Ramona and Bruce Goldberg attended a meeting hosted by Zero to Three where they learned that the likelihood of permanency decreased by more than 50% when a caseworker change occurred.
- Foley: We can provide other data along these lines also.
- Sherbo: Turnover occurs with lawyers, counselors, therapists, foster homes, and schools; not only caseworkers.
- Foley: We are not getting external review of the procedure manual at this time other than from the Attorney General's office for compliance with the law. After it is released public input is welcome and will be part of an evolving process to continually improve the manual. The need to get the manual out is too great to delay it for external comment. We will add an overview of the Oregon Safety Intervention Model to the September CWAC agenda. She went on to say that the House Interim Task Force on DHS Review met on 7/11/06. DHS Child Welfare provided information on the Sensitive Review Committee process and adoption assistance. She referred to the copies of the materials from the presentation, including a comparison of Oregon and Washington CPS

removal data. Oregon currently has threat of harm as a separate category of abuse, unlike most states. We are looking at combining the type of abuse and threat of that type of abuse as one category. While Oregon has more substantiated cases of abuse, the rate of removal is close to the same as in Washington.

- Sherbo: This does not answer why Oregon has so many more substantiated cases, which is what she considers to be the main issue.
- Foley: Washington does not use threat of harm as a separate category and has an alternate response system. States with an alternate response system can get services to families without there having to be a substantiated case. She also referred CWAC to the handouts on the Sensitive Review Committee and adoption assistance. Rep. Richardson's concern about adoption assistance is that while the number of adoptions of children in foster care doubled, adoption assistance quadrupled during the same period of time.
- Balter: Adoption assistance allows families to take a risk in adopting a child that they would not have otherwise considered. Private adoption agencies would not be able to place these children without being able to offer adoption assistance.
- Keeling: We are working to educate the public that we are not paying families to adopt.
- Foley: The Task Force members showed a lot of interest in these issues. There is a collaborative spirit to make improvements.
- Miller: Rep. Krieger is leading a work group on child welfare that may be similar to the work group on meth last session. She believes Rep. Krieger is interested in investing additional dollars in child welfare.
- Foley: Legislators generally show interest in child welfare during a crisis, but there appears to be enough continuing interest that we anticipate positive changes in child welfare this coming session. We will let CWAC know the date of the next hearing of the House Interim Task Force on DHS Review as soon as we know when it is scheduled.

SB 818

- Stiegler: During the May CWAC meeting, we had a broad discussion on SB 818. The Legislative Subcommittee met on 7/10/06 to refine the discussion and prepare a draft letter to Rep. Billy Dalto, understanding that the issues in the bill are likely to be reintroduced next session. This is our effort to be more proactive on an issue. Angela Sherbo put the initial draft letter together. The

Legislative Subcommittee agreed there were sections in the bill where members could not reach consensus. Rather than set out those sections and the reasons for not reaching consensus, the subcommittee decided to focus on those sections where consensus was possible. A general paragraph in the draft letter explains the diverse interests of the membership that led to a lack of consensus for a variety of reasons. It goes on to say that the committee is open to further conversations. Individual members may address their independent concerns separately from the CWAC.

- Arenz: One reason for a lack of consensus may be that for some members the concern does not rise to a high enough level to be a battle worth fighting for politically.
- Stiegler: The omission of sections in our list of those we agree to speaks through its silence.

ACTION: Mike Balter made a motion to adopt the draft letter to Rep. Dalto as prepared by the Legislative Subcommittee. The motion was seconded and opened for discussion.

- Lemman: It needs to say SB 818 D-engrossed, because SB 818 is a very different bill. Regarding Section 10, is there anything in the Sensitive Review Committee process that addresses redisclosure of confidential information provided to legislators that serve on an SRC?
- Foley: During the recent SRC, all materials were collected and destroyed following the review. Care was taken to protect the privacy.
- Stiegler: Section 10 is not included among those of which we are in agreement.
- Lemman: Since CWAC is an advisory body to DHS, should Bruce Goldberg and Ramona be co-recipients of the letter?
- Foley: In this particular case, Rep. Dalto requested input from the CWAC and other groups. However, we need to keep Phil's point in mind for future letters that the CWAC might prepare.
- Patton: Asked if the concluding sentence of the draft letter should bring the focus back on SB 818.
- Foley: It is better keep it as a broad statement and to raise the conversation to a higher level.

