

SAC's + RACs'
Key Strategies for
Synergy Achieved Through Collaboration
10.05.2015

Steven Smith: Juvenile Justice (JJ)

As Connecticut continues its shift toward a more strengths based approach in the treatment of juvenile offenders and away from reliance on punitive measures, the partnership with parents/families, the network of community providers and interagency relationships become critical. Work with the juveniles has to be anchored by central needs: supportive, natural relationships, educational stability, opportunities to build skills, employment opportunities.

- Serve as a communication bridge to reinforce DCFs approach with parents, community providers, schools, judges, law enforcement
- Reinforcing and supporting the parent/caretakers' role in the treatment of their JJ-involved child by providing advocacy.
- Facilitating interagency information sharing among the network of community providers toward greater collaboration. Encourage sharing of resources when treating family/child
- Informing DCF on youth/family needs within community
- Growing support for programs and services that target emerging, shifting needs: substance abuse, mental health, family supports, etc...
- Inform and advise DCF on emerging practices. Serve on agency agendas: RFP reviews, policy review, work groups and steering committees.

Anthony Gay: Fatherhood

- Have fatherhood as an ongoing agenda item at the meetings.
- Providers can have their own FELT teams
- Be more father friendly/inclusive.
- Providers should make sure the physical space is representative of fathers (i.e., pictures in the office and magazines and anything else they can do to make a dad feel comfortable.)
- Provider should try to assess father who come to the program to see what services they need.
- Data collection in any form would be great (e.g., how many fathers actually utilize their program.)

Tim Marshall + Mary Cummings: CRP

- SAC should recognize that they are one of three CRPs in CT and that the RACs should support the SAC CRP process. The other two CRPs are the "Eastern CRP" (DCF Regions: 3, 4, & 6) and the "Western CRP." (DCF Regions 1, 2 & 5)
- It would be great if each Region sent one DCF member to participate on their respective CRP.
- For auditing purposes, the SAC CRP should provide to FAVOR/DCF an accounting (brief is fine) on how the expenses for the annual SAC CRP were used. (Family Involvement and refreshments are fine expenditures)
- The SAC CRP does not need to select the same issue(s) as the East or West CRP and vice versa.

How
TO LINK
W/ THE
LISTS

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- Mary/Tim will send SAC (through Susan) list of all members and open slots for East and West CRP it would be great for the East and West to receive the list of SAC and RAC members too.
- If the SAC would like support and assistance in completing their annual CRP report, please let Tim or Mary know as soon as possible. We would be happy to assist. The East and the West would like to submit their own report, so we are simply providing technical assistance.
- If members of the SAC (and RACs) have suggestions or information to pass along to the CRPs just let Tim or Mary know.

Tammy Sneed: Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST)

The issue of Human Trafficking is happening at an alarming rate in the United States. Connecticut began looking at this issue in 2004 with the Department of Children and Families taking the lead since 2008. Since 2008 the department has received over 300 unique referrals of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). Connecticut's Human Anti-trafficking Response Team (HART) has made tremendous progress in addressing this issue but has a lot more work to do and cannot do it alone.

The SAC and RAC's are in a unique position to support the state's efforts to address CSEC. Every part of the state has been affected by child trafficking but not all areas are actively engaged in creating awareness and supporting victims. The RAC's can support community awareness and resource development and/or enhancements to meet the needs of this population. Getting into middle and high schools to educate our young people is the key to prevention; many schools are fearful to provide such information increasing the vulnerabilities of these children and youth. Educating the community will bring attention to this issue and normalize the discussion; when parents understand there is less fear of the educational efforts.

Each region has trainers that can provide introductory trainings to communities; Introduction to CSEC and DMST in Connecticut. Each region has group facilitators in two psycho-educational curriculums for middle and high school youth: 1) My Life My Choice and 2) Not a #Number. Every youth confirmed as a victim can be provided with a Rapid Response focused on educating the youth and planning for safety. The RAC's can ensure their teams are trained and the trainings and education are extended to their local communities. Providers can ensure their staff are trained and high risk and confirmed victims are afforded services. Foster care agencies that have agreed to deliberately work with this population need foster parents as resources for these children and youth; education is the key to community awareness which often leads to increased support and resources.

For additional information on HART including regional contact information please follow the link: <http://www.ct.gov/dcf/cwp/view.asp?a=4743&Q=562246>

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Lisa Driscoll: Adolescents

- The RAC's and SAC can support Adolescents in care by including the youth voice in their committees.
- Meeting and event dates should accommodate the youth's schedule and not take away from school time.
- Youth representation is very powerful and should be considered whenever the committee is reviewing or deciding on new initiatives or struggling with regional issues. Youth live in the environments where we as adults work so we must include their firsthand experience whenever possible.
- Youth in care need adults to support their transition to adulthood. Any efforts RAC's and the SAC can make to help connect youth to regional/local supportive adults, pro-social activities, organizations & career mentors would especially benefit older foster youth. Youth need to leave the system fully embedded and invested in their communities and any initiatives these committees can provide would be greatly appreciated.