



CARTF

Virtual

April 1, 2022

MINUTES

Joshua Wickard- Public Defender (Chairman)
Michelle Weir- DHW, Family & Children Services
Ruth York-Children with Disabilities Representative
Sheila Sturgeon Freitas, PhD– Mental Health
Curtis Carper- Law Enforcement Representative
Melissa Osen– Foster Youth
James Curb – Homeless Education Liaison
Jill Robertson– Parent
Molly Vaughn– Victim Services Coordinator

Jennifer Tachell– Educator (Vice-Chairman)
Susan Bradford, MD – Pediatrician
Jennifer Bergin- Child Advocate Attorney
Hon. Steve Clark- Civil Magistrate Judge
Madison Miles- Prosecuting Attorney
Tahna Barton – CASA
Hon. Mark Rammell- Criminal Magistrate Judge
Nadine McDonald – Juvenile Justice
Teresa Vance- Administrator of the Courts Representative

Mindy Peper – Task Force Support

Indicates **ABSENT**

Guests: Paula Barthelmess, Det. Chad Benson, Taylor Numdahl from Nampa Family Justice Center

Welcome

Wickard welcomes everyone. CARTF reviews the March 2022 minutes. Rammell makes a motion to approve the minutes, Carper seconds, all in favor and so moved.

Child Trafficking

Wickard welcomes our guests. Guests share about their background and how they became involved with the fight against human trafficking.

After power point presentation, CARTF discusses conference in October. This group will be the speakers at the conference on October 20- live presentation.

Paula talks about Treasure Valley Human Trafficking organization. Seeing a lot of people coming to the table in learning about trafficking and how to identify and stop it.

McDonald asks for specific recommendations on how child protection can do a better job in this issue. Paula says need to know the questions to ask, getting the answers, being diligent to recognize the signs. Taylor mentions that disclosure in trafficking cases is taking 5-6 forensic interviews and it's important to know this, to know the right questions, and to know that it may not come out in an initial screening interview. Need to have a team approach among several disciplines.

Budget Increase for CFR Team Analyst

Tabled until next meeting- make as an action item and executive session.

Subcommittee Updates

Grants:

All grantees for Cycle 2-2021 have turned in their mid-use reports. No grant applications have been received for Cycle 1-2022 as of today. Deadline is April 5.

Conference:

Conference subcommittee met and we have secured the Riverside Hotel for October 20. The topic will be child trafficking and then self-care at the end of the day. Speakers will include Det. Benson, Paula Barthlemess, and Taylor Numdahl.

Wickard mentions that this topic may be an important topic that CARTF needs to take on. There seems to be a strong sense of urgency around the issue.

Need to consider adding this as a new goal, goal 5, including new strategies. Will consider this in the new year.

Legislative:

We will meet in April and will re-cap the session and create a presentation for CARTF in May.

CFRT:

Suicide reviews will be next case review. Recruiting an additional law enforcement member.

Publications:

No new update.

Review Goal 4 and Near- Fatality Reviews

Does CFRT have time to review near-death fatalities? Weir states they did a couple years' worth of near fatality reviews in two separate meetings. At most, taking this on would only add one more case review day. Barton states it will not take additional time from the research analyst as Weir will be the one gathering the majority of the case review documentation.

The recent near-fatality case reviews showed a high percent of significant trauma, such as sexual abuse, bullying, and suicide attempts.

Does this need to be added to Goal 4, changed within the CFRT parameters, or both?

Wickard proposes changing language of Goal 4 to "Oversee the Statewide Child Fatality Review Team to examine child fatalities and near-fatalities.

Clark asks what is the definition of near-fatality? Weir shares parameters for federal and Idaho definition of near-fatality.

Near Fatalities to be Reviewed:

Whenever a child sustains injuries that are suspected or confirmed to be the result of abuse, neglect, attempted suicide, or under suspicious circumstances which are certified by a physician to have placed the child in “serious” or “critical” condition, a review will be conducted according to the following criteria:

- The injured child or his/her family previously received a safety assessment from, or received other child protection or adoption services through the Child and Family Services Program;
- The child was injured while in foster care; or
- CFS is has an open case for assessment or is providing case management of in-home or post adoption services to the family.

Reviews will exclude children who are in “serious” or “critical” condition due to genetic or medical conditions not related to the child being involved with the child welfare system. The reality is that near-deaths will most likely be the most underreported cases the CFR Team will review.

Vance said she feels if anything, it is important data to study and needs awareness brought to it.

Barton says there are so many trends evident even in the near-fatality case reviews. It is very meaningful and will add to the work of the team and help in making recommendations.

