

11/6/15 SRJW

Bill Rivera stated Judicial would be joining the SRJW meetings  
Jen Agosti is doing well and although absent, we're in her thoughts and she in ours.

Introductions

Committee Reports

Vannessa reported that the commissioner mandated that we have to develop strategies to address performance expectations, primarily PE 3

SOLNIT presented their strategies to address PE 3 (see handout)

There is an over representation of Black and Hispanic youth in the facility. We have to start separating specifics (ie. juvenile justice admissions) out of SOLNIT's admissions process. We don't control the front door, so the question is, do these kids need our level of care, as we don't control referral sources. Comparisons to the Medicaid population would be made as well.

Length of stay- From Q 1 to Qtr 2 there wasn't much variance. A high percentage of girls go to TFC. Length of stay for White and Hispanic children is same, whereas the length of stay of Black kids is a bit longer.

Discharge destinations- Caucasian kids are being discharged home more often than other races. The reasons why have yet to be determined.

Inpatient Units- There is an over representation of Black and Hispanic kids, while Caucasian kids are under represented.

With respect to restraints, Black kids are being restrained at a much higher rate than other races. White boys are getting DBT therapy and Black kids noticed the segregation in the program. SOLNIT administration and staff took a hard look at these realities and questioned how they could address the systemic and individual needs of children. SOLNIT staff have researched literature regarding restraints. When threat of risk is imminent, there's no variance regarding rate of restraint. The perception of threat leans overwhelmingly toward Black youth being a threat. This is a point of discussion that hopefully would shed light on what needs to happen to improve the situation.

Bill pointed out that the perception of threat increased with staff who weren't present on a regular basis. The decision making process of staff is being scrutinized in order to effectuate better outcomes for the children at SOLNIT

Vannessa pointed out that the data was difficult to process but necessary for all to consider in order to address and eliminate inequities in our psychiatric facilities. Vannessa questioned how length of stay would be categorized, at which point the Director of SOLNIT stated that there is a high level of care but there are

external factors that would influence discharge. Michael Williams stressed the irony of the fact that our efforts to be equitable often have the opposite effect.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Workforce:

THE Language Utilization Survey is complete. The question remains as to how come staff are leaving DCF or transferring. Committee members are looking at the exit survey. Why isn't it done? What other exit surveys are other agencies using? We must tweak our survey for those leaving and transferring, adding a RJ component to look at patterns. The mid November meeting was to look at data with the hope of presenting findings. It was discovered that there has been More done by DCF facilities than regional offices. Interviews are usually given to DCF exits, not always for transfers. Bill asked about caseload allocation regarding the Language Utilization Survey. Tracy Davis stated that the Union would have to be involved when considering compensation for speaking another language. The goal was for area offices to consider service provision and to look at the translation service, training staff or training providers in order to have better services. Fernando encouraged the committee to provide suggestions to explore options to provide a stipend for bi-lingual staff. Fernando doubted there would be traction, but encouraged the question be asked. Bill stated South Carolina requires that bi-lingual staff have to be certified that they know how to speak their other language. If there would be stipend, there would probably be a standard required for those individuals. Mike Williams asked that we talk to our providers about this issue.

### Policy and Practices

Yadira has met twice, looking at the priorities and the charter, which is a work in progress. The committee looked at SIU policy, and looking at a co-chair. Bill thanked Yadira for getting that done prior to the policy being reviewed.

### Community

Gail reported that brown bags are happening to bring awareness to staff. Region 5 held a meet and greet to their Hispanic coalitions. A Power Point presentation was conducted on 10/20/15. Danbury and Waterbury groups will meet next week about what they want from the SRJW in terms of how to approach future partnerships. Region 5 resolved that everything would be presented in Spanish during the meetings with their Hispanic coalitions. SOLNIT was also recognized for their innovation regarding the Spiritual Life Center. They have wide faith-based participation and it is open to SOLNIT residents. The group is non-denominational, and all are welcome. Community groups present to staff, usually faith based topics. The group has also partnered with True Colors as some boys have identified as female. RAC meetings, the DAT, and RJ teams are being used to spread the word about our racial justice efforts. Bill mentioned that there would be a Juvenile Justice focus in the racial justice work of the regions and facilities. Racial justice slides are in the mandated reporter training. Chrichton reported preliminary data from

Careline. The challenge is getting information regarding race and ethnicity data of the reporters. Chrichton continues to compile the data. Yadira questioned the outcomes of the reports. Bill pointed out that we wanted to target interventions within communities, hence the ask of race and ethnicity info from mandated reporters. Yadira stated that we have to ask the questions in order to obtain accurate information.

