

FAMILY VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL
March 23, 2011
Room 14, Potomac Building
5:00 P.M.

MEETING MINUTES

Council in Attendance: Krisanne Bentley, John Helldorfer, Laura Joyce, Kathy Lacer, Lanny Lancaster, Nancy Luginbill, Dr. Kathy O'Brien, Bob Rezza, Ella May Russell, Elizabeth Schaeffer, Christina Taylor

Other attendees: Heather Bauer (Walden Sierra), Kristan Thomas

Absent: Sheriff Cameron, Judge Karen Abrams, Kimberly Gregory, Rona Harding, Sue Sabo, Judge Greg Wells

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Kathy O'Brien at 5:00 p.m.

I. Approval of Minutes:

Dr. Kathy O'Brien requested Council approval of the December 3, 2008 Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded. Council voted and meeting minutes were duly approved.

II. Status Reports:

SART report: In the process of trying to influence the Safe Steering Committee to change their name to SART.

Child Advocacy: Ella Mae Russell reported that from January 1, 2011 to March 23, 2011 there were 19 sexual abuse cases and 26 physical abuse cases. The sexual abuse cases involved 16 female victims and 3 male victims. The physical abuse cases involved 24 females and 2 males. The age group break down for the sexual abuse cases was as follows: ages 0-6yrs: 8 children, age 7-12yrs: 7 children, and age 13-18yrs: 4 children. The age group break down for the physical abuse cases was as follows: ages 0-6yrs: 15 children, ages 7-12yrs: 13 children. Ella Mae Russell reported that the numbers are up on all reports – child abuse, neglect, etc. The team is working with the cases that are the most complicated. Dr. Kathy O'Brien reported that they have requested additional staff for the Child Advocacy.

Committee Updates:

Fatality Review Committee:

No new reports. Team has not met since the last meeting.

Case Review Team (CRT)

Laura Joyce reported that the numbers have gone up. This time she provided a quarterly review instead of a monthly review and provided a handout. The number of cases reviewed was 43. There were cases that all 9 agencies were involved. Almost all referring/lead agencies have been involved. The CRT will be working on new procedures regarding how the agenda, meetings, leadership in the meetings, etc. are handled. Ella Mae Russell asked if they track the numbers for middle of the night calls. Laura Joyce responded saying no because it rarely happens.

Other Business:

Christina Taylor reported that she is moving her office this week. She went on to elaborate that there are lots of changes at the State's Attorney's Office (SAO). They have had some turn over, Attorney's leaving etc. There is now space available at the Circuit Court office and the SAO. Sarah Gray will be moving with her as well as Sarah Russell and Jody from the Sheriff's Office. Sarah Russell and Jody will be working at the SAO Tuesday's and Friday's and they all will be working on purely domestic violence cases. Christina also reported that she will be taking over the juvenile docket. All the moving and the new schedule will be effective April 1st. Christina will also oversee all domestic violence cases. The long term goal is to have the Domestic Violence Unit centralized in one location working on the cases 5 days a week. She also stated that she wants to start prosecuting strangulation cases as felonies. Also, the Sheriff's Office has space become available as well. Christina would also like to start doing monthly reports regarding what's going on in the Sheriff's Office/law side. The final goal is to have a Family

Justice Center eventually. Christina will also now have more control over domestic violence cases and prosecution.

Krisanne Bentley reported that the Commission for Women had a meeting with Cynthia at the Board of Education (BOE) regarding the letter brought forth at last month's meeting and they seemed very receptive to the idea of educating students on healthy relationships and dating violence. The BOE expressed interest in including healthy relationships as one of the messages they send to students. Everything is still in the preliminary stages but maybe in August the BOE will start implementing this in the schools. There is another meeting scheduled in April in which this issue will be discussed further. Krisanne also reported that the Women's Commission will go before the Board of County Commissioners to request that the funding that was raised at a very successful banquet go towards these programs. Krisanne asked if the board would write a letter supporting the Healthy Relationships programs in the schools. Dr. Kathy O'Brien asked the council if they support the letter from the council. Kathy Lacer agrees with the program and submitting a letter as well as Ella Mae Russell. Dr. Kathy O'Brien requested a motion to a letter, the motion was seconded. Council voted and the letter was duly approved. Laura Joyce suggested that the letter be reviewed by the FVCC. Dr. Kathy O'Brien will draft a letter then send to the council for input and/or approval. Krisanne will get the specific date of the meeting with the BOE in April and forward to Dr. O'Brien.

Heather Bauer reminded the council that the college is sponsoring "Walk a Mile in her Shoes" on Sunday, April 3rd and provided the flyer for the event to the council. She also reminded the council that the College was also participating in "Take Back the Night" on April 6th at 8pm. There will also be a memorial for a domestic violence victim on April 16th at the Jaycees Hall in Waldorf. Christina Taylor said she will get the information regarding the memorial.

Dr. Kathy O'Brien reported that Michael Cohen with the MD Network came to meet with her and they discussed what MD Network could do to help as a coalition. She suggested that we have a need for more immigration laws because of the rise in certain populations within St. Mary's County. She also reiterated that a presentation was made to the Family Violence Committee which is chaired by the Attorney General and the Lieutenant Governor for the FVCC to become a sub-committee of the FVC.

Heather Bauer also reported that the flyers she discussed in the previous meeting were done and will be available at the next meetings.

Dr. Kathy O'Brien requested that on next meeting's agenda we include: Guidelines for discussing case specific information during a team review/fatality review.

V. Next Meeting / Adjournment

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 27, 2011 at 5:00 pm-Potomac Bldg, Room #14

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Submitted by: Kristan Thomas, Recording Secretary