ACTION: The draft letter was approved with the above corrections. Pam Pearson will finalize the letter and Judy will sign and send it to Rep. Dalto.

HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE

- Balter: Rep. Dalto invited CWAC to participate in a broader discussion on the foster care system. The Future Issues Work Group began the discussion and struggled to explain the barriers that have kept CWAC from speaking with one voice. We are used to reacting rather than being proactive on issues. In February 2006, we developed a set of operating procedures that say we will advise on the policy, program and practices (quote here from the Ops) by beginning with collecting information, moving to discussion, then action and response. We need to address foster care system issues in that spirit. It is such a broad topic, we could go in hundreds of directions. Our past experience is that we either force ourselves into too much detail or push it out so broad that it is meaningless. We need to recognize the varied interests of the members. Our recommendations can be specific toward the realistic deadlines of interim committees and legislative sessions, but we can also look ahead together and decide where to direct our attention in the future.
- Stiegler: Referring to the document titled, "Issues and Principles Defining the Foster Care System," the first bullet recognizes that individual CWAC members each have their own set of issues. However, this is meant to be a set of guiding principles to help the Legislature when they study something as broad as foster care. She expects CWAC will ultimately craft a letter to Rep. Dalto as we did for SB 818 D-engrossed. This is one document in the process to get to that letter. It is only a guide and has no content.
- Miller: The Future Issues Work Group (FIWG) had a hard conversation. It is difficult to put our hands around what to say to Rep. Dalto about the foster care system.
- Balter: FIWG started listing specific issues, but it changed direction to instead help CWAC frame the issues. FIWG is too small a group to create the list of specific issues. In the past we have been cowed into shrunken conversations about the needs of children, due to the recessionary period. We have been forced to talk about small things when we really want to talk about bigger things.
- Foley: That which Rep. Dalto is addressing is but a small slice of the whole child welfare system. Other things come into that slice that cannot be ignored.
- Balter: We could focus on only the smaller piece, but some of us want to talk about the bigger issues.

- Foley: The document started by Judy will become the principles. After that, a list of examples needs to follow each principle.
- Patton: The whole “pie” needs to be looked at. The message from CWAC should be that one cannot look at only a piece without considering the whole. The Legislature needs to know how a change in one system impacts the other parts.
- Miller: There are simpler ways to say the statements on this document. She offered to rewrite it based on today’s discussion.
- Waller: Rather than using the term “foster care system,” she recommended using “placements of children and children at risk of placement.” When we talk about integration, it is for that population of children.
- Foley: Nancy Miller will rewrite the document and send it to FIWG before it goes to CWAC. This project’s deadline will be based on when the Interim Committee meets again. Rep. Gelser may know when they will meet again and she suggested Judy contact her.
- Stiegler: CWAC may need to approve the final principles by email vote due to time constraints.
- Foley: It will be interesting to see how the various legislative efforts on child welfare come together for session.
- Miller: Bill Taylor will be putting together the legislative concepts that will go before the Judiciary Committee. She suggested asking Bill to bring Rep. Dalto, Krieger and Richardson together prior to session.
- Sherbo: Recommended we focus on the full Legislative Assembly and not on individual legislators.
- Lemman: It would be a legitimate request for CWAC to ask the legislators to coordinate their efforts in child welfare to avoid having silo conversations. However we don’t need to offer them a solution to how to accomplish that. Rep. Dalto asked for CWAC input. In our response to him, we could remind him of the other legislators interested in child welfare, that we are interacting with them and that there will be a need to reconcile any differences in their efforts.
- Patton: Rather than sharing our guiding principles with the other legislators, we can recognize that it becomes a public document when it goes to Rep. Dalto and it can make its way to Bill Taylor with a suggestion that it may be something useful for other legislators. We are talking about both what to give to Rep. Dalto and how to develop that which we will give him. Are there other issues to add to this list of principles? Do we want to work on both the big and little picture?

