

Implementation Sub-Committee Of The Task Force on Federal Legislation Of the Children's Cabinet

MEETING MINUTES

December 10, 2004

Linda Katz called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM at the Arnold Conference Center. Introductions were made. Donalda Carlson, DHS staff to the task force, expressed her gratitude to the members of the task force for all their hard work on behalf of DHS and of the Rhode Islanders in need of assistance. Donalda passed around cookies for all to enjoy.

Minutes of the November 05, 2004 meeting were reviewed and accepted.

1. ASSC EVALUATION REPORT - JANE GRIFFIN-MCH INC.

Jane Griffin presented her Evaluation of the DHS Youth Success Programs and data on teen births in Rhode Island. Jane designed an intake form for the Adolescent Self Sufficiency Collaboratives and the Youth Responsibility program. Both these programs comprise the youth success programs. The intake form collects age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, birth data, education achieved, employment, contraceptive use, and the level of crisis being experienced by the teen. The use of the intake form began April 2003. After the intake is

completed an electronic record of the intake is created by program staff and transferred to the researcher who provides the individual ASSCs with regular summary reports of the data they have collected. Using the data from the intake document, Jane has established baseline data that will be compared to follow-up data in future years. The baseline data includes demographic and social characteristics of participants in both programs, their health needs, and the differences in these characteristics from site to site.

The role of the ASSC programs includes:

- A close one to one relationship between teen mom and the program case manager that lasts up to two years.
- Support for teen so that she finishes high school.
- Work with teen to prevent another pregnancy.

Jane suggested that there should be an effort to talk more to teen moms and to have teen focus groups to determine what motivates their behavior.

Questions that arose during the WRITF group discussion included:

- Age of father of the teen mom's child,
- What is the number of teen moms on their own and on FIP,
- Are the FIP rules preventing teen moms from eligibility for FIP,
- How long are teen moms on the program,
- Teens should be asked why they use contraceptives or not,
- How many teen moms are involved with DCYF?

It was noted that 75% of the teen moms in the New Opportunity Homes were involved with DCYF.

2. FIP/TANF CASELOAD REDUCTION REPORT – RANDY ROSATI

Randy Rosati, Assistant Administrator of Management Information Systems, made a PowerPoint presentation (attached) to the group. He explained the methodology and this year's results to the group. There was some speculation in the group as to whether this report and the credit that is derived from it would remain as is or at all in the TANF reauthorization. There were no other comments and the report was accepted.

Randy reported on FIP data. As of the October report there are 13,166 FIP cases which is a drop of about 200 cases from the previous month. There is a new table that reflects the number of cases and recipients by city and town in RI.

There were 660 new cases in October and 808 cases closed in September. One hundred and fifteen were closed with a full family sanction. The number of exempt cases has slightly declined. Eighty-six individuals who had been convicted for drug sale and distribution became eligible for FIP in August due to the recent change in rules. Childcare disregard cases continue to decline at 95 cases in October. FIP sanction cases continue to decline. There are 449 fewer sanction cases since January of 2004.

3. UPDATE ON:

Full Family Sanction – The actual number of families that closed was

115 and since the initial enforcement of the sanction, there has been about four per month. The initial number was due to the cumulative number of families that had been sanctioned for 24 months and over.

Alternative Cash Assistance – The regulations have been published; however, there is a delay in implementation due to the need to train field staff. Field staff has been involved in training on simplified reporting and training on alternative cash assistance will follow. A question arose about a hardship exemption to the six month bar to cash assistance for families that accept the alternative cash assistance option and then need cash assistance sometime within that six month period. There should be a way to review such cases if they arise. Also, it is imperative that before a family selects this option, they make an informed and well-reasoned decision in consultation with DHS staff.

Simplified Reporting - Implementation will begin when a problem with the issuance of notices is resolved. Question arose as to the implications for recertification in other programs like Rite Care.

FRED/FRAUD Regulations - There was a hearing on the regulations and the comments

are being compiled and reviewed.

4. **NEW CONTRACTS (SUPPORTIVE EMPLOYMENT & TRANSITIONAL JOBS** – Jeannette Cabral noted that the RFP had been issued on July 29 and that successful bidders were published on the WEB. She reported that contracts were signed and that the program was beginning to recruit participants for services.

5. OTHER BUSINESS – Brenda Dann Messier asked that the Education Committee be put on the next meeting’s agenda and that Steven Brunero be invited to attend.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gabriella K. Barros