

5/13/15 Statewide Racial Justice Team Meeting

Introductions

Bill encouraged the workgroup members to review minutes prior to posting on the DCF website. It was recommended that the statewide team's minutes be sent to providers.

Regional Updates

Jen informed the team that the Community Kickoff would be on June 17th at Solnit South. We must think about what we want to tell the providers regarding our racial justice activities throughout DCF. We would identify those participants who would attend prior to the end of the meeting.

Natasha informed the group that offices within the region came together for three objectives and are doing the American Denial. Dr. DeJesus would be coming to Region 4. Natasha added that there is a community provider on their QI team, who has embraced the RJ work and provided positive contributions.

Reg. 5 Dr. DeJesus presented for the region and discussed potential work to come to integrate in the region. Dr. DeJesus would also present to region five's management set. Jodi clarified Dr. DeJesus' role as a contracted provider/trainer. Contact Tim Moynihan of the Academy to see about getting him to speak. Dr. DeJesus's work centers around cultural humility and talking about race as it relates to child welfare. We have to think about how this work could be attached to DCF staff outcomes. July 1 June 30 is the contract period for Dr. DeJesus. It is the hope that DCF could partner with universities to do this work. Mike Williams reported that Dr. DeJesus has been invited to be a part of the RJW. Yadira asked how do we connect Dr. DeJesus' training to CO's work? Jodi stated that there would be multiple opportunities for Dr. DeJesus's training through various mechanisms. LAMM received the training but other CO staff has not. Jodi stated that the facilities and CO has yet to be offered the training, but would be presented with the opportunity when given the performance expectations. Dr. DeJesus has spoken at a variety of DCF events, i.e. Hisp Her. Month and the Mentoring Program. Dr. DeJesus has been well received and does well when partnered with and given a context in which to direct his presentation.

Region 1 completed the Color of Justice training in the three offices, but need to do an additional training. Bpt. community collaborative received the RJ presentation. Mike has to follow up with the Academy about the RJ slides for the mandated reporter training. (Talk to Vanessa Dorante about getting the RJ slide info.) Mike did the M&M game at the presentation to the collaborative group and it was well received. Bill stated that all of this information is on the DCF website. Mike is moving forward with the mandated reporter training as the next step.

Ofc. of Performance and Management.

Mike Williams reported that all regions were given the performance expectations and performance measures. It was decided that we would publicly promote what we are doing in the area of RJ. Mike displayed race, disparity data that would be accessible to the public. The examples showed the dramatic gap between AF Amer and White re. children in DCF care, as there are significantly more Black. Mike showed data that kids going into secured facilities is raising, with Hisp. being the highest. Mike noted that the group is contributing to this through local and regional work. Gail Walton suggested that the data be posted on the provider tab on the DCF website. Additional data would be posted shortly.

Reg. 2

Nedra reported that they are working on a worksheet to look at data in different outcome measures as it relates to RJ. Monica's LAMM questions were provided to staff and given training on how to discuss it with families. LINK clean up re. unk race to be updated with accurate information. There was discussion with the management team regarding the CRM facilitator asking about cultural barriers, however the questions have to be vetted. Bill inquired about the outcome of the question. Nedra stated that would happen in the pree meetin. Vanessa suggested Monica's questions be included in the teaming continuum. Nedra voiced a question about FASU involvement in the racial justice work

Change Management

Two pieces of work going through 5 COP's interpreters and translators and survey that providers would send to staff to inquire about the experience. The goal is to look at contracts and other ways to integrate into the plan. Lang and Culture questions were raised. Were there any barrier in lang and culture in engaging families. Questions should be separate, per staff perspective. Re. I and T's, Yadira stated that monolingual workers are challenged working with landT. How does worker's discomfort with land T affect the families and the data we see. Using co-workers is not allowed. Yadira questioned do we know our staff. It's important to take inventory of the staff before we go out into the community. There is a survey being developed to learn about our staff as it relates to community engagement. How do we deal with the challenges of working with the community and the data

REg. 6

Got survey results back re. Color of Justice. Staff wanted adtl. opportunities to have RJ discussions to talk in smaller groups. Looking at helping supervisors frame RJ questions in supervision.

