

# RAC Minutes

## July 11, 2013

In Attendance: Allon Kalisher, Jon Jacaruso, Donna Grant, Lorna Grivois, Cara Westcot, April Brenker, Diane Breton, Laureen Sheehan, Nancy Gentes, Liz Shulman, Kim Somaroo-Rodriguez, Ann McIntyre-Lahner, Michelle Castillo, Jennifer Nadeau

*Dr. Janice Gruendel will attend the RAC meeting on September 5<sup>th</sup>. She will discuss the DCF Strategic Plan and its premise of keeping children healthy, safe, smart and strong. The Strategic plan is on the DCF website. Go to the section "About DCF" scroll down to "S" and click on Strategic Plan.*

- Minutes from last RAC meeting Accepted.
- Gas Card Report by Lorna Grivois. On behalf of the Family Advisory Board Lorna requested RAC approval of the following proposal: Allot to the Family Advisory Board's childcare person a \$40 gas card once per month to support her time, gas and activity expenses. RAC approved unanimously.
- RAC Membership. RAC approved unanimously adding Family Advisory Board to the RAC distribution list. It was also recommended that the RAC recruit rep's from Generations Health Center, JRI and NECRC. Donna Grant offered to reconcile current membership to the original membership grid. Allon Kalisher reminded the group that RAC has a goal of geographic, family and provider diversity. Missing constituents were also noted including folks representing Early Childhood and Transiting Adolescents issues.
- Lorna Grivois noted that the Family Advisory Board (FAB) meets monthly on Saturdays. The next meeting is July 13. There are 15 active parents. The group is doing a survey regarding system gaps and access issues.
- State Advisory Council (SAC) Update - The next meeting is September 9<sup>th</sup>. The last meeting was facilitated by Casey Family Services focusing on Collective Impact. Donna Grant will email to all an article on Collective Impact "on the ground".
  - The second issue discussed was about the role of the SAC. Donna Grant noted that the DCF administration is clearly responsive to the fact that community voices truly matter. This will result in special policies around follow up and follow through with the structure of the SAC to directly inform the DCF process.
  - A survey will be sent electronically to SAC members to gauge other, groups, activities and coalitions SAC members serve on. It will also help assess where we are missing members or connections.
- The Regional Director's Report - Allon announces the departure of Libby Graham, Deputy Commissioner and the appointment of Fernando Muniz as Deputy Commissioner of Administration. Susan Smith was appointed to replace Dep. Commissioner Muniz as Chief of Quality and Planning.

- One of the members raised a question about the contracting prohibition against subcontracts. Allon discussed the interesting federal model of granting which is to issue up to a certain number of awards that are all funded up to a certain amount. Allon noted supporting the RFP process and a way to do public comment for individual community members.
- Allon shares the Commissioner's goals of no more than 10% of children in congregate care, no children placed out of state and no young children under 13 placed in congregate care. As a consequence we need active work on what we need to achieve these goals. *Please refer to attached dashboard document.*
- Guest Speaker: Kim Somaroo-Rodriguez. The State of Connecticut DCF has received a \$5million federal grant to support a new Intensive Supportive Housing model. Connecticut was chosen by the federal government as one of only five states to receive this important grant which provide services to families to help sustain safe housing. Connections, Inc is the grantee implementing this research and service design. Service provision under the guidance of the research grant is scheduled to begin in October 2013. Please refer to the attached article and summary sheet by Ms. Somaroo-Rodriguez for details on this wonderful opportunity for Region 3 families!
- RAC Workgroup RBA Presentations - *Please refer to attached RBA Report Cards.*
  - Early Childhood Education Workgroup - passed out their RBA plan. Discussion among membership about the hard work on this and voted to unanimously accept the Workgroup's first steps.
  - The "Regional Caregiver Strategic Plan" was distributed by that Workgroup. This is the name of their RBA Report Card. This was also well received by the membership. The only additions noted were inclusion of the realignment of the FASU staff into Core Foster Home and Kinship Foster Home staff and the change in the SALA system. A discussion about the history of a fragmented recruiting system and the goal to change that ensued.
  - Adolescent Workgroup represented by Christine Stebbins. The goal of this Workgroup is to support or establish "enduring connections" for all DCF children and youth. This was a very passionate presentation and produced much discussion on the topic among members about the inherent value of this proposal.
  - Education Workgroup - This workgroup's focus is on middle schoolers in grade 5-8. The goal for this workgroup is to do a pilot project in two communities in the region to enhance the partnerships in two community schools. The engagement process is to connect DCF more with the schools and schools more with parents and connect everyone with community agencies.
  - Internal DCF Quality Assurance RBA activities - Considered Removals and the Regional Service System Workgroup RBA's are in process. There are also RBA Report cards on Children in Out Of State Placement and Children in Residential level of Congregate Care.

**Next RAC Meeting is Thursday September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013**