



OSWEGO COUNTY Department Of Social Services

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Commissioner

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INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

- Subject:** Annual update from the Oswego County Child Protection Advisory Council.
- Purpose:** To provide the Health & Human Services Committee and the Oswego County Legislature with an update of the activities performed by the Child Protection Advisory Council (CPAC) through June 2013.
- Summary:** The Oswego County Child Protection Advisory Council (CPAC) has been functioning since March 2010. During the past year, CPAC has continued to approach its mission and goals with fluidity, understanding its role more clearly and making the appropriate adjustments to its process and procedures. CPAC has solidified its mission as an advisory council and its role with the Department and Child Protective Services. CPAC maintains its commitment to:

“Our County, Our Children, Our Future, It’s Our Responsibility”.

CPAC focused on the following areas of practice and service performance during the 2012-2013 review period:

- Janet Clerkin and Kelly Jordal from Tourism & Planning are in regular attendance at CPAC meetings. They act as CPAC’s media and outreach consultants, preparing press releases and working on a webpage for the County website focusing on child protective tips, information, and referrals. Janet and Kelly also guide CPAC and the Department through effective use of media to improve the image of Child Protective Services. This involvement has continued throughout this reporting period.
- CPAC has the opportunity to review performance statistics for Child Protective Services and comment on the unit’s progress towards quality care/services, and compliance.
- CPAC has participated in complex case presentations during this review period. This opportunity gives CPAC members a clear understanding of the challenges of child protective investigations and family/youth services cases.
- CPAC is strongly invested in the Department’s concerns with family court and makes regular suggestions for improving communications or alternate decision making.
- CPAC has been attentive to its membership and the business of filling vacancies. By-laws were reviewed, updated, and approved, along with a process for vetting new members. Recommendations for new members, including their qualifications and potential contributions, will be brought to the Human Services Committee. Membership has remained stable throughout this reporting period with regular attendance by all members.
- Commissioner continues to use CPAC as consultants for contracted services review. CPAC has been encouraged to comment on Department ideas to more fully meet the needs of families in this community. These discussions have resulted in the planning of Services Summit which is being held on June 10, 2013 at DSS. The Summit will include providers of service from the community and school district representation.

- Commissioner is bringing important child welfare legislation to CPAC for discussion and to review the potential impact to child safety and care in our County. This process is helping CPAC to understand how changes to Social Services Law or Family Court Act can impact the Department's approach to investigations and provision of services.
- CPAC is also reviewing educational outreach opportunities that can be provided in Oswego County. Outreach & education being an essential goal of CPAC, the members review appropriate training programs or on line education that can be promoted to the community on child safety and reporting. Activities such as: Front Porch Project & Family Day of Play has been strongly supported by CPAC.
- CPAC continues to be an incubator for systems collaboration. As a result of CPAC and the Partnership Committee, the Oswego County Cross System Collaborative Group was formed and is currently in development. The model was presented and approved by the Human Services Committee and Legislator Ron Sakonyi agreed to join the group as a Legislative Representative. SUNY Oswego has joined with us in the project and has invested in community educations for change such as: The Rainforest Project and Emily Pilloton's Project H, Sustainable Design Innovations.

**Recommendations
for continued work:**

- Further discussion and development of cross systems collaboration focused on child safety & family stability/self sufficiency.
Collaboration may include:
 - DSS, Probation, Mental Hygiene, Sheriffs Dept. State/Local Police, County/District Attorney, Child Advocacy Center (MDT), and local non-profits organizations in the areas of: case management, mental health/family counseling, chemical dependency services, advocacy, housing, and independent living skills training.
 - Utilize collaboration to define an informal/voluntary continuum of services for families at risk of abuse/neglect issues.
- Media & on line promotion: webpage on DSS/County site.
- Promoting CPAC membership
- Consult with DSS on service improvements, identifying gaps.
- Continue case reviews quarterly.
- Continue statistics review quarterly

Recommended The Child Protective Advisory Council respectfully requests approval by the Human Services Committee and the Oswego County Legislature of this annual summary of activities for the Oswego County Child Protection Advisory Council.