



**Chafee Advisory Group Meeting
March 25, 2025**

Minutes

Attendees: Nancy R. Andre, Anthony Cameli, Arian Craig, Hailey D'Elia, Filomena DiNuzzo, Patricia Jordan, Niambi London, Jonathan Marsh, Stephanie Mills, Kelly Nestor, Dan Rhoton, Stefani Thachik, Kasey Vienckowski, Emel Altomari, Rachel Barth, Alyssa Gonzalez, Kerry-Anne Henry, Ifeanyi Pole, Alicia Ramirez, Safa Simmons, Justin Wang, Candice Webb

Absent: Mary Coogan, Randi Mandelbaum

- I. Welcome & Introductions
- II. Meeting minutes approval
 - a. CAG members did not request edits to the drafted December 3, 2024 CAG Minutes. The December 3, 2024 CAG Agenda and Minutes will be posted on DCF's website.
- III. 2025-2029 Chafee Plan Discussion and Feedback - Break out Room Discussions
 - a. Youth Voice – Development of a Chafee Youth Survey
 - i. Emotional Social Support
 - 1. Survey needs to have questions that result in youths' accurate responses;
 - 2. Add survey questions about positive childhood experiences;
 - 3. Include a resiliency scale to the survey;
 - 4. Add questions that capture youths' feedback on provider programs;
 - 5. Survey should also collect feedback from CP&P workers;
 - 6. DCF would like this to be an annual survey for 13+ year olds;
 - 7. Jon and Justin will meet with the DCF Youth Council on April 2nd for their thoughts and feedback on the Chafee Youth Survey.
 - b. Economic Stability – Banking and financial literacy
 - i. Youth need financial literacy.
 - ii. Financial literacy learning mechanisms:
 - 1. Financial literacy apps;
 - 2. Managing youths' bank accounts;
 - 3. Financial literacy tools should be youth friendly and direct.
 - iii. Identify literacy programs in youth's community.
 - iv. Connect with providers to see what financial literacy tools/programs they offer to youth.

- v. What financial literacy tools can be utilized within OAS?
 - vi. Identify banking institutions that can make financial literacy connections with youth.
 - vii. Establish financial outcomes with youth who receive the independent living stipend.
 - viii. Financial literacy is now a requirement in schools in New Jersey.
 - ix. Some DCF youth who receive a stipend are required to take financial literacy classes.
 - x. YJC also has an independent living curriculum for our residents which has a financial literacy component. There are free resources available.
- c. Social Connections – Foster Greatness or another app
- i. Help youth and young adults build and maintain connections with each other through a platform or application.
 - ii. One example shared was to plan in-person social connections events that invite youth to meet once a week and have dinner to connect with each other.
 - iii. Work with staff and schools to create a safe space for youth.
 - iv. Create an opportunity for engagement with the youth and families.
 - v. Promote advocacy and mentorship through different events.
 - vi. Create both in-person and virtual events for youth.
 - vii. Create programs for youth that are inclusive.
 - viii. Organize summit events for youth to connect.
 - ix. Keep in mind that the online chats on apps can lead to “dating” or “bullying.”
- d. Health Care – Healthy relationships, healing, access to services
- i. Look at restorative justice measures;
 - ii. Explore social and emotional curriculum;
 - iii. Focus on resilience and stress management;
 - iv. Discussed benefits of DCF’s Peer-to-Peer mentoring program for youth;
 - v. Consider resources for youth might be viewed as, “out of the box thinking”;
 - vi. Utilize mental health apps to support youth;
 - vii. Explore what health insurance companies could offer youth;
 - viii. Explore Medicaid reimbursable services for youth;
 - ix. If transportation is a barrier for youth, explore remote options;
 - x. Consider how wellness is marketed towards the youth;
 - xi. Explore the availability of wellness programs for youth.
- e. Equity – Race, Gender and LGBTQIA2+ - Data collection
- i. Include race, gender, LGBTQ data collection for youth;
 - ii. Work with youth to develop grievance reporting;
 - iii. Create a statewide Resource Guide that includes resources for all youth;
 - iv. Ensure communities that DCF’s data is collected to help and not harm them;
 - v. Explore legal services and therapy that is available free of charge via website;
 - vi. DCF service providers should communicate with youth using friendly language;
 - vii. Match youth with support people who have things in common so they may feel more understood.

- f. Housing –
 - i. Be aware and mindful of available housing options for youth;
 - ii. Share housing resource management info with youth;
 - iii. Discuss housing goals with youth and collect/manage this data;
 - iv. Share housing access info/resources with youth;
 - v. Prioritize youth building relationships different housing stakeholders;
 - vi. Build/develop youths’ housing goals and objectives;
 - vii. Develop youth housing data sharing.
 - g. Education – How to support youth in post-secondary education and employment training
 - i. Work with youth to help them plan their education goals;
 - ii. Collect data to ensure good outcomes;
 - iii. Identify with youth their current education status and help them plan their next steps toward achieving their educational goals;
 - iv. Assist youth with understanding the need for IEP during post-secondary education success;
 - v. CP&P Workers to assist youth in identifying their educational goals;
 - vi. When working with youth in foster care, it is important to be aware that a lot is happening at the same time for them.
- IV. Additional Information sharing and updates
- a. Next steps
 - i. DCF’s Chafee Plan will be executed over the next four years.
 - ii. DCF’s Chafee plan is posted on the DCF website.
 - iii. OAS will send info to CAG about Hudson Pride’s March 26th virtual meeting.
- V. Closing
- a. Volunteer for Agency Spotlight
 - i. None.
 - b. Announcements, resources, etc.
 - i. No announcements.

2025 Chafee Advisory Group Meeting Dates:

March 25, 2025

June 3, 2025

September 16, 2025

December 2, 2025

All ideas reflected are not endorsed by the agency.