

NETWORK MEETING MINUTES

June 24, 2015

Attendees: 30 attendees (none on conference call)

Note taker: Connie Monahan

Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements:

- Members introduced themselves, their agencies, and how their work intersects with today's panel's theme of children who experience violence.
- Jennifer Rose introduced herself as the new Network Facilitator and shared her past experience and passion for the work of domestic and sexual violence.
- CE sign-in for counselors/social workers was passed around and members were encouraged to sign in for the minutes/reporting purposes.

Panel: Supporting children and youth who have been exposed to violence.

- **Dee Dee Stroud- All Faiths.** All Faiths houses the children's safe house in Bernalillo, Sandoval, and Valencia Counties. They provide forensic interviewing and close coordination with the co-responding agencies. They also support family members with counseling, home visitation, case management, skill-development, and therapy groups for both dads and moms. Serve over 2500 clients, respond to referrals from other agencies, take Medicaid and private insurance, can provide services to families regardless of whether a child receives the forensic interview. Licensed clinical staff are core to their services, as is trauma informed care.
- **Cynthia Florence- Children's Grief Center.** Their program serves children/youth ages 5-25 as well as family members when someone in the family dies (any reasons, not only homicide or suicide). They provide support groups/activities for children and family. Work closely with other programs and promote referrals, some children need individual counseling. Share space with the All Faiths campus. A lot of their work involves games/activities to allow children to talk and share with others of the same age who are experiencing comparable loss/grief. They have groups for specific ages (littles, middle, tweens, young adult, and adult). Have staff of four with more than 100 volunteers. They serve children from around the state during Sept-May (school year) but also host summer camps that are held around the state. They also have a library of resources open to the public.
- **Sergeant Rich Evans, Albuquerque Police Department Crimes Against Children Unit.** Investigate crimes – child homicide, suspicious deaths, SIDS, any time a child dies under 18 unattended (i.e. not in a hospital) as well as sexual abuse and physical abuse cases (children 13 and under) and when suspected offender is familial (18 and under). They work closely with other agencies (Para Los Ninos, CART, CARE, etc.) and very closely with CYFD. They receive approximately 1000 referrals a month. The CARE model (Child Abuse Care Evaluators) is new, works well, and is getting national attention as a way to provide advanced training to law officers.

- **Larry Kronen- Pegasus Legal Services for Children.** Pegasus represents kids from low-income families. Staff of four attorneys. Representation for young parents (through age 19) in custody and order of protection cases. Pegasus also assists kids who are on runaway status, and work with kids in abuse/neglect proceedings as GALs, etc. They do not represent kids in delinquency – that would be public defender. Works closely with YDI and other service providers. Represents youth who want to be emancipated. They also work with Special Ed litigation – when kids with special needs aren't getting the services that they should be getting from schools. The spillover from those cases is that Pegasus is often helping ensure the schools provide the services for other children. Represent kids within CYFD, serve as guardian ad-litem for kids up to age 14 (minors 14 and older get their own attorney) as well as kinship-guardianship program. The agency does policy work, children mental health rights, reproductive rights, etc.
- **Alexandria Taylor- Valencia Shelter Services.** They provide comprehensive dual services for both DV and SA cases, and are now moving into Child Advocacy. They want to provide services to children when they are young and in need and not wait until the child is an adult in crisis. A while back, the statewide DV Coalition added a focus to build capacity for child services and at the same time, the Governor was asking rural communities to build Child Advocacy Centers. Valencia Child Advocacy Center is a co-location center of agencies and services, including shelter, advocacy, mental health, clinicians, law enforcement, prosecution, etc. They serve an average of 76 families per month, serving over 1100 individual and families per year. They are taking on increasing children-specific services and building the protective capacities of families.
- **Sarah Blackwell- CYFD, Sandoval County Office.** Focus today on reporting for child abuse and neglect. In NM, every adult is a mandated reporter, even with just the suspicion of child abuse. You call the Statewide Central Intake number (1-855-333-SAFE or cell phone #SAFE) and provide as much specific information on the abuse that you have. You have choice of anonymity but even if you give your name, CYFD does not release your identity – rather they might call you back for additional info. For CYFD, it is helpful to give your name. Calls get prioritized: for priority 2 they have 5 calendar days to see the alleged victim; priority 1 they have 24 hours; and emergency call, they have 3 hours to see the child. SCI (Statewide Central Intake) is driven by protocol (background checks, handing off to staff, planning for investigation, etc.). They have 45 days to conduct investigation, with determination of substantiated or unsubstantiated based on the specificity of information to support. They can refer to community resources regardless of substantiated or not. They have a tiered response: first working with the family, then in-home services, and if that doesn't work, removal which becomes a legal case – they use “reasonable efforts” to intervene and support the family. In Sandoval County, there are seven investigators, and approximately 100 screened in reports per month.

Conclusion

- Consistent themes across the panelists: we each seem to work within our silos which isn't the best strategy; we don't know what the other agencies are doing; relationship building is very important; we don't always understand the rules and limitations of other agencies; families are complicated units.

Wrap Up:

- Next meeting is Wednesday, September 30th starting at 9:00 a.m.
- Website: <http://www.thenetwork-dvsa.org>.