Carmen from Reg. 4 reported that they're working on developing a tool to help workers open the conversations about race and ethnicity. People confuse race and ethnicity. They're working on a draft copy of what the tool would look like. A map of the countries of the world might be in the tool, could be in the form of a brochure. There isn't training, according to Bill, about how to identify race and ethnicity. Tools of how to engage, and the differences between race and ethnicity would be posted on Bill's website in January of 2016

#### Contracts and Procurement

Mike stated that the questions presented for RFPs were approved. Now working on the contract language with Judicial. DCF would appropriate some of Judicial's contract language. Bill stated that the cultural competence information would be presented to all RFPs moving forward.

#### Academy

Tracy Davis reported that Jodi Hill-Lilly is looking at how regions are addressing PE3. Reg. 1 is exploring ways to make their leadership more diverse, as all of their leadership is white. Jodi is going to schedule a meeting with the chairs and co-chairs of the sub-committees. The Reg. 1 Regional Administrator acknowledged the lack of diversity and he actively sought help from the academy. Staffing can't happen based on sheer numbers. We have to assure that our practice is free of racial bias, whether diverse or non-diverse staff, we must have racial justice and equity. Mike W. went on to state that a concern has arisen regarding data clean up on racial coding in LINK. There's a huge spike in the MLT racial designation. Fixing the disparity by changing the category is being explored. It was reported by Carmen that in her experience, people are identifying as multiracial. When people identify more than one race, MLT is the choice. Bill stated that the administration is trying to make this process easier. Debi Freund reported that DAS has rejected the idea of MLT as a category. Vanessa stated that the CRM race definitions are different than what the intake workers have. It's important that the race categories match. Fernando stated that there must be consistency in how we identify race in LINK.

Andrew Ludwig, Bill's intern, presented data. SFY 15 race disparity and disproportionality data will be updated soon. US census projections would be a baseline. There's not been much change in the disproportionality report. Bill stated that this data is available on Share Point, and that we're looking at making this data accessible to the public. The public wouldn't / shouldn't have access to identifying information. There is a CIP slide that isn't being used in an official capacity. Each bar would be able to be broken down into its own bar graph. The information

would be available by the end of November 2015. All data will be complete by end of Jan 2016.

Dr. Caraballo reported that she and Dr. DeJesus are working on a project. She stressed that other states would want to replicate CT efforts. Dr. Caraballo stressed that we must document the buy in, and birth of this effort. Dr. Caraballo asked for permission to do an ethnographic study consisting of a record of everyone's story about how this effort took shape. IRB request made to DCF to move this project forward. Dr. Caraballo asked for the team's blessing. Bill stated that there was a meeting with Dr. DeJesus regarding this project. Finished product possibilities were discussed, i.e. white paper, published article, etc... There would be an editing process. Mike W. emphasized that the commissioner would have to give her blessing before we could move forward. Dr. Caraballo offered any assistance to move the process forward. We looked at Texas and California's racial justice chronicles and it would be a good opportunity for Connecticut to do the same.

Break

Next meeting date would be on January 22, 2016 at Value Options' Hartford Room in Rocky Hill.

The group watched the Bryan Stevenson Ted Talk: We Need To Talk About An Injustice

Bill R. reported that Juvenile Justice hasn't been looked at so far, thus the Community Sub-committee would be responsible for this, i.e. disproportional minority contact. Someone from Juvenile Justice must be on the local racial justice teams. Steve from Juvenile Justice would present data at the next SRJW meeting. It was reported that courts commit delinquent in order to get kids treatment to which the court doesn't have access. Yadira stated that the adolescent COP is involved in these efforts.

There was a discussion about Bryan Stevenson's Ted Talk as it related to our practice with the juvenile justice population. Exploration of family loyalties (take the good and leave the bad), reframing, access to the resources needed to live (internal and external), the power of words as it relates to identity, we have to allow our compassion and passion for justice to emanate in our interactions with the juvenile justice population, we must accentuate the positives amongst our juvenile justice population, we have to ensure that our system breeds success not failure, look at the history as it relates to where our youth are now to help shape their future, call out injustices whenever appropriate, look at racial inequities / lack of diversity in DCF's management.

Vannessa emphasized the positive of SRJW's collaboration with community providers and adjourned the meeting.