Region 3.

Ryan reported that Norwich Office social worker Gail Hooper developed a power point presentation geared toward training pre and post licensed foster parents, as well as post adoptive parents about racial justice. The presentation was vetted by the Region 3 RJW and has been presented to a group of post adoptive parents, who've adopted transracially, and to a group of post licensed foster parents. Both presentations were well received. The group suggested that the presentation be vetted by the Statewide Racial Justice Workgroup for other regions to use.

Willimantic is hosting a re-certification training for mandated reporter trainers, followed by a tutorial regarding the racial justice slides. The purpose is to help trainers feel comfortable presenting the racial justice information to the community and to assist trainers with handling pushback from providers. Early feedback reports indicate that some providers aren't happy about having to disclose their race to the Careline. As such, trainers must be able to explain the shift in DCF practice.

Ryan reported that Region 3 had Racism of the Well Intended training this month. The training was impactful and useful with respect to honing DCF staff's cultural competence skills. Jodi stated that the Academy would consider contracting the presenters so that all regions could have the training. Bill has the facilitators' contact information, as does Ryan.

It was further reported that Region 3 has taken on a project in which Kid Pix would be displayed in the respective offices. The pictures of our committed children would be placed in areas not open to the public so as to maintain confidentiality. The Norwich Office has displayed their Kid Pix, with the heading "What Does My Permanency Look Like?" The Middletown and Willimantic Offices are compiling their Kid Pix to be displayed. Jenn suggested that the project be titled, "The Color of Placement", which

everyone agreed was on target. The group agreed that there be a fluid exchange of information and ideas between regional offices and facilities in order to further DCF's racial justice work.

Yadira suggested that racial justice data slides, as well as Monica's questions be given to staff. Jodi suggested we also go back to the data and discuss with all DCF employees because people are at different places regarding racial justice.

Tara needs somebody to chair the Policy and Practice Subcommittee. Those interested should contact Bill who would cc Tara

Tracy passed out Lan. and Utilization Survey. To assess the needs of our non English speaking family and needs of our bi-lingual staff. Tracy stated that we had to take a look at how comfortable staff is with talking about race and if the discussions are happening. Survey data indicates that Staff use coworkers for translation rather than providers. We also found that bi-lingual staff don't feel supported and feel like they do more work than their monolingual colleagues. Anastasia stated that we would look at adding lang. as a factor in caseload weighting. Vanessa noted that she witnessed a bi-lingual trainee being descended upon by other workers to use her. The Manchester Office's intake supervisor questioned the level of skill of the provider translators, which is a major issue that has to be addressed. Tracy emphasized the need to address next steps regarding language and staff needs. The intern Christine, would separate the data by region. Yadira added that monolingual speakers don't want to take the time to make the referrals. Land T doesn't know our work as a result. Vanessa stated Worker's ask if you speak english and just move forward. Sometimes people feel lesser, the question has to change. Jodi stated that DCF can't afford to pay folks for useless services. Jenn recalled the position of cultural brokers from the Fresno article for the group to consider, to suggest that worker's are taking on this role and case weight be tied to this. There has to be an understanding of what's expected by DCF to provider translators. Tracy suggested that survey be presented at the SARA meeting, HR meeting. Bill stated that language contracts, new and old, are being reviewed. This would be a good time to voice concerns in the process. It was suggested that workers fill out surveys of the providers. Pay attention to the client to see if the interpreter is doing what they need to do. Gail reminded the group that the same interpreter issues have happened at court. Training via college for lang. interpretation as it relates to child welfare. From speaking to leaders around the country disparity and disproportionality issues are universal. Jodi stated that we under utilize the community services already in place, i.e. different cultural services. 169 languages are used in CT

