

Orange County Children's Partnership (OCCP)

March 19, 2015 Minutes

In Attendance:

Alexis Abbot, Carol Wiseman, Christina Altmayer, Eldon Baber, Karen Christensen, Judge Richard Lee, Susan Leibel, Ginger LaFlamme,, Rick Martin, Martin Schwarz, Marcy Garfias, Mike Ryan, Chris Bieber, Linda Smith, Janis White, Helene Calvet, Betsy DeGarmoe, David Nunez, Gene Howard, Christine Smith, Janice Chieffo, Julie Poulos, MaryAnn Soden, Alyson Loyd, Stephanie Schneider, Allison Maxon, Janine Miller, Israel Orta, Victor Cumberland.

Introductions / Announcements:

Introductions were made. Announcements: None

State legislation/budget: Mike Ryan referenced Assembly Bill (AB) 403. The State is working with stakeholders on Child Welfare reform. They are looking at the Continuum of Care in the area of placement and moving away from residential care. Orange County has been moving away from residential care for many years and has less than 100 children in this type of placement. There is pressure to do away with shelters and there may be language built into AB 403 to remove shelters. While the Orangewood Children and Family Center (OCFC) is utilized much less than historical years and the population is low, Orange County still values the shelter and uses it for safety needs. The average length of stay in this shelter is 30 days. The majority of the population at OCFC is sibling groups, who would otherwise need to be separated, based on limited placements. The other use of OCFC is to safely house high need adolescents (often with substance abuse, mental health and runaway issues) while more permanent placement is sought. Over the years there have been many efforts to limit and decrease the population in OCFC. Orange County has worked with its partners to achieve this. AB 403 is expected to go into effect in 2017. If the decision is the phase out shelters, the State will work with each county to develop a plan to remove shelters within three years. This bill would provide for the reclassification of treatment facilities and the transition from the use of group homes for children in foster care to the use of short-term residential treatment centers. Group home placements will be phased out and short term residential centers will be developed. Youth receive services in short term facilities and then transition into a lower level of care. The State is building in 15 million dollars to support foster care recruitment and training.

ACTION ITEM: Approve minutes from the February 19, 2015 meeting. Approved.

Presentation –Dr. Anne Light, SSA Medical Director Candidate, completed a Power Point presentation entitled: *Preventing Child Abuse: Developing a Center of Excellence*. Soft copies of the PowerPoint presentation and slides showing data on the Survey of Well-being of Young Children (SWYC)/Safe Environment for Every Kid (SEEK) were distributed to OCCP members.

21th Annual Report on Conditions of Children – Christina Altmayer stated that the Children and Families Commission of Orange County (CFCOC) will take the lead on the 21st Annual Report. Christina indicated that she and Sharon Boles (also of CFCOC) will be the primary point persons to report out on the progression of the report, including timelines and data collection. Christina provided a hand out outlining timelines and action steps specific to the development and finalization of the report. Christina also handed out a summary of selected indicators and data sources. Christina requested that OCCP members review and update the data contacts, such that they are current. CFCOC is hoping to start collecting data by April 1, 2015. Christina handed out a sample layout and design of the 21st Annual Report. The sample was of the following indicator: Immunization of Children. The new design of the report will include more geographical summaries and maps to assist with comparing trends. This report will have more graphics and less text as compared to previous reports. Christina stated that the CFCOC would like to develop a steering committee that will closely look at the 21st Annual Report, as it is being developed. Christina invited volunteers to participate on this committee. Christina stated that the committee will meet once monthly and look at creative ways to present data. Dr. Nunez and Stephanie Schneider volunteered to participate. A follow up email will be sent to OCCP members to enlist additional volunteers for this committee.

Mike Ryan stated that the Board of Supervisors has had a lot of discussion on the Conditions of Children's Annual Report and they are interested in having the report online. Mike recommended that OCCP consider the impact of decreasing the amount of hard copies and whether that might impact the overall use of the report. One recommendation was to decrease the number of hard copies over time to allow a smoother transition to an online version.

Eldon Baber stated that it would be helpful if the online version had more navigation capabilities, such as being more interactive and having searchable modes. Making the online version more user friendly might be an incentive to transition. Eldon suggested that the link of an online version could be put on several different sites, such as the Health Care Agency, Orange County Department of Education, and Social Services Agency. This would provide very accessible access to the report and may further promote its use.

Lauren Ramos stated that online use of the report may be tracked and could provide valuable data regarding how frequently it is accessed.

Dr. Handler referenced immunizations and Senate Bill (SB) 277. Dr. Handler indicated that this bill would eliminate the exemption from immunization based upon personal beliefs. If the bill passes, this will increase compliance and vaccinations for children. Dr. Handler suggested that OCCP develop a support letter for this bill to move it forward.

2015 OCCP Areas of Focus- Commercial Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) and Mental Health Transition beds/substance abuse-

Gene Howard explained that there is an existing subcommittee [Foster Youth Outcomes (FYO)] designed to address the service needs and gaps related to the high risk youth, including needed facilities, placements and assessments. There is a large gap in services for many high risk youth. Many of these youth have co-occurring diagnoses, involving mental health and substance abuse problems. There is a need for transitional treatment/placement for these youth. These facilities are not currently available, nor are placements. Gene referenced an interim facility, adjacent to OCFC that existed historically. This facility housed youth with significant mental health problems, until more stabilization could be reached. Gene suggested that the interim facility model be reconsidered. An interim facility could provide short term assessment and services during a transition period for youth. It could include a diagnostic center where multi-disciplinary needs assessments would be conducted for high risk youth entering the dependency or delinquency system. Gene said this model fits nicely with the Continuum of Care model. Gene communicated that OCCP could move needed actions forward by supporting the work of the existing FYO subcommittee.

Safe Sleep Collaborative - Dr. Nunez stated that the Safe Sleep/Cribs for Kids pilot at Joseph Hospital continues to progress and is set to launch in May 2015. The infant sleep survey and parent education materials have been finalized. They have identified good training for the involved nurses and will borrow education materials that already exist from other Counties. The Family Support Network (FSN) was able to donate 20 cribs to the project.

Immunization rates – Christina Altmayer indicated that Dr. Singh from the Children’s Hospital of Orange County (CHOC) conducts presentations on childhood immunizations. This presentation would be valuable for OCCP members to see. CHOC has developed focused groups to seek information regarding the reasons as to why vaccinations are not being done. Christina indicated that there are not sufficient educational strategies for parents; many remain misinformed.

Dr. Nunez stated that there was a small focused group in San Juan Capistrano to research reasons why children were not vaccinated. Results suggested that some parents believe that certain diseases and illnesses are no longer a threat. Dr. Nunez stated that erroneous beliefs are perpetuated when false information goes out to the public. Dr. Nunez stated that educational campaigns/providers need to make sure that the information given is very intentional, evaluated and has the intended effect. Many different approaches have been used, including personal and public. It is difficult when Dr. Sears sends a different message regarding immunizations.

Dr. Handler suggested that Public Service Announcements (PSA) be used, citing that immunizations are safe. There are a lot of pro-parent vaccinations. Dr. Handler stated that these parents are interested in eliminating the personal exemption belief. Parents are concerned about the safety of their children having contact with others who have not been vaccinated.

Subcommittee reports -

1. Annual Report Redesign Subcommittee –No update.
2. Infant Safe Sleep Collaborative-Please see above for update.
3. High School Completion/Educational Resources –Rick Martin stated that he is seeking direction from the OCCP regarding the focus of the subcommittee. Mike Ryan stated that this will be discussed further, at a future meeting.

General Committee Member Comments: Eldon Baber stated that April is Child Abuse Prevention month. The Orange County Blue Ribbon “Kick Off” campaign is Wednesday April 1, 2015. The location will be the Bowers museum in Santa Ana. Eldon encouraged OCCP members to wear the color blue throughout the month of April to commemorate this special and important cause. Eldon also announced that next Wednesday March 25, 2015 is the 27th Annual Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment conference. A handout regarding the conference was distributed.

Public Comments: None.

NEXT MEETING: April 16, 2015