

**Kent County Department of Social Services
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2019**

Present: Kevin Karpowicz, Beverly Birkmire, Olythea Hunley Charlotte Potts, William Washington, Tracy Williams, Shelly Neal-Edwards, Patty Dahle (scribe)

Absent: Bob Jacob

Presentation: Child Advocacy Center update

Chairperson's Report :

- Approval of minutes from June 17, 2019 (due to not having a quorum minutes from June could not be approved at July's meeting) and July 15, 2019 meetings. Motion to approve made by William Washington and second by Beverly Birkmire motion carried by unanimous vote.
- Two potential members to the board were present at the meeting. They both live in Kent County and are connected to St. Martins Ministry. They were able to share a wealth of information with the board as to what they do and how St. Martins Ministry operates.

➤ **Kent County CARES Foundation**

- No discussion

➤ **Director's Report :**

- **Divisional Performance Report –July and August** were reviewed by attending members. There was one question regarding Child Support as to why the goal for FFY 2019 Establishment is over a 100% at 112.93% (the % is made up of Cases with paternity Established and Children Born Out-of -Wedlock) Shelly has asked Elizabeth Bankhead, Supervisor of Child Support to present to the Board at the November meeting to clarify the reason for over 100%
- **Summer SNAP** - The Summer SNAP for Children program, which will be in place to support thousands of low-income children beginning in the summer of 2020. The first effort of its kind in the country, Summer SNAP for Children provides an additional \$30 in food support during the summer months of June, July and August, and \$10 over the winter break in December for very low-income children who receive SNAP benefits. Introduced by Maryland Sen. Cory McCray and Del. Pam Queen, the Summer SNAP for Children Act passed unanimously in the Maryland Senate and overwhelmingly in the House; it becomes law next month. KCDSS presented the application to the Commissioners on 9/17/19. \$200,000 funds available for the whole State of MD. Counties must provide a match. For KC it is a 50%-50% split. 8,500 from the State and 8,500 from the County. The County approved. We will target Rock Hall since there are 170 SNAP children recipients (this is the second largest concentration of children) and no summer food program accessibility. Overall 908 children in the county receive benefits and of that 446 are located here in Chestertown. \$3.4 million in SNAP benefits are given in Kent County this Summer SNAP is in addition to that already given.
- **SSA-FFPSA (Family First Prevention Services Act)**
(following description was taken from www.gu.org)
The Family First Prevention Services Act (Family First) became federal law on February 9, 2018, as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. Family First is a landmark child welfare law that aligns with the principle that children do best in families. Although Family First addresses an array of services and programs, this brief summary focuses solely on the several provisions specifically important for grandfamilies. These provisions take effect on October 1, 2019 with some exceptions as noted below in this summary.
Allows for federal reimbursement for prevention services and programs For the first time, this Act will allow federal child welfare dollars to be used for up to 12 months of services and programs to prevent children from entering foster care by supporting the triad

of generations in grandfamilies - children, kinship caregivers and parents. The children can get services if they are “candidates” for foster care who are at imminent risk of entering care and can safely remain at home with parents or with kinship caregivers. This includes children whose adoption or guardianship is at risk of disruption or dissolution. Kinship caregivers or parents of the children can also get services if they are needed to prevent the children’s entry into care. Children and families can receive these services more than once if the child is again identified as a candidate for foster care. The prevention services and programs include: • mental health treatment • substance abuse prevention and treatment • in-home parent skill-based supports

Provides federal support for kinship navigator programs States can receive federal reimbursement for up to 50% of their expenditures to provide kinship navigator programs that meet certain evidence-based requirements. This federal support is available regardless of whether the children for whom the services are being accessed meet certain income eligibility requirements for Title IV-E foster care funding

Works to ensure that each child in foster care gets a family If children need to come into the custody of the child welfare system, the law encourages the placement of children in foster care in the least restrictive, most family-like settings appropriate to their needs by not allowing the use of federal funds for inappropriate group placements as of October 1, 2019, although a state may request a delay for up to two years. Federal funds may only be used for a few specific types of group placements, including a qualified residential treatment program (QRTP). An important component of the appropriate use of QRTPs is the need to maintain family connections. To be considered such a program, the program must facilitate outreach to the child’s family members, including siblings and close family friends known as “fictive kin”; and the child’s family must be a part of the child’s treatment, including family-based support for at least six months post-discharge. As part of the assessment to determine if a QRTP placement is necessary, the placement preferences of the family must be considered, and children must be placed with their siblings unless it is not in their best interest. If the placement preferences of the family are not followed, the reasons must be documented as part of that assessment process.

Improves Interstate Placements The Act expedites interstate placement of children in foster care, adoption or guardianship by requiring states to use an electronic interstate case-processing system by no later than October 2027 for exchanging related data and documents.

Extends child and family services programs The Act extends funding for five years (fiscal years 2017-2021) for two critical service programs for children and families in the child welfare system-- The Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program and The Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program

Reauthorizes the Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Program The Act reauthorizes for five years the Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payment program, which allows states to receive incentive payments based on improvements in increasing exits from foster