



COUNTY OF HUNTERDON NEW JERSEY

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION MENTAL HEALTH BOARD



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- REFERENCE:**
- Council
 - Mental Health
 - Youth
 - Disabled
 - Substance Abuse
 - Transportation

Draft to be approved September 6, 2023

YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, July 12, 2023 12:30 p.m.
Via Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

K. Stoskus	S. Becker
F. Brown	L. Gudino
L. Ranieri	C. Douglass
M. O'Reilly	K. Omoifo
J. Collevchio*	M. Roussas*
M. Scherer	A. DeLuca
A. Villano	K. Conyers
D. Paneque	A. Jackowski*
K. Harris	D. Amos

EX-OFFICIO

K. Schwenderman

STAFF

D. Childers

GUESTS

J. Keebler
E. Kesler

*Designees

- I. "This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21. Notice of this meeting has been provided in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier News. A public notice announcing this meeting has also been placed in the lobbies of the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services, the first floor of the Main Street County Complex, 71 Main Street Building #1, Flemington, NJ; the first floor of the Route 12 County Complex, Building #3, 314 State Route 12, Flemington, NJ and County Clerk's Office."

PURPOSE: The Commission shall serve as an advisory committee to the Human Services Advisory Council and to the Board of County Commissioners to maximize provision of assistance to youth and their families, and to promote prevention programs that enhance the building of competencies and positive development of children and youth and reduce the likelihood of juvenile delinquency and other socially unacceptable behaviors.

F. Brown opened the meeting.

- II. **MINUTES:** A motion was made by L. Ranieri to approve the meeting minutes of May 3, 2023. F. Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **Hunterdon County Data Sample:** D. Childers reported on the current data samples and information that would typically be used to identify services needs for the Comprehensive 3-Year Plan. She's reviewing what data is available to see if we can ascertain any type of information as to what the needs are in Hunterdon County. There is specific information that the JJC would like for us to focus on and currently she's still waiting on for the documents to be released. D. Childers requested if any agency has data or knows of youth specific information relating to service needs, to please let her know.

J. Collevechio asked if D. Childers was looking for additional data sources for the needs or actual needs that may not be included?

D. Childers responded that the document lists statistics that are available or that have been used in the past. Unfortunately, some information is either no longer collected or collected in a new format that omits relevant information, i.e., NJ Uniform Crime Report. The commission needs to gather as much information as possible including general demographics, serves that youth are receiving or need, etc. Without this data, it may be difficult to identify service needs for our community, so collecting as much data as possible is important for planning.

D. Childers advised that typically in the past Prevention Resources has been able to provide additional information from the Middle School Risk and Protective Factors. J. Collevechio advised she would check the Middle School data because it would be for the year 2021.

D. Childers explained that any information that could be provided from 2018 to 2022 would be helpful. During the last 3-year cycle 2018 was the last year used so typically that year carries over to the next cycle.

D. Childers advised there are some areas of Hunterdon that have higher needs than other areas. The newly designed NJ Statewide Student Support Service (NJ4S) Network provided data that ranks school districts by high, moderate, and low areas of needs. If NJ4S is supposed to be focusing on the high need areas that would be an opportunity for the County to look at the moderate to low need areas to see if any service gaps exist.

D. Childers conveyed that right now a few entities are in planning phases, so sharing available data can offer an opportunity to collaborate. The last time the commission did a 3-year planning cycle was during Covid.

J. Cassano advised two categories under additional data that she thinks the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board might be able to assist with are alternative education program data as well as unemployment rates.

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Current Trends:** D. Childers reported Human Trafficking will be the topic this month. As many of you know, a new movie is out called The Sound of Freedom, which addresses Human Trafficking. One service area that FCIU is responsible to address is for handling Human Trafficking for youth under the age of 18. Would this topic be something anyone would like to discuss or are there any suggestions about having an outside source come in and give a presentation on this subject? J.

Collevecchio shared that bringing in someone to do a presentation on Human Trafficking would be a great idea. Somerset County recently had a presentation, it was very informative and educational as many may not know the extent and depth of this problem. Discussion ensued.

F. Brown reported around Flemington there's been a drastic increase of those walking around that appear to be suffering from some type of mental illness. There has just been a big influx of some troubled people in our area. Has anyone observed that?

C. Douglass reported she 100 percent agrees as she sees so much of that both in the Town of Clinton and just many walking on Route 22 near Lebanon. D. Childers asked if there is any specific behavior that you are noticing? F. Brown advised one of the individuals in Flemington who continually talks to himself, has hand gestures, and screams at people for absolutely no reason. I know several times Flemington Borough Police have taken him to Hunterdon Medical Center and he gets back on his medication, and then he is released. I think our government is lacking in taking care of those with mental illness. Discussion ensued.

B. Community Engagement: D. Childers reported in May the Youth Services webpage was redesigned and updated on the Hunterdon County website. The webpage is located under the Department of Human Services, which includes information on all the divisions that Human Services oversees. This is a work in progress, basic information about the Youth Services Commission (YSC) such as meeting information, funds and services that are offered. In addition, YSC funded program information was included as well as resource links. If anyone has any suggestions or feedback, please contact D. Childers.

F. Brown asked if the committee members could be included on the webpage? D. Childers advised this would be possible – the required membership slots and current members would be listed.

