



CARTF

March 3, 2023

Hampton Inn Boise Spectrum/ ZOOM

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
OPEN- Foster Youth
James Curb – Homeless Education Liaison
Jill Robertson– Parent
Susan Nalley– Victim Services Coordinator

Jennifer Tachell– Educator (Vice-Chairman)
Susan Bradford, MD – Pediatrician
Stacy Pittman- 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**

Welcome

Wickard welcomes everyone. CARTF reviews the February 2023 minutes. Tachell makes a motion to approve the minutes with noted changes (new business- 2nd paragraph), Robertson seconds, all in favor and so moved.

CARTF discusses recent supreme court ruling regarding ICPC and how it may affect child protection cases.

Guest, CRP Regions

Brandt (district 1) representing the 5 counties in northern Idaho, Brandt states that the child protection oversight panel was designed to oversee the child welfare system in Idaho. Her concern is that there are still concerns not being addressed. The CRP panel authority needs to be expanded so that they can share their suggestions and concerns with other stakeholders outside of IDHW. Concerns include training of advocates for children over 12, timelines between trial dates, lack of trauma-informed training for all workers within the CP system and need to understand protective factors. Brandt promotes child abuse prevention month coming up in April. Weir mentions that the copy of the annual CRP report is online for anyone to read as well as provided to Children's Bureau a requirement of the CJA grant.

Delva (district 2) is the board chair for the regional CRP. She is also director of 2nd Judicial District CASA. She is in Lewiston and represents 5 surrounding counties. They have noticed some of the same concerns as district 1. They noticed some concerns in reviewing files and as a result they made suggestions to the legislators. One concern is that though IDHW responds to the CRP annual report, they are not seeing any action. Also concerned that when children come into care, there is a long CP history and referrals. Concerned that there is a crisis in lack of foster families and social workers – did a survey of those exiting as foster families and found that it was due to a lack of support from IDHW. Those results were given to the legislative committee. Also doing

an anonymous survey right now for social workers to understand the lack of social workers in the field. Finding that a common response for leaving the field is due to lack of support and being overwhelmed.

Iverson from district 3 represents southwest of Idaho. They have a high number of cases proportionate to population. Have seen some improvements in terms of bringing on and keeping social workers. Seeing same reasons for low numbers or exiting foster families similar to other districts, including shared frustration of timely responses, especially during off-hours; lack of logistic support to see to foster child needs; and need for additional judicial support to allow for hearings to happen in a timely manner (seeing some improvement in this area).

Dublin with district 4 has been involved in several aspects of child protection. Many of their concerns have been covered by other districts but she notes that she is shocked by the lack of foster families being very low. She says they have a concern regarding the high number of referrals in some of the kids and families before they come into care. She wonders if there is a correlation of no place to put children due to low foster family numbers to the long referral histories before they are placed. There is a trend nationwide to assign trained legal counsel to every child, no matter what their age is to provide continuity and for strong legal advocacy, independent of what CASA provides. Idaho was one of 13 states in 2008 that failed in this area. Eight of these states have since addressed this issue. Idaho has not yet. Shannon McCarthy is also with district 4 and notes that they also have seen several cases with 40 plus number of referrals before they are mandated into care. Dublin wonders is part of the issue for these high number of referrals is due to the case worker not having a full picture and all of the data-maybe decisions are being made without knowing everything about the history and facts of the case. CARTF holds discussion regarding trauma-informed care to include foster parents, need for additional counseling, and timeline for removing children from families. Vance mentions that the CP Committee is bringing some legislation regarding counseling for children under 12. Weir mentions that the agency and the courts are willing, but have to have counselors willing to

Jones from district 5 covers Ada County and south-central Idaho. Her panel's primary role is to review cases and has recently noticed an increase in home services and that is showing some promise. Feels there would be more accountability with child protection court for families with multiple referrals and generational, ongoing issues and trauma. Feels this would hold them and those working in CP would have more accountability. However, there is a lack of matching funds for the counties to continue the service.

Thomas from district 6 states that he sees many of the same problems in their district as others- staffing of social workers (currently have 6 openings), lack of foster care families, and cases with high number of prior referrals. Seeing a trend of poaching the IDHW social workers from private organizations due to higher pay and little better working conditions. Also seeing a high number of fentanyl overdoses. Also, a concern for safety assessment workers going into homes and exposure to fentanyl.

Brandt adds that her statement about the CRP report was directed toward the quarterly reports and came from a quote from Director Cameron Gilliland noted that IDHW was

not actively working to get our reports to other stakeholders outside of IDHW, such as leadership in courts or law enforcement. Weir says that is an important piece that though they do pass along the information there is no requirement that they respond and she appreciates Brandt clarifying that point and perhaps that is a systemic change that could come from the CRP's.

CARTF discusses their thoughts on the CRP presentations, including seeking out data and information on concerns that are brought up and to get it quantified, systemic changes for data sharing, and training of CRP panels. Also, CARTF should review the annual CRP reports.

