SUBCOMMITTEE ON RACE POVERTY AND NEGLECT

Katherine Stoehr, Chair

November 25, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Attendance:
Katherine Stoehr, Department of Children and Families
Wendy Yallowitz, Department of Children and Families
Nydia Monagas, New Jersey Children's Alliance
Sonia Moticha, Department of Education
Larry Braasch, Department of Human Service
Natasha Johnson, Department of Human Services
Kayanne Foster, Lived Experience Expert Partnership (LEEP)
Lisa Drago, Cooper Health
Mary Coogan, Advocates for Children of New Jersey

Guests:
Dr. Susan Esquilin, Clinical Psychologist
Kimesha Kelly, Parent Committee
Kayla Rivera, Justin Wang, Department of Children and Families
Angela Phillips, Department of Children and Families

Staff:
Bethany D'Amelio, Department of Children and Families

Agenda Overview

1. **Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)**

   - Purpose: To evaluate New Jersey's compliance with federal requirements regarding children and families.

   - Components:

- The Statewide Assessment

- Onsite Reviews

- Program Improvement Plan Development

- Timeline: CFSR to be conducted every 5 years, the upcoming onsite review is scheduled for September 2025.

2. **Current Projects and Initiatives**

- Development of Training Curriculum: The subcommittee is preparing a draft outline for a curriculum focused on recognizing and reporting maltreatment.

- Focus on Stakeholder Engagement: Continual efforts are in place to involve a wide range of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of child welfare strategies.

3. **Issues and Solutions Explored**

- Addressing Child Poverty: The subcommittee is investigating measures to differentiate poverty from maltreatment in order to provide more tailored support to affected families. Strategies being considered include targeted interventions and collaborations with various community partners.

- Integrating Social Services: Enhancing the collaboration between agencies to ensure a more cohesive service delivery model.

Discussion Highlights

- **Data and Stakeholder Feedback**

  - The subcommittee is actively collecting data and preparing to engage with stakeholders to assess and address local needs.

  - Emphasis was placed on understanding the social determinants of family instability, including economic and racial disparities.

- **Program Improvement Planning**

  - A critical component of the meeting was dedicated to discussing the development of a comprehensive improvement plan, which will be formulated based on the CFSR findings and stakeholder input.

- **Next Steps**

  - Continue data collection efforts for the statewide assessment.

  - Identify required training and logistical requirements for the upcoming onsite review.

  - Engage in ongoing dialogue with stakeholders to foster transparency and inclusiveness.

Conclusion

The subcommittee is committed to improving the efficacy of New Jersey's child welfare systems. By leveraging data-driven insights and enhancing stakeholder collaboration, we aim to address the multifaceted challenges facing children and families across the state. Future communications will continue to inform the public of our progress and solicit input from all interested parties.

This memo aims to maintain transparency and provide the public with an overview of the task force's recent deliberations. The committee values community input and engagement as we collectively strive to enhance the welfare of children and families across New Jersey. This meeting report was prepared, in part, with the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

For further information or queries, the public can reach out via the contact channels provided by the Department of Children and Families.