V. AGENCY UPDATES/NEWS:

E. Kesler introduced herself as the Family Engagement Specialist for Hunterdon County CFRS with Norwescap. E. Kesler conveyed to the committee that in July Norwescap does an annual Community Needs Assessment. They treat this as an environmental scan to understand and collect information in the following areas: service gaps and needs; barriers in concern to childcare; various constraints impacting childcare services; and influences impacting quality of care in Hunterdon County. The assessment is bilingual and is online via a QR code that she will post the link for the form in the chat.

J. Cassano, Greater Raritan Work Force Development Board, reported a summary on the Summer Employment Program. The program is funded through a State Grant through the Department of Labor for Youth between the ages of 16 and 24. The Work Force is serving 74 youth with 38 employers. Hunterdon County is serving 9 youth with 7 employers, which is an improvement over last year. We are looking forward to reaching out to more youth and employers for next year's program. The program for 2023 will end in October.

J. Collevecchio, Prevention Resources, she mentioned from May 2, 2023's meeting that the Safe Communities Coalition was looking into meeting the new marijuana dispensaries that have opened. J. Collevecchio reported she had visited Union Chill in Lambertville recently. The Union Chill staff were very receptive of the lock it up campaign, where Prevention Resources can provide lock boxes to encourage anyone who is purchasing the recreational marijuana, if they are over the age of 21, to promote safe keeping. This helps by reducing access and availability to families, children and pets that are getting into these products.

Prevention Resources is scheduling an event in September 2023 where there will be a presentation on the harms of high-level THC concentrates to our youth and their developing brains as well as promoting the lock it up campaign. We will be supplying individuals with a lock it up logo that they can display. Discussion ensued.

A. Jackowski introduced herself as the new Juvenile Probation Officer for Hunterdon County.

D. Amos introduced herself as the new Tri-County CMO rep. She stated Linda Zimmerman retired at the end of last year and she will be representing Tri-County CMO. Tri-County has an event next week, Autism Cooks. The event is with Fox and the Hound in Lebanon NJ. The Chefs are donating their time to host a cooking class for youth enrolled in the CMO who have Autism or a DD diagnosis.

K. Omoifo introduced herself as the Assistant Chief of Probation in Hunterdon County. K. Omoifo advised she took over for Julie McKean.

VI. **REPORTS:**

- A. **Children's Interagency Coordinating Council (CIACC):** L. Gudino reported they will be partnering with the Harvest Family Success Center. They have two back to school events happening in August so we are going to see how we may be able to be part of it. Last year we assisted in purchasing lunch boxes that they were able to give to families and we wanted to collect some feedback for services in the area.
- B. **Department of Children and Families – Children's System of Care (CSOC):**
- i. **Tri-County Care Management Organization (CMO):** D. Amos reported currently having 937 youth enrolled in the CMO. In the beginning of the year, the numbers were rising and right now they are steady and will remain steady for the summer. 139 of the Youth are from Hunterdon County which equals 15 percent of the 937. Most of the Youth are being referred from Flemington, Annandale, and Clinton. In terms of diagnosis, we are seeing the primary diagnosis as ADHD, Adjustment Disorder and Development Disorder.
 - ii. **Tri-County Family Support Organization (FSO):** M. Roussas reported having their life savers support group and youth partnership group currently running.
 - iii. **Tri-County Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS):** L. Gudino reported for June 2023, 13 Dispatches in Hunterdon County out of the Tri-County total of 83 dispatches. The highest referral sources were schools and parents. The most common age range for service requests continue to be 6-12 and 13-18. Trends include Youth Suspected Substance Abuse, Verbal and Physical Aggression towards parents and guardians, and symptoms of Anxiety and Depression.
- C. **N.J. Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P):** M. Scherer reported for June 2023 in Hunterdon County the local office is working with 202 Children, 10 Youth in placement and received a total of 46 referrals. 38 of the referrals were of Abuse and Neglect and 8 were Child Welfare referrals.
- D. **N.J. Juvenile Justice Commission (NJJC):** K. Schwendeman reported that the counties are waiting for the release of the plan and application. The documents should be out at the end of July, and we are going to push the due date back to mid-November.

- E. **School-Based Youth Services (SBYS)**: K. Stoskus reported having two summer programs currently active. The Hampton Public School summer program, which is 3 days a week, has had a good turnout this year. We currently have 25-30 students per day, and we were able to get several presenters and activities running for this year. The summer program will continue through August. This year North Hunterdon and Voorhees School District are conducting a Freshman Orientation program for the incoming Freshman. The program will run for 3 weeks at North Hunterdon High School and 3 weeks at Voorhees High School and that will continue through August as well.
- F. **Family Crisis Intervention Unit (FCIU)**: No Report.
- G. **Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI)**: D. Childers reported Hunterdon has a new Research and Reformed Specialist, Elizabeth Gronowski. Hunterdon submitted a letter on June 1, 2023, advising JJC that we will not be applying for 2024 Innovations Funding. Our goal is to be able to apply in 2025. We currently do not have all the information necessary to apply in 2024.

VII. ADJOURN:

There being no further business, the meeting of July 12, 2023 was adjourned. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 12:30 pm via Microsoft Teams.