Executive Session: CARTF Open Seats

Tachell moves to go into executive session at 10:58 am to discuss changes to CARTF representation and open seats. Robertson seconds, all in favor, and so moved.

Tachell moves that CARTF comes out of executive session at 11:37 am, Robertson seconds, all in favor and so moved.

McDonald makes a motion to invite both candidates to attend one of the next meetings to hear from them, Bradford seconds, all in favor, and so moved.

McDonald makes a motion that we will also send future open seat notifications out to our subscriber list, Robertson seconds, all in favor and so moved.

NAAC Conference Representatives

Weir discusses this conference. It will be in August in Minnesota. Due to conflict with the child welfare review happening in the state, we are limited on the number of people from CARTF who can attend. Weir mentioned it will be in SLC in 2024 and CARTF wants to send CARTF to that conference. To go this year, we have to wait for the NAAC to send the discount invite out which will cover one person for free and then send another at a discounted rate. Wickard, Pittman, and Tachell are all interested.

Legal and Judicial Survey Results

Vance shares results of survey and power point presentation. Went out to over 1100 legal and judicial professionals and had a 20% response rate.

Regarding MDT numbers and issues, McDonald wonders if it would be a good idea to have some legislation that would allow county prosecutors to delegate the MDT oversight to someone else. One of the reasons cited for not having an MDT is because of time constraints. Would also like to provide a template for written protocols to help MDTs.

Subcommittee Updates:

Legislative- Vance and McDonald updates on the bills we are following, to include the parental rights bill and the false or malicious reporting bill.

Weir mentions that there was a rules rewrite for the department, mostly a reduction of some things. Removed some licensing standards for certification but added some national standards for foster care license. Also had a change in the number of children who can be in a foster care home to 6 children total, with an allowance for exceptions, to allow sibling groups to be together, to allow for former relationships, and to allow for families with specialized skill sets. Worked for a change for Idaho, when kids are placed with a foster parent out of state, Idaho releases jurisdiction to allow for the family in the other state to oversee the adoption, which is slowing down permanency. New legislation proposed will allow Idaho to have the adoption to be allowed to go through Idaho.

Grants- Peper states that the grant cycle is open, and we have not received any grants yet. Closes April 5th.

Publications- Peper gives update on last publication meeting. Discussed red book distribution and framework for that process.

Peper discusses the blue and green activity book and the possibility of creating an app from the book idea. Could work with U of I and incorporate a law student, computer tech student, and art student into the project. Very beginning stages.

Peper continues discussion of MDT Orientation Guide being done by Upper Valley CAC and that they will visit with publications subcommittee meeting on March 29.

Conference- Tachell states that we are moving forward with conference planning. Working on lining up speakers and Peper will then send out speaker's agreements. We have secured Judge Murray as moderator, who will meet with subcommittee on April 5. Almost have the hotel secured. Peper working on quotes for conference app, videographer, and AV tech support.

CFRT- Barton states that the research analyst has left and IDHW is now looking for a new analyst. Weir working with vital stats to make the pulling of reports a little bit easier and that seems to be working. Barton reports that the maternal death subpoena power is expiring this year and even with that, they still are struggling with getting records. Barton reports that it looks like the 2021 SUID numbers are only 2, down significantly from past years. About 4 years ago, CARTF and CFRT sponsored a coroner training about how to code SUIDs correctly and this seems to reflect that training. Will be a good idea to repeat that training in the future.

New Business

Wickard states that last year a bill was passed to switch the funding of public defending from the counties to the state. The bill for the plan is in committee. The bill will break up public defenders statewide by judicial districts. It proposes a transition team to be

formed, a head public defender in each judicial district, etc. Essentially shouldn't be much change at the local level but more systematic changes.

Weir covers the child and family service reviews, which are done at a federal level of each state to ensure conformity with federal requirements (tied to funding) focused on child safety, child and family well-being, and permanency. Looks at how states are achieving outcomes and how the state assisted those families. Starts with a state self-assessment, giving data and evidence to show how they are conforming to or not conforming to an area. Covers 36 areas. The Idaho statewide assessment is due June 27. Next piece is site reviews—these will include Ada County, Region 1, and Region 6. They will review 65 cases (45 foster care and 20 in home care). Will include reading files as well as several stakeholder interviews of all parties involved. It is a review of the system, not the case in relation to outcomes of the case. Will look at system level outcomes. Then as a result the Children's Bureau will decide if the state is in or is not in conformity. Any area that is not in conformity, they must come up with an improvement plan and given about 3 years to come into conformity.

Weir hopes that they can get more engagement at all three levels. In the first phase, collecting data in the 36 areas that are addressed on the self-assessment survey. Looking for people with lived experiences, panel discussions, etc. Also looking for case reviewers for the state side, who will work in partnership with a federal reviewer. Need other stakeholders involved to get a full picture for the assessment. Peper will send out the survey and if you are interested in helping, please take the survey and IDHW will reach out to you.

Adjourn

Next meeting will be April 7, 2023 in Pocatello.