- Sherbo: JRP is working on some foster care legislation. Because the Legislative Subcommittee meeting time is usually not long enough to allow time for discussion about other entities' legislation, she asked the Legislative Subcommittee if they were open to the idea of inviting them and others to meet at her office for a separate meeting. She has already developed foster care principles and has started a list of factors that have positive impacts that improve outcomes for children such as face-to-face visits, placement stability, school stability, and placing siblings together. JRP's answer to how to get those outcomes is by oversight: what gets counted gets done. They are developing practice expectations that do not require much change to the juvenile code. They are also focusing on relatives and the current practice of not paying relatives for foster care if they are not Title IV-E eligible. She offered to begin the list of specific examples that will fall under each principle.
- Waller: We know what children need to thrive. We need to encompass these principles around this at-risk population. Wraparound Oregon is also working on some legislative concepts to move toward integration of funding. There are probably other organizations that will be introducing legislation. We should take the best of all based on the principles of what children need to thrive.
- Foley: The focus should not be on foster care, but rather on what the entire system needs to look like, recognizing that it will take additional money to get there. That is what the CWAC can be called to do. The committee will need to be bold to say exactly what the investment needs to be.
- Lansing: The focus should be not only on children and families already in the system, but also those who are knocking at the door. It is that point of balance of prevention and intervention.
- Balter: Asked how we take these points and put content under them.
- Miller: The criminal justice system developed a two-page document of principles called "Justice in the Balance." All state agencies in the criminal justice system used this document in their budget presentations to help illustrate the connections and how a cut in one budget impacts others. Suggested developing a similar document for the child welfare system.
- Balter: What we have started is a preamble document of principles. It will follow with a letter to Rep. Dalto containing the specifics, the program and practices that it would take to fulfill the principles. One of our jobs would be to educate legislators on the principles.
- Waller: As an example, a principle may be that all children need a relationship with a caring adult. Under that we would list ten ways to provide that relationship, such as providing every foster child with a CASA.

- Miller: Asked Mickey Lansing if the CASA program will be submitting a budget package for full funding.
- Lansing: Confirmed that CASA does have a General Fund budget package, though it does not necessarily get to full funding.
- Sherbo: We need to frame the discussion around all domains of a child's life with a laundry list under each domain. Then we can develop a letter as we did for SB 818 D-engrossed, which all CWAC can support.
- Stiegler: We have two tracks. The FIWG will develop the core principles and the Legislative Subcommittee will develop the practice issues that feed into the core principles.
- Balter: Asked that the agency cost each one out.
- Foley: The core principles document and practices document need to go to Bruce Goldberg in advance.
- Miller: Documents already exist on reasonable efforts principles and expectations that guide casework practice.
- Shugar: Asked that she or another AAG be added to the Future Issues Work Group and Legislative Subcommittee.
- Stiegler: CWAC members will be asked to submit their contributions to FIWG in advance of the next FIWG meeting. CWAC will have an opportunity to review and refine what FIWG develops.
- Stetzer: The fall out can be much bigger: the general public and many legislators do not know the core principles of what is good for children. Educating them can be the next step.
- Stiegler: The eventual audience is unknown.
- Foley: We need to be sure we write this in a way the general public can understand and avoid using jargon.
- Balter: We may end up with two documents, one for the general public and one for those more familiar with the child welfare system. We need to get as many points of agreement as possible as we did for SB 818 D-engrossed. It will take some time to fine tune it so we need to keep it elastic for a while.
- Foley: The letter to Rep. Dalto on SB 818 D-engrossed describes CWAC as a diverse group, but it is not racially or culturally diverse. Acknowledged the need to add some diversity to the membership.
- Stiegler: What was meant in the letter is that the committee has diverse interests. We will poll the FIWG members to set their next meeting date. We will tentatively set August 9 for the Legislative Subcommittee.

ACTION:

- Nancy Miller will redraft the principles document for the next FIWG meeting.
- Angela Sherbo will lead the discussion on the practices document for the next Legislative Subcommittee meeting.
- The FIWG will meet prior to the Legislative Subcommittee, which is tentatively scheduled for August 9.
- AAG representation will be added to the FIWG and Legislative Subcommittee.
- CWAC members will need to send their input on the principles prior to the next FIWG meeting.

OTHER

- Taylor: The National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect will be in Portland in April 2007. The deadline for the call for papers is the end of July. Asked that the details about the call for papers be sent to CWAC.

Meeting adjourned.