Jodi reported that she presented at SCSU and encouraged folks to talk to students at institutions of higher education about racial justice. Jodi did the Walk of Privilege and the kids were hungry for the info. Jodi encouraged everyone to watch Black-ish on ABC because there are many teachable moments. Jodi pointed out that the tv shows are an easy way to start the racial justice conversations. The work has taken hold, Kudos. Performance expectations are being reported on by management. OD's and managers are having rich conversations about racial justice. RA's, OD's and managers have to be in the room, "just show up" It was suggested that it be framed as a beautiful idea, Jodi added that the conversations are happening, however Vanessa encouraged leaders to keep the heat up because there are leaders who continue to struggle. Latasha suggested that folks have to get comfortable being uncomfortable. Tina stated Leadership in this work happens regardless of title, and also people have to feel safe delivering the message. Having brave space was also encouraged because folks aren't always going to be safe. Jodi introduced Melanie Mersachi as joining Mike on the Procurement Committee.

Gail reported that she has had the opportunity to talk about racial justice on 1120 am radio. Jenn pointed out that there aren't many white folks on the statewide team. Jenn pointed out that one has to have a trauma discussion when talking about racial justice. We must connect resilience and trauma informed practice as it relates to racial justice. Jenn talked about creating the Trauma informed City of Baltimore. Trauma informed practice must be integrated into our racial justice approach moving forward.

Bill stated 32 persons were given the green light to be invited to the June 17th kick off meeting at Solnit's Silver Mine Training Rm. Lunch at 12-12:30, welcome (this is the work), data, where we are / why we need you, where do we go from here? meet till 2, then SWRJ will meet from 2-4. Representatives from law enforcement, judicial, hosp., dir. from agencies and various institutions. Monica asked about ed. side invites and Steve stated that the Superintendent's org. was invited. Bill offered to send everyone the list of those invited. Steve suggested folks follow up with the individuals invited. Jenn pointed out that of all places we are in a facility that is representative of the disparate data. Vanessa stated that Solnit is a good location in their interest of transparency. It was suggested that we use the venue to our advantage to emphasize the need of the providers to help us decrease disparate outcomes. It was further suggested that someone direct traffic and have registration in the same building in which the presentation would be held.

Jenn suggested we do an activity to introduce the partners to the work and how come we need the partners involved in the work. Michael stated that this is the first time the Commissioner's Team since Aug with the SWRJ and Nov on the issue in general. Mike requested that Bill do an Outlook invite to all senior admin. Tracy suggested a visual that would speak to the issue that would facilitate a dialogue that is different from the data. Gail suggested showing "Growing Up Black" It was suggested that question / guiding principles be displayed prior to the meeting to get potentials in the racial justice mode. Tina stated that we have to be prepared to talk about what DCF is doing to address the issue of racial justice. What do we want the community to help us with? Mike and Jenn stated that the statewide meeting isn't for them. Mike suggested that the partners have us in their community, as we don't want to be perceived as DCF telling folks what to do. Yadira reminded the group to remember the prevention piece of the work. Less about DCF mor about our families our children our communities. Goal is PE#3 and show partners our goals and actions steps. What does community need, what promising practices have occurred, what do you think would help the most if you had a crystal ball. Mike suggested that we not spend time redefining the work. Monica suggested we identify members of this group, identify members for regions and local groups. Denise suggested that we allow the partners to chose their level of involvement and give them contacts to facilitate their involvement. Get recommendations for partners to participate in other ways. Jenn suggested putting together a handout for the potential partners to take away from the meeting. Bill stated that he would send out a follow up letter to first group. And send letters to an additional group, i.e. to people who participated with the SWRJ initially. Bill stated that he would invite those from the first and second groups. Steve suggested setting up time for the partners to talk about what they've already been doing in the are of racial justice. Ask providers to do this ahead of time. Melanie stated that CJR has a strong cultural competence program. Gail suggested a follow up meeting for processing. Tina stated that the meeting is an invitation so at some point there be a follow up meeting.

The group thanked Christina for her work and shared cake.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10pm