

Child Forensic Interview Advisory Committee

April 1, 2020, 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Conference Call

**Conference Call:** 888-585-9008

**Participant Code/Conference Room:** 275-269-015

Meeting Minutes

**Attendance:**

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| **Members Present:** | **Staff Present:** |
| Jay Howell - Chair | S. Nicole Jordan |
| Alan Abramowitz – Co-Chair | Marceller Hines |
| Carol Lilly, M.D. | Erica Puckett |
| Bruce J. McIntosh, M.D. | Dr. Robert Brooks |
| Candice Brower |  |
| Judge Daniel P. Dawson |  |
| Erick Quevedo |  |
| Jackie Sandefer-Gonsen |  |
| Jamny Coronado |  |
| Maureen Honan |  |
| Francine Donnorummo |  |
| Sgt. Lori Colombino |  |
| Brandy Macaluso |  |
| Terrence Watts |  |
| Stephanie Cox |  |
| Maria Sanin |  |
| Angie Griffin |  |
| Alison Cowell |  |
| Theresa Simak |  |
| **Members Absent:** | **Guest(s) Present:** |
| Kelly A. Swartz |  |
| Valerie Stanley |  |
| Lorena M. Vollrath-Bueno |  |

**Welcome and Introductions**

* Chair, Jay Howell called the Child Forensic Interview Advisory Committee (CFIAC) conference call meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.
* Chair, Jay Howell, conducted a roll call of all members and DOH staff
* Chair, Jay Howell extended a welcome to all CFIAC Members and DOH Staff, expressing understanding that these are difficult times and we are all working to keep safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.
* Chair, Jay Howell reviewed webinar and conference call protocol

**Review of February 13, 2020 CFIAC Conference Call Meeting Minutes**

* Chair, Jay Howell confirmed that all present CFIAC members received and reviewed a draft of the February 13, 2020 CFIAC Meeting minutes. Some members had not received the minutes. DOH staff promptly emailed minutes to those members for review. Members were provided an opportunity to request revisions, ask questions, or seek clarification regarding the February 13, 2020 CFIAC Meeting Minutes
* No revisions requested
* Chair, Jay Howell requested members vote to approve or reject the February 13, 2020 CFIAC Meeting minutes
* Minutes were unanimously approved by all present CFIAC Members

**Establishment of CFIAC Subcommittees**

* Chair, Jay Howell conducted a review of the established Ancillary Subcommittee.
* Co- Chair, Alan Abramowitz reported a review of circuit websites for animal therapy information and documents. Alan offered to collect information on all circuits which have orders/information and share with members. Alan offered to contact local directors for additional information in circuits who do not have information on their websites.
* Chair, Jay Howell offered to scan the case law information to Alan Abramowitz to include in packet to group.
* Member, Brandy Macaluso – offered to send information to DOH staff regarding animal therapy information to be included in packet to subcommittee members.
* Chair, Jay Howell requested that the orders from all 20 circuits be reviewed and compared to determine what work needs to be done in which locations. Jay suggested a focus on areas with an age cut off at 16 for child forensic interviews and areas with different protocols for children under five.
* Orders can be accessed on DOH website.
* Chair, Jay Howell invited other CFIAC members with interest in this area to volunteer to serve on the subcommittee.
* Subcommittee Chair, Judge Dawson stated that there is crossover between dependency, criminal and juvenile court protocols and that it might be better for the supreme court to send out a model order. He stated they may be reluctant to do so, but it would be most helpful for consistency across the state.
* Chair, Jay Howell introduced Law Enforcement Subcommittee request, citing that Sgt. Sonya Bush reports using fact-finding interviews in the field and her staff take part in presentations provided by local CPT and CAC.
* Francine Donnorummo volunteered to serve as the chairperson of the Law Enforcement Subcommittee.
* Terrance Watts volunteered to serve on the Court Orders Subcommittee.
* Chair, Jay Howell suggested that Sonya Bush be invited to serve as an Ad Hoc member of the Law Enforcement Subcommittee.
* Jackie Sandefer-Gonsen stated that she has a few other people in mind who may be candidates for serving as ad hoc members of the Law Enforcement Subcommittee.

**Community Presentations**

* Jackie Sandefer-Gonsen presented information gathered from conducting a survey of six CPT teams across the state.
  + The teams reported information on community trainings made available to the public, informing the community of forensic interviewing.
  + CPT teams are providing mandatory trainings to school personnel regarding how to talk to children, how to preserve the forensic interview.
* Dr. Lilly stated that Hillsborough County is conducting community training as well, to inform the community of how to talk to children and initial safety interviews.
* Jay inquired as to whether training is being provided to the faith-based community regarding preserving forensic interviews, how and when to call the hotline.
* Dr. Macintosh stated that it is critically important to talk to community providers about what not-to-do, emphasizing that people should back off and stop asking questions.

**Survey Results Data Presentation**

* Dr. Brooks demonstrated data heat maps based on survey results
* Dr. Lilly stated that a lot of training is designed to answer local requests and identified gaps in certain areas, thus training is not looking the same throughout the state.
* Chair, Jay Howell suggested members continue to dig into information regarding community presentation trainings, child safety interviews and seek community partners to expand providers and community knowledge regarding forensic interviews.
* Erick Quevedo suggested a committee to assess for designation and continuing education available for forensic interviewers. Jay Howell requested Erick to serve as the chairperson of this subcommittee. CFIAC members volunteering to serve on this committee include: Allison, Jamny, Jackie Sandefer-Gonsen, Maria Sanin, Angie, Brandy Macalouso, Stephanie Cox.

**Local CPT COVID-19 Response**

* Maria Sanin stated that Circuit 20 is only doing critical interviews and only allowing one staff in the office at a time.
* Jamny reported no changes to their procedures.
* Dr. Lilly stated that DCF is screening at the hotline. Interviews and medical exams are being conducted only after the child is screened negative for coronavirus risk. Other CAC FI unit is responding to the office only for urgent/immediate cases. Some units are conducting temperature screens and staff are working separately from one another. Dr. Lilly clarified medical exams are happening for COVID-positive or COVID-exposed youth but occur with appropriate PPE or at the ER. No refusal of COVID-Positive or Exposed persons.
* Teresa asked, are we seeing a shift in the number of interviews occurring?
* Co-Chair, Alan Abramowitz stated that Secretary Chad Poppell has reported a significant decrease in calls to the hotline and that domestic violence reports are also down.
* Terrence Watts confirms that DCF is receiving fewer calls, but the allegations are more egregious, seeing an increase in abusive head trauma.

**Open Discussion**

* COVID-19 testing site operations are concerning.
* Concerns of COVID-19 response resulting in increase of cyber abuse of children.
* Patti Armstrong stated that the site in question was not a DOH site, but that she would look into the issue.

**Next Steps**

* Next CFIAC Meeting will be determined by doodle poll
* Subcommittees will meet between now and next meeting, prepared to report objectives and progress to the CFIAC

**Meeting Adjourned:**

* Chair, Jay Howell adjourned the meeting.