



SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN

Richard Stagliano, Chair
Liza Kirschenbaum, Co-Chair

In compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Trenton Times and the Newark Star Ledger and posted at the Department of State, 125 West State St., 1st Floor, Trenton, New Jersey.”

**Please note the meeting was recorded for the transcription of minutes.*

October 16, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Richard Stagliano, Center for Family Services
Liza Kirschenbaum, CASA of New Jersey
Greta Anderson, Department of Children and Families
Nydia Monagas, New Jersey Children’s Alliance
Dr. Martin Finkel, NJ CARES Institute
Eileen Caracker, Forensic Nurse Coordinator
Svetlana Spiegel, Montclair University
Anthony Cameli, Families and Communities Together
Debbie Riveros, New Jersey Children’s Alliance
Judy Spinney, Public Member
Lorene Wilkerson, New Jersey Child Placement Advisory Council
Jennifer Underwood, Office of Community Services, OCA
Jack Auzinger, Lived Experience Expert
Ron Welsh, Dad’s Council
Jill Pniewski, Department of Children and Families
Dr. Cynthia Lischick, Forensic psychologist
Devin DeFoe, Partnership for Children of Essex
Michelle Renner, Catholic Charities
Juanita Brooks, PEI Kids

Staff

Bethany D’Amelio, Department of Children and Families

1. Introduction and Compliance

- Meeting initiated with the reading of the public notice.

2. Committee Structure Changes

- Transition from the Subcommittee on Protection to the Subcommittee on the Safety of Children.
- New leadership was established: Chair and Co-Chair positions were assigned to guide future proceedings.

3. Strategic Focus and Data Collection

- Emphasis on a multi-month data collection effort aimed at identifying primary focus areas, such as community education and system communication efficiencies.
- Utilization of recent data presentations to inform strategies. The focus included improving communication across child-serving systems.

4. Possible areas of Focus

➤ Departmental Collaborations

- Discussed enhancing collaboration with the Department of Education to ensure consistency in training, safety of children while in school settings and communication across school districts.
- Consideration of adding Education Department representatives to the committee to strengthen ties.

➤ Safety and Prevention Initiatives

- Deliberations ongoing and potential new safety initiatives like safe sleep guidelines and car seat checks.
- Suggestions to focus on emotional abuse awareness and training for family court judges.

➤ Public Involvement and Accountability

- Exploring ways to increase community responsibility for child safety through public engagement.
- Considering legislative approaches to enforce safety measures.

5. Recommendations and Outcomes

- The committee aims to propose actionable recommendations after thorough data analysis and discussion.
- Members encouraged to continue suggesting improvements and potential collaborations.

Future Meetings

The committee intends to hold meetings monthly to keep momentum and to address arising concerns promptly. Details of upcoming meetings will be communicated via official channels.

Closing Remarks

As we advance, the committee is determined to work collaboratively across various sectors to improve child safety and welfare.

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.