

**Chafee Advisory Group Meeting
March 19, 2024
Minutes**

In Attendance: Niambi London, Jonathan Marsh, Arian Craig, Randi Mandelbaum, Nancy Andre, Patricia Jordan, Hailey D’Elia, Stephanie Mills, Konniesha Moulton, Anthony Cameli, Laura Albanese, Ashley Tartaglia, Kelly Nestor, Eleanor Gilliam, Rachel Barth, Alicia Ramirez, Candice Webb, Ifeanyi Pole, Daniela Guarda, Emel Altomari, Barbara Washington, KerryAnne Henry, Nicole Cedeno

Absent: Dan Rhoton, Mary Coogan, Vance Stephens, Safa Simmons

- Welcome & Introductions
 - a. Niambi announced that Jonathan Marsh is now serving as Co-Chair of the Chafee Advisory Group.
- Meeting minutes approval
 - a. The Chafee Advisory Group members didn’t note any edits for the December 14, 2023 Minutes; these Minutes were approved and will be posted on the DCF website.
- Data Presentation – Parenting Young People in Care (PYPIC)
 - a. DCF’s PYPIC survey was administered to parenting young Winter; 39 young parents participated in the survey.
 - b. Parents ranged from 18-26 years at the time they participated.
 - c. Most parents were 21-year-old mothers (8% Fathers; 92% Mothers)
 - d. Most parents identified as Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American.
 - e. Most parents identified as heterosexual or straight.
 - f. Most young parents (59%) held religious beliefs or values. Most identified as Christian, although nearly one-third did not have religious values or beliefs.
 - g. One-fifth of parents reported having less than a high school level of education. About half reported that they earned a high school diploma or GED. Few parents achieved a college degree (18%), and less were actively pursuing a college-level education (15%).
 - h. Most young parents did not identify with a medical or psychological disability or impairment.
 - i. The mean average age of first-time parents was 18.38 and 39% of participants became parents as minors.
 - j. 39% of participants reported having more than one child.
 - k. More than half of the respondents had been homeless or unstably housed as young parents.

- l. Of the 64% of parents who were employed in some capacity, most (56%) were part-time employees, and most (80%) worked over 20 hours per week.
 - m. Slightly over half of respondents denied that they utilize childcare services.
 - n. Most parents have been able to find childcare when they need it.
 - o. Finances were the most cited barrier to childcare access. Parents who had been unable to secure childcare in the past were 2.7 times more likely to report financial barriers when compared to those who had their childcare needs met.
 - p. Most parents reported having enough support and advice to make decisions that affects their child/children.
 - q. Parents in care identified income, housing, and food as their most important needs.
 - r. Nearly all parents denied CP&P involvement with their children.
 - s. Most parents and their children had health insurance, and few had health challenges.
- National Youth in Transitions Database (NYTD) Video
 - a. OAS shared the NYTD Data Bites video. The video highlighted data from youths' NYTD independent living services and NYTD surveys.
 - b. CAG discussed DCF's new housing programs.
 - c. KerryAnne Henry from DCF's Office of Housing shared that DCF launched the following two housing initiatives to support youth based on real-time data:
 - My First Place which offers shared housing
 - Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) which provides support services to young people to accompany their housing vouchers.
 - d. CAG members discussed DCF adding questions to future NYTD surveys to better inform youths' survey data.
 - OAS shared the NYTD follow-up survey is now available to youth online via SurveyMonkey.
 - Agency Spotlight – Kelly Nestor (NJ DCF - Division of Child Protection and Permanency)
 - a. Bergen South LO – The Wolfpack (team name)
 - b. The LO worked hard to create a different culture after research.
 - c. For the youth being a part of the Wolfpack events has made a difference.
 - d. The 4 areas of LO Focus:
 - e. Building informal supports
 - f. Modeling
 - g. Providing unconditional supports
 - h. The LO does enrichment activities (i.e. Habitat for Humanity, annual picnic, bowling, etc.)
 - i. Training & advocacy
 - j. The Unit meets once per week.
 - k. The LO created a “relaxation room”
 - l. The LO created an office for the young people; decorate the office for the holidays
 - m. The LO has a pantry and a clothes closet



- n. The LO created a youth Idea Board during their MVRs
- o. The LO sends out monthly newsletters about upcoming events and resources. Sometimes the youth share/contributes to the newsletters.
- p. The LO has monthly cooking classes.
- q. Recently started a Girls Group on Friday nights after work.
- r. The Bergen LO now have many youth who don't close their case at 18.

- 2024-2029 Chafee Plan

- a. Areas of Focus

- Children's Bureau Priority Goals

- Ensure Youth Leave Care with Strengthened Relationships, Holistic Supports, and Opportunities
 - Secure connections to loving adults who can guide them into adulthood after foster care (legal and relational permanency)
 - Access to financial literacy education
 - Access to supportive financial programs that lead to self-sufficiency
 - Provide robust services and supports (physical, mental health and well-being)
 - Normalcy – fully participate in activities at school and in community
 - Access to a range of housing options and supports – choice of what works best for the youth

- Social Determinants of Health

- Economic Stability
 - Education Access and Quality
 - Health Care Access and
 - Neighborhood and Built Environment
 - Social Community Context

- 2025-2029 Chafee/ETV Plan

- Youth Voice
 - Economic Stability
 - Social and Community Context
 - Healthcare Access and Quality
 - DCF is developing an Adolescent Learning Pathway

- Youth Voice

- Chafee Youth Ambassadors/Youth Consultants

- Chafee Survey
- Participation on workgroups/subcommittees
- Transition Planning

- Economic Stability
 - Bank Accounts
 - Individual Development Accounts
 - Financial Literacy/Education
 - Independent Living Stipend/Wraparound
 - Concrete Supports
 - LifeSet, PACES, Housing

- Social and Community Context
 - Connection
 - Website/platform
 - Cellphones
 - Normalcy
 - Concrete Supports
 - Enlightenment
 - Driving Program

- Health Care Access and Quality
 - Mental Health Services
 - Physical Health Services
 - Medicaid Coverage

- Education and Training Voucher
 - Post Secondary Education
 - Employment Training
 - Apprenticeships and Internships
 - Partnerships
 - NJ Foster Care Scholars Program
 - Apprenticeships

- OAS stated DCF's next step is to draft the 2025-2029 Chafee/ETV Plan by the end of March 2024.

- Closing
 - a. Volunteer for Agency Spotlight
 - The Chafee Advisory Group did not discuss this item.



b. Announcements, resources, etc.

- The Chafee Advisory Group did not discuss this item.

2024 Chafee Advisory Group Meeting Dates:
March 19th , June 4th , September 17th , and December 3rd

All ideas reflected are not endorsed by the agency.