

Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee Meeting Report

Meeting # 1

Date: July 28th, 3:30 – 5:00pm

Location: Great Hall of the State House

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Items
Welcome & Introductions <i>Secretary JudyAnn Bigby</i>	Secretary Bigby welcomed the Advisory Committee. Senators Berry, Flanagan, Rodrigues and Spilka as well as Representatives Khan, Malia, O'Day and Story and/or their staff were in attendance. Secretary Bigby gave those legislators that were present an opportunity to say a few words of greeting.	
Overview of Advisory Committee Mandate <i>Secretary JudyAnn Bigby</i>	Secretary reviewed rationale for Committee as well as its broad mandate and expectations regarding the final deliverable: a report with recommendations for improving child, youth and family services in the Commonwealth due by the end of the calendar year.	
A Parent's Experience <i>John Laing, Parent & Advisory Committee Member (introduced by Commissioner McClain)</i>	<p>Commissioner Angelo McClain introduced John Laing, a parent, a businessman, and a parent advisor to the Department of Children and Families.</p> <p>John Laing shared the difficulties that he and his wife experienced trying to work with human service agencies in the Commonwealth to obtain services for his child and family. He emphasized that despite being a relatively wealthy, well-informed and engaged parent, he struggled to get the answers and services he and his child needed from the agencies with which he interacted. He experienced being bounced from one agency to another, feeling that no agency wanted to address the "whole" family or the "whole" child. He felt that his point of view about the treatment plan and services needed in his family was not given ample consideration. He experienced being kept at arm's length by the system despite being a caring and responsible father and cited this as a barrier to effectively meeting his family's needs.</p>	

<p>Key Issues for the Committee's Review <i>Brittany Butler, Harvard Kennedy School Intern</i></p>	<p>Brittany Butler thanked Advisory Committee Members for completing pre-meeting survey (number of respondents as of meeting date > 30).</p> <p>She briefly reviewed the themes reflected by answers to Question #2 on the survey, which asked Committee Members to list and prioritize the top five most important issues for the Advisory Committee to address in making recommendations to improve child, youth and family services in the Commonwealth.</p> <p>Each small round table (6-9 people per table) was asked to discuss these themes and then provide a brief report back to the larger Committee.</p>	
<p>Report Back on Key Issues <i>Advisory Committee Members</i></p>	<p>Report back highlights and suggestions from small group discussions of key issues:</p> <p>Improve coordination/collaboration of systems and services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current system can create repetitive and disconnected experience for families ○ Work with other departments – especially schools, but also some said housing and police ○ Put family health centers in schools ○ Think of the kids as “all our kids” ○ One big challenge: local level coordinating with state level ○ Organize services by geographic region ○ Consider one agency model ○ Benefits of a one case manager per family model vs. the challenges of one person providing such a variety of different services effectively vs. balanced approach where one person conducts intake only but not case management <p>Allow information-sharing when appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include information about families across all domains at intake to better serve them ○ Digitize records ○ Promote data-sharing while taking privacy concerns into consideration 	

<p>Report Back on Key Issues cont'd. <i>Advisory Committee Members</i></p>	<p>Standardize practices and definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consistency across system is important ○ One application across systems ○ Define regions the same way across agencies ○ Universalize language across systems ○ Increase use of evidence-based or evidence-informed practices <p>Focus on family engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include/involve voice of people who use services ○ Solicit needs from families ○ Currently family voice often goes unheard 	
<p>Stakeholder Engagement Strategies <i>Assistant Secretary Marilyn Chase</i></p>	<p>Assistant Secretary Chase briefly reviewed responses to Question #3 from survey, which asked Advisory Committee members to identify “voices that we should make a special effort to include.” Detailed responses are included in data handout. She asked Committee members to continue to make recommendations regarding how to engage these populations, particularly those who are difficult to reach or whose voices are rarely heard (e.g. people with Limited English Proficiency, etc.). We are willing to host public meetings, focus groups, etc. to reach these populations.</p>	<p>Send suggestions for how to engage voices that are rarely heard.</p>
<p>Next Steps <i>Assistant Secretary Marilyn Chase</i></p>	<p>Next Advisory Committee meeting: August 18th, 3:30-5:00 pm.</p> <p>Location later announced as John Adams Courthouse at 1 Pemberton Square, 2nd Floor, Conference Suite 1, Boston, MA.</p> <p>New survey will be provided by EOHHS between this meeting and next, seeking input on potential working groups.</p> <p>More information about what other states are up to and a list of child serving agencies in the Commonwealth will soon be made available for reference.</p>	<p>Complete survey before next meeting.</p>

<p>Next Steps <i>Assistant Secretary Marilyn Chase</i></p>	<p>Committee will determine working groups and working group chairs at next meeting. Committee Members encouraged to think about who might sit on working groups.</p> <p>For upcoming meeting agendas and report of prior meetings, visit new HHS webpage: www.mass.gov/hhs/childservices</p> <p>Send email comments to: ChildrensProposal@state.ma.us</p>	
<p>Closing Remarks <i>Secretary JudyAnn Bigby</i></p>	<p>Secretary thanked the Committee for their attendance and their excellent work during the meeting. She asked for feedback about the process thus far.</p> <p>Some mentioned that acoustics in the Great Hall were difficult. Representative Story expressed appreciation for the inclusion of Mr. Laing's experience in the opening remarks. Others suggested including more representatives from schools, given the number of comments about coordinating with school systems. Another person suggested including more employee perspectives going forward.</p>	