

**Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families
April 5, 2000—Minutes**

Members Present

Robert Cox, City of Charlottesville Department of Social Services
Dr. Michael Dickens
Meredith Gunter
Richard Merriwether, Vice-Chair
Dr. Susan McLeod, Thomas Jefferson Health District
Linda Peacock, City of Charlottesville
James Peterson, Chair, Region Ten Community Services Board
Debby Pomerantz
Sterling Robinson, III
Martha Snell, University of Virginia
Dr. William Symons, Superintendent, Charlottesville City Schools
Roxanne White, County of Albemarle

Others Present

Saphira Baker, CCF
Jacki Bryant, Partnership for Children
Rory Carpenter, CCF
Terri Evans, CCF
Bernard Hayes, Region Ten Prevention Services
Terrence Jones, Region Ten Youth Council
LaShauntesse Spears, Region Ten Youth Council

I. Welcome/Chair Remarks

J. Peterson called the meeting to order at 4:40 PM. Due to the abbreviated nature of the meeting, Members agreed to rearrange the agenda to accommodate the invited presenters in the time allotted.

II. Early Childhood Development

Jacki Bryant, Healthy Community/Healthy Families Coordinator for the Partnership for Children, updated the Commission on recent activities. The Partnership's major obstacle, setting the organizational structure, has been resolved. The group has established a mission statement, settled on a name for the collaborative, and drafted a Memo of Understanding for all fourteen partners. The Partnership has also identified potential Advisory Board Members and expects to meet on May 10, 2000. The Work Group has a six-month timeline to define a set of benchmarks to guide the Partnership's work, and will report to the Commission once they are developed.

The Early Literacy Work Group of the Partnership has been especially active. The Group sponsored a very productive training for home visitors on March 10, 2000 that focused on

infant and toddler brain development. A follow-up training on integrating the information learned from the March session into home-visits is planned. The Group has also developed an early literacy brochure and is in the process of developing strategies for distribution, and developing a proposal for "literacy kits" for distribution through local doctors. The schools will fund these kits, and UVA's *Reach out and Read* program will be used as a model.

The Home-Visiting Collaborative's primary task has been the standardization of reporting and data collection. Because of this standardization, the Partnership is able to accurately count the number of clients served; for example, 732 people have been served through the Partnerships four home-visiting programs. Additionally, the Collaborative is developing a proposal for "information bags" for new mothers who may complete an assessment for home-visiting services, but not enter the program. J. Bryant commented that the Collaborative also participated in the outcome-based funding pilot process and submitted an application for funding to the City, County, and United Way. A community kick-off event for the Partnership is envisioned for the fall.

The Partnership has retained Gotham Graphics to design a logo and outreach material. Initial designs will be presented on April 11. To enhance public awareness of the Partnership, there will be a table at the *Week of the Young Child* event located at Charlottesville's Fashion Square Mall; literacy brochures and Partnership bookmarks will be distributed. J. Bryant reported that the Partnership has provided a list of recommended resources for the Family Resource Centers to the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library. These centers will be located in the children's section of all five branches of the Library.

To help raise awareness about the Partnership, L. Peacock suggested arranging the community kick-off even to coincide with the International Food Festival sponsored by the Downtown Foundation. S. McLeod encouraged interested CCF and Public Involvement Work Group members to help with outreach, and J. Bryant invited members to attend the meeting with Gotham Graphics on April 11 to provide input on the logo design.

M. Snell asked if the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library would be interested in providing a portable set of books at the Thomas Jefferson Health Department. J. Bryant commented that the Partnership is looking to expand in the future, but that their focus is to get the resource centers established at the libraries first. She also noted that outside of libraries, children tend to leave with the books, and that arrangements would need to be made to staff a center located outside of the library. R. White suggested that some books could be given away and mentioned the possibility of seeking donations of books for this purpose.

III. Region Ten Youth Council

Bernard Hayes from Region Ten's Prevention Services, Terrence Jones, and LaShauntes Spears of the Youth Council presented the Commission with their ideas on gaining information on youth needs in the community. B. Haynes gave a brief description of the

Council. Region Ten's Prevention Services offers primary prevention programs in the schools and the community. Area youth serving on the Council perform community service work and participate in community-based businesses located at the program's three sites--Sixth Street, Seventh Street, and Hardy Drive (Westhaven). Members receive a stipend, and proceeds from their businesses are used to pay for recreational and educational activities. The Youth Council had been approached by CCF staff to discuss working together to get input from local youth about community needs, and decided to conduct an informal survey of their peers to gain youth perspectives.

Two members of the Youth Council, Terrence Jones and LaShauntese Spears, presented four survey questions 23 Council members were asked rank in order of importance. The questions were:

- Would more day care programs help teen parents in their community?
- Should the age for youth to get a job be younger?
- How would you describe your community?
- What needs to be changed in your community?

The Youth Council members felt that the availability of day care was an important issue, noting that childcare is especially important for teen parents who need to complete their education. Members also discussed their perception of their community, and cited the high incidences in drugs in the area. At S. Baker's suggestion, the Youth Council agreed that it would be a good idea to conduct an inventory of their peers concerning these issues at the Youth Summit/College Symposium on May 5 and 6, 2000.