After discussion, Weir suggests putting language in the annual report and application to qualify that the near-fatality cases related to CFS.

IDHW Annual Progress Service Report Program Instruction

Weir shares information about the 5-year plan and the annual report on the progress of the 5-year plan. It is a public report and can be found at online.

President Biden signed Executive Order 13985, “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government”

Priority Areas:

- Prevent children from coming into foster care
- Support kinship caregivers
- Ensure youth leave care with strengthened relationships, holistic supports, and opportunities- leave better than when they entered
- Develop and enhance the child welfare workforce- dwindling pools of staff, significant staff overturn, directly related to pandemic and seen nationwide

Emphasis on collaboration and how it is occurring- sharing information and substantial and ongoing engagement with stakeholders, and specifically with our CJA partners who are represented on this task force.

Quality assurance includes how they are looking at and utilizing data, what observations are being found, how are strengths and weaknesses being identified, and so on.

Looking at how Idaho defines child abuse for the most vulnerable populations. Who is that population and how can Idaho prevent that population from being abused?

Report covers the CHAFEE program.

Section on collaboration between the state and tribes and how those children are served.

CAPTA plan is covered, includes state care and the programs and services in Idaho. This plan includes the CRP report recommendations.

Other sections in the report include:

- Foster and adoptive parent plan
- Healthcare oversight and collaboration plan
- Disaster plan
- Training plan

Wickard notes that the way CARTF is engaging with other groups like ICTF, the child protection section of the bar, and so on is a good example of the work that this report covers.

CARTF discusses the retention of case workers. Biggest area where they are losing staff is in safety planning case management. Pay raises, bonus, management support, validation, training, and resources are all helpful. Wickard mentions that having the ability to switch case managers when needed might help with burn out and losing staff.

Interestingly, Clark mentions there has been a disproportionate number of termination cases come across his desk by a small number of the same case workers.

Wickard feels the work that needs to be done is in the middle rung of cases- not the one that will always lead to reunification or always leads to termination, rather than those cases that with a good case worker would end in reunification but with the wrong case worker, could end in termination. This may be easily resolved by just allowing for assigning a new case worker.

Wickard mentions that it may be helpful to bring pieces of this report more frequently to the group throughout the year to allow for suggestions and looking at ways to help.

Freitas says would be helpful to have something concrete on how Idaho is comparing to other states in various areas. For instance, in the area of foster family retention, kinship caregivers, etc. Wickard would like to hear about the selection committee and adoption and appeal process in other states.

Regarding shelter care hearings, Wickard often hears that IDHW couldn't do their due diligence because law enforcement declared imminent danger and so removal can't be reviewed. Interested in the assessment done between the removal and the shelter care hearing and reasonable efforts done by the department. Vance says that a joint project between the courts and the department is to look at cases where kids are in state care for less than 30 days and was removal from home an appropriate call-- yes, no, circumstances as to why, etc.

CARTF Delegation to Other Parts of the State

Need to know who would be interested in going up to CDA in September—Peper would go to set up the logistics. Volunteers include Vaughn, Weir, Vance, Barton. Peper will send out a poll to see who would be interested. The rest of team would join virtually.

Would be tasked with meeting with MDTs, our CARTF counterparts in the area, stakeholders, CACs, tribal group, judges-- bring publications, make connections, share conference information, etc. Main agenda item would be to hear from these stakeholders.

Spring Planning/ September Planning

April- Wickard will invite a former parent involved with foster system and reunification; legislative update; annual conference; Weir will invite a social worker; re-visit goal 4 regarding adding near-fatality strategy; update on near-fatality reviews; IDHW annual progress service report program instruction; CARTF delegation to CDA; action item: budget increase for CFR Team analyst; conference speakers

May- McDonald update on probation services and protocol on children who disclose when in custody; Vaughn- victim compensation discussion; grant cycle one decisions; annual conference; review draft CARTF Annual Report for May 30 submission date; Court Improvement update; action item/executive session: budget increase for CFR Team analyst; hotel change and cost comparison

September- subcommittee updates; conference planning

October- conference planning; debrief September delegation- expand the idea?; Heather Cunningham with IDCVVA

New Business

Engaging Youth in Court research idea-

CARTF is thinking about utilizing BSU to help with researching this topic- do they participate in court, why or why not, comfort level, and do they feel prepared. Vance mentions that CIP is looking at this topic as well. She will give us an update next month on all the projects that they are working on.

CARTF discusses idea of changing hotels- to Hampton Inn Spectrum from SpringHill Suites. In May we can do a cost comparison.

Adjourn

Next meeting will be May 6, 2022. This will be a hybrid meeting.