

**Minutes of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee**  
**May 11, 2018**  
**Holland & Knight, 50 N. Laura St., Jacksonville, Florida**

**Present**

Chairman Buddy Schulz, The Honorable Suzanne Bass, the Honorable Brian Davis, Pamela Davis, Dr. Jeff Goldhagen, Shelley Grant, Marcus Haile, Gretchen Hamm, Elder Lee Harris, Bill Hodges, Alan Louder, Michael Meyers, Lara Nezami, Asst. Chief Deloris Patterson, the Honorable Jack Schemer, Nina Waters, Vicki Waytowich, Donna Webb

Committee is called to order at 9:09 a.m.

**Meeting**

SAO Juvenile Director Laura Lambert welcomes the room and thanks everyone for attending. Lambert outlines the next meeting, which will be the last formal meeting before the committee breaks into subcommittees to begin working. She introduces first guest, Dr. Ravoira.

Lawanda Ravoira, D.P.A., is President and CEO of the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center. She gives an overview of the DBWPC's research, advocacy, and model programs. She explains the goals of the program, why their focus is girls, and what the research says about girls who have been exposed or referred to the juvenile justice system. Ravoira stresses that the key to juvenile care is accurately identifying the individual's needs and then molding appropriate programs around those needs. One of the most prevalent and effective tools for risk and needs assessment is the Juvenile Assessment Intervention Strategy (JAIS). This tool indicates appropriate supervision and intervention strategies to wrap around the child. Ravoira emphasizes the advantages of the JAIS being used early on, in the intake process, in order to quickly discover underlying causes and concerns.

Robyn Cenizal and Michelle Hughes, both representing the Network for Strengthening Families, discuss the program and its benefits for the health and wellbeing of families. (See attached PowerPoint about the Network for Strengthening Families.) They state that family is the single most significant factor influencing the lives of children. For high-risk, low-resource families, the natural parenting process is often difficult, and it is these families NSF aims to aid.

Robyn discusses the Jacksonville NSF, which began by convening the community and holding a services needs assessment. This information was used to develop a program

and curriculum that would directly address the needs of this community. She discusses the basic change model, which focuses on changing paradigms to identify ways the people involved can follow through with their case plans and successfully increase family functioning.

Michelle discusses the Fresh Path program, which identifies the needs of families who have an incarcerated child. The program identifies a family's strengths and weaknesses in order to connect them with appropriate community resources. Anger issues, job loss or employability, substance abuse, and mental health were among the most self-requested services from referrals to the program.

Jacksonville parent Ingrid Harris shares her experience with her son going through a diversion program, his struggles prior to the program, during the program, and where he is now. Through diversion, her son was able to develop coping skills, talk about things bothering him through his counseling sessions, and now is doing better in school, with plans to join the military. She talks about the incredible benefits of her son having a mentor, someone outside of the family, to hold him accountable. She also details the frustration she encountered when trying to get her son tested for different educational deficiencies, such as dyslexia, through the school system.

### **Committee Discussion**

- Questions for Dr. Lawanda Ravoira about wraparound services:
  - Nezami asks about ACEs, correlation with juvenile justice involvement, and whether providers have to wait until children come into contact with the juvenile justice system or are expelled in order to administer the assessment. Ravoira offers that exact situation is why the DBWPC established a continuum of care and tries to start interaction at the elementary level. Nezami asks at what point it is necessary to get involved with a girl who has suffered a loss within her family or a loved one. Is there some way to incorporate the effect that prosecution may have on a child's family, so it does not just focus on the individual? Ravoira states that their case managers work very closely with attorneys and prosecutors who call to request case management strategies.
  - Meyers states that grief and loss play into children's emotional health and behavior. Although they are contributors, family involvement is crucial in the care for children. How do wraparound services encompass these factors? Ravoira states that the families can sometimes be the most challenging aspect in a case, because parents and families often carry intergenerational trauma. The DBWPC tries to assist in these situations, as well as long term.

- Goldhagen poses the question, how can we ensure these kids are not being re-traumatized by their experiences with these systems? Ravoira claims that service is not enough, and that policies need to be changed as well. In addition, agencies and service providers should be held accountable for the quality of their work. More evaluation and data is needed of these services, and the data should reflect the effectiveness of institutional changes. Services are not independent from policies and programs.
- Questions for Robyn Cenizal and Michelle Hughes about family services:
  - Dr. Goldhagen asks why physical and mental health were not listed as a self-requested services by families. Cenizal answers likely because these services are irrelevant until they fail. These families are so focused on providing that they do not spend much time or money on prevention; rather, treatment accounts for 95% of medical care.
  - Meyers asks if wraparound services always formal. How do these groups form? Is the goal of this committee to develop a program like these or are we trying to plug into and interact with the ones already developed? Is the SAO currently involved with the program? Cenizal suggests using existing resources through partner networks. Louder and Cenizal explain that the SAO is plugged into the program, but not as much as in former days, when it was better funded.
  - Waters inquires about the funding status of the program. Cenizal explains that the original NSF funding was through a combination of City, DCF, and grant monies lasting four years. It was housed first at Fresh Ministries, then briefly at Operation New Hope. Currently it is a standalone program, operating on only one grant through Fresh Ministries. The cost for the program materials is the only cost associated with administering the program.
  - Waytowich highlights the intensive mental health services that some unique families require. She states that Milwaukee utilizes a high fidelity wraparound model that is serving children with severe emotional distress well. There really is no “one size fits all” program. The goal of wraparound services is to develop a natural support network of resources so that the family will be able to achieve independence. Waytowich emphasizes the importance of diversion being tied to those services so that the relationship with wraparound resources exists at the end of the diversion process, and families know who to call.
- Questions for Ingrid Harris about her experience:
  - Asst. Chief Patterson notes that with a lot of programs, kids may have to already be in trouble in order to qualify to participate, rather than getting

plugged into programs before real trouble begins. She asks if this was the family's experience. Harris answers affirmatively, that it was very difficult to find a program for her son. She approached the school before his behavior issues began, but the school did not offer counseling services. Dropout Prevention services gave her information for the Youth Challenge Academy, and she independently sought services from Daniel Memorial for her son.

**Public Comment**

No public comment.

Laura Lambert closes the meeting by thanking committee members and visitors, and announces the date for the next meeting, on June 1. The June meeting will be extended an extra 30 minutes so that subcommittee instructions and next steps may be outlined.

Meeting is adjourned at 11:17 a.m.