K. Ralston asked how kids were recruited for this program, how many kids were involved in the Council, and if any of them were from Albemarle County. B. Hayes responded that recruitment is done in the schools, and that of the 23 kids involved with the program, the majority are from Charlottesville, but that there are a few kids from Walton Middle School participating in the Council. Transportation from home to program sites is an obstacle for many County youths who may be interested in the program, and expansion into Esmont, Whitewood Village and Southwood are being explored.

M. Snell was interested in the Member's perception of their community. T. Jones and L. Spears replied that Members felt drugs and violence plague the community and many of them fear leaving their homes after dark. K. Ralston asked the Council members about their incentive for joining the Council. L. Spears replied that the stipend was not a factor in his decision to become involved in the Council, as it is less than he could earn at a part-time job. Rather, his decision to become involved grew out of his appreciation for the concept of the Council. T. Jones responded that L. Spears encouraged him to join the Council, and that the opportunity to participate in an organized activity appealed to him.

R. White wanted to know if the Youth Summit was only for kids from Charlottesville. B. Hayes stated that the Summit was for all Charlottesville/Albemarle youths. S. McLeod asked how many staff people were involved with the Council. B. Hayes replied that there are three staff people and one intern involved with the Council.

S. Robinson commented that the Youth Council is a good program, and appreciated hearing about the positive influence of youth in the community.

IV. Update

Saphira Baker requested to bypass the usual update due to the abbreviated nature of the meeting. S. Baker reported that CCF staff would be attending neighborhood planning meetings that are scheduled as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan in an effort to get resident input about local needs. The Quality Community Council, a committee made up of community members and City staff that focused on safety and prevention efforts, may also be a means to hear from residents.

S. Baker informed the CCF that Carrie Fried has been hired as a part-time temporary researcher for the recently-awarded information-sharing grant, and the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Work Group would be having an informational meeting in April

V. Update of Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act Plan

Rory Carpenter presented a draft of the FY 2000-2002 Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act plan for Charlottesville and Albemarle. The City and County will combine these funds to provide services for juvenile offenders. The management of \$830,204 in State funds, \$204,554 in local funds, and \$33,500 in Department of Criminal Justice Services funds fall under the auspices of CCF.

R. Carpenter briefly outlined the services supported by these funds. The Juvenile Court Assessment Center, which provides assessment, referral, and follow-up services on a 24-hour basis, is the first step in the continuum of services provided to juvenile offenders. The Assessment Center programs include the Truant Program, Curfew Center, and the Delinquency Prevention Program. Intermediate-level services supported by VJCCCA funds are the Intensive Probation Fund, the Electronic Monitoring Program, and the 16th District Court Services Unit Fund. Community Attention and its programs are also supported by Crime Control funds. Community Attention uses these funds to operate two residential programs--the Attention Home and the Family Group Home. These funds also maintain Community Attention's Outreach Services and Teens Give, a community service program for Court-involved youth.

J. Peterson asked if the \$830,204 in State funds was level from previous years. R. Carpenter responded that the level of funding had remained the same. K. Ralston questioned the impact the loss of DCJS funds in FY 2002 would have on the Delinquency Program. R. Carpenter explained that the funds would level off over the next two years, and no longer be available for this program, but that other sources of funding will be explored. He noted that because the Delinquency Program is being re-vamped, it is not possible to determine how the reduction in DCJS funds will affect this service since it may be different two years from now.

VI. Committee Reports

A. CSA Committee

Robert Cox reported that Charlottesville and Albemarle had both been approved for CSA supplemental funds. He also reported that the CSA Committee would be exploring the use of the Harmony information system to track services and expenditures. R. White asked if Harmony would track the use of IV-E and Medicaid funds in addition to CSA funds. Debbie Stone replied that Harmony could be used to track IV-E, but the tracking of Medicaid has not been explored because it has only recently become a source of funding.

R. Cox updated the Commission on the outcome of a recent parent appeal of a CSA decision to deny funding for living expenses related to an out-of-state residential placement. On March 27, the Committee heard an appeal from the parent of an Albemarle County special education student, and ruled that the charges are not allowable under CSA without the support of the schools. This case has raised issues concerning the roles of the Family Assessment and Planning Teams and the CSA Committee in relation to the public schools, and the policy for appeals for services that are allowable under CSA. The CSA Coordinator will explore how other localities handle the appeals process and whether local policies need to be changed.

VII. Minutes from March 1, 2000

K. RALSTON MOTIONED FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 1, 2000 MINUTES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY S. MCLEOD. THE MINUTES WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

VIII. Members' Comments

K. Ralston mentioned that there is a Kiwanis Club being formed locally. The club is youth-focused, and would like individuals involved in human services and youth development to consider membership. She stated that she hoped they would work with CCF and that we should encourage them not to duplicate similar efforts or existing meetings of professionals. S. Baker mentioned that they had been in touch with CCF and that they had moved ahead in establishing a chapter. She will maintain communication with them.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 5:35 PM.