MEETING MINUTES
CT Kids Report Card Leadership Committee
May 12th, 2016 Quarterly Meeting
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. LOB Room 1B

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks by Co-Chairs (9:00-9:10)

a. The meeting was convened by Co-Chair Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman at 9:14 a.m. Apologies were given for Co-Chair David Nee who was absent due to jury duty.
b. Representative Urban explained the critical nature of the Report Card going forward with our current budget environment and the need to find programs that are not working so that money can be allocated to programs that are working.

2. DCF Presentation on FAR: Kristina Stevens and Susan Smith (9:10-9:30)

a. Kristina Stevens thanked the group for the opportunity and explained that this project and RBA have really allowed the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to do exactly what Rep. Urban had explained, to really look into whether programs are working, focus resources on things that work and improve their programs to have the best possible outcomes for the children and families they serve.
b. Susan Smith conducted a review of existing data on abuse and neglect in Connecticut and explained that most of the reports that are accepted by DCF are related to neglect rather than abuse. She discussed the importance of allegations, and accepted reports in addition to substantiated reports when considering the needs of families where there may be concerns or a need for supports, that does not rise to the level of abuse or neglect. All the way through, from allegations to placement, black and Hispanic children are overrepresented throughout the DCF system. Based on this DCF has been undertaking a deeper look at racial disparity in the system.
c. Kristina outlined the adoption of the Differential Response System (DRS) in Connecticut, going back to the pilot program conducted in 2004. One of the largest factors that began Connecticut on the path to establishing DRS was that during this time period 80% of DCF cases were with families who had previous involvement with DCF. Currently, for families assigned the Family Assessment Response (FAR) track of DRS only 37% have prior DCF involvement. She went on to discuss some of the major issues that are continuing factors for families with repeated involvement; homelessness and unemployment. Kristina continued, explaining DRS and the two tracks included therein, investigations and FAR. If a family is assigned to the FAR track, after the assessment they are offered services by outside, local providers through Community Supports for Families. Approximately 16% of those families accept Community Supports for Families services. Some of the reasons for families declining Community Supports for Families services are; existing involvement with community services, request for a referral to a single specific service only, or choosing to engage in voluntary services through DCF.
    i. Extensive discussion ensued as to why so few families are engaging in Community Supports for Families services, the detailed process of assigning families to a track under DRS, and the stigma of DCF involvement.
d. The top three identified needs in Community Supports for Families statewide are Basic Needs (utilities, security deposits, etc.), School Uniforms, and Parenting Skills. Kristina highlighted the positive outcomes that DCF has seen through involving the families, and the feedback from a survey conducted at exit.
    i. Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman asked how many of the families DCF has involvement with are military families, because there may be resources through the military to support those families. Kristina said that was not currently a data point they collect.
    ii. Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman also asked if DCF is able to pick up a family that was involved and then left and came back to Connecticut but maybe in a different school system? Kristina answered that they absolutely would know that family and link them to any previous DCF involvement they had despite changes in location or school district.

Kristina concluded with an extensive overview of the data points DCF is collecting and analyzing through their partnership with UCONN to better serve families.

e. Susan briefly reviewed the disproportionality and disparity data and highlighted the importance of culturally competent services to correct over and underrepresentation of various racial and cultural groups in the DCF system.

3. Quarterly Report: Safe Domain (9:30-10:40)

a. Rep. Urban discussed the current legislation that will formalize the inclusion of FAR as a drill down program and asked for other programs
   i. Abby Alter suggested the School Based Diversion Initiative, Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services, and the suicide prevention component of Educating Practices in the Community (EPIC) as potential programs.
   ii. Rep. Urban thanked her and urged the group to really think about programs that really need to be considered for efficacy, duplication, etc. She stressed the need to come up with programs that need a hard look in this budget climate. She further discussed the next step in this process which is to consult with the RBA subcommittee of Appropriations.
   iii. Bennett discussed the School Based Diversion Initiative and the various partners that could be involved in mobilization for action around that program.
   iv. Anne proposed that the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership and the School Based Diversion Initiative that might be turning the curve on the Restraint and Seclusion indicator. Maggie added that the Office of Early Childhood has allocated dollars to the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership.
   v. Rep. Urban urged members to email if they think of any other programs that need to be drilled down into.
   vi. Commissioner Katz suggested looking into the number of referrals to EMPS from schools that have School Based Health Clinics versus the 9-1-1 calls for schools that do not have a School Based Health Clinics. Rep. Urban agreed this would be an exceptional piece of data to have.

4. Priorities for Action (10:40-10:50)

a. Six programs were selected for further consideration;
   i. Family Assessment Response
   ii. Early Childhood Consultation Partnership
   iii. School-Based Diversion Initiative
   iv. Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services
   v. Safe Sleep Campaign
   vi. Educating Practices in the Community

5. Adjourn (11:00)

a. The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.