

Orange County Children's Partnership (OCCP) Committee Minutes

Date: May 21, 2020

Location: Zoom meeting

Committee Members/Alternates Attendees:

Debra Baetz, Eldon Baber, Anne Bloxom, Lisa Burke, Veronica Carpenter, Karen Christensen, Betsy DeGarmoe, Melanie Hertig, Laura Jose, Debra Kegel, Hon. Judge Motoike, Paula Noden, Chief Sentman, Denise Schleicher, Dawn Smith, Todd Spitzer

Non-Committee Attendees: Denise Churchill, Heidi Garrel, Raina Lee, An Tran, Kristina Traw

1. **Introductions / Announcements** - Self-introductions were made.
2. **Action Item: Approval of Minutes** - Meeting minutes from February 20, 2020 were approved
3. **Annual Conditions of Children Report** – Lisa Burke/Robyn Odendahl
Debra Baetz reminded the committee that the Orange County Children's Partnership's (OCCP) revised vision statement with the anticipated objectives was to be refined further during the committee's offsite meeting. In addition, the Conditions of Children Steering Committee desired to reformat the Annual Conditions of Children Report to focus on OCCP's vision statement. Due to the pandemic, the offsite meeting has not taken place, as a result the Steering Committee has a short time line and is requesting OCCP's feedback.

Lisa Burke advised now that she has taken on a new role with First 5 Orange County, Robyn Odendahl from Health Management Associates (HMA) Community Strategies will oversee the production of the Annual Conditions of Children Report.

Robyn reported that the Conditions of Children Steering Committee has resumed and will meet virtually once a month. Membership is open, please contact Robyn for further details. The Steering Committee has begun preparing the 26th Annual Conditions of Children Report. Timelines and approach will remain the same. First draft of the report is expected to be completed by August. The final report will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors by September 2020.

The Steering Committee discussed at their first meeting the content of the report, ways to acknowledge and reflect on our current circumstances, and the impacts it is having on children and families. The Steering Committee suggested the committee address COVID-19 in the report; however, acknowledge that the data, trends, and impacts may not appear until 2021. The Steering Committee requested input from OCCP members on how to address COVID-19 creatively and to share trends they are seeing throughout their agencies.

4. COVID-19 Update – Support for Families – Debra Baetz

Debra requested brief updates from members on efforts being made on addressing COVID-19 within their departments.

- First 5 Orange County is addressing child care needs.
- Department of Ed. continues to support distance learning and recovery phase.
- Social Services Agency continues to address public assistance, responding to emergency requests, reports of abuse and neglect, and working on recovery phase. Individual wellness checks were conducted on IHSS recipients. Individual wellness checks are now being conducted on CalWORKs households. This is a direct outreach approach to assess household needs and provide additional resources if necessary.
- Health Care Agency Behavioral Health Services continue to work with families and youth telephonically and through telehealth. HCA does reach out and engage with families. Crisis evaluations continue. In-person contact is available when necessary.
- The Raise Foundation and Child Abuse Prevention Council have traditionally worked with the community to outreach related to food insecurity. Items include previous monthly food distributions. As of March 24, the Raise Foundation has launched a weekly module and has served over 12,000 individuals, running 4 weekly food distributions each week, for up to 800 individuals per week at 4 different sites, Demographics are shifting.
- Regional Center is providing additional Respite and other support services. Reaching out to families to provide additional services.
- Melanie Hertig: Returning to school - The county is coordinating a task force together with local medical experts including the orange county health care agency to create guidelines in terms of reopening in the fall. How and when schools will reopen is still pending.

5. 2020 OCCP Areas of Focus/Goal

a) Legislative Updates – Debra Baetz / Kristina Traw

May revise was published and negatively impacted by the effects COVID-19 has had on the economy. Areas of concern for child welfare is the loss of realignment funding. Realignment is the predominant funding source for child welfare staff as well as adult protective services.

A lot of work is being done as far as support to the impacted workforce such as emergency CalFresh allotments, pandemic EBT, and Great Plates programs. The Board of Supervisors authorized 3 million to two primary food banks that provide food for community-based organizations in meeting food insecurities needs of our community. Fourth stimulus package is on watch. There is monetary support for women, infants, children's programs, food banks, and funding for local and state governments.

Kristina Traw advised there is a lot of debate going on at the assembly and the senate in California, surrounding critical areas where cuts are being made, most of them seem supportive for Health and Human Services and Education.

b) Secured Facility Committee Updates – Anne Bloxom

The OCCP Ad Hoc Committee has not meet since the pandemic began. Meetings will resume in June. There has been additional time for our STRTPs to get their mental health component in place. We will find out how things are going and if things are improving to the point, we will no longer need an additional STRTP facility for our most chronic youth. As for children and family services point of view, the funding we had allocated is no longer available. Anne also shared that there are positive programs that the Health Care Agency is putting into place that would add to services we can provide to these youth.

Dawn Smith advised that the Health Care Agency (HCA) does not currently have a crisis stabilization unit for adolescents, however, one is planned with an anticipated opening date in early 2021. HCA is looking into RFP'ing a Children's Crisis Residential Program (CCRP) within the next fiscal year. The program can be used for youth with a higher level of need that cannot be maintained in a STRTP. With no additional funding for other types of facilities, the CCRP will be a way to address the current need. Debra Baetz shared that the Governor's May revise proposes a 5% decrease to STRTP funding which is concerning.

c) Foster Youth Resources – All

Raina Lee advised they have not had success with reaching "Know Before You Go." Makaelah Perkins will be ending her membership and will no longer be part of OCCP. Makaelah will be pursuing her career goals.

6. General Committee Member Comments

Debra requested volunteers to plan OCCP's offsite meeting. Volunteers are as follows: Debra Baetz, Hon. Judge Motoike, Eldon Baber, Lisa Burke, Betsy DeGarmoe, Veronica Carpenter. Meeting to be scheduled in June.

Public Comments

Michael Arnot with Children's Cause Orange County, stated that due to the budget reductions, overcoming challenges during the pandemic, and the transitions we will be facing, having public partnerships is essential. Michael recommended the reconvening of Child Welfare Services Improvement Partnership meetings. Having dialog with community-based organizations will assist with addressing our community's current needs.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is June 18, 2020, 9:00 a.m. ZOOM meeting

Minutes taken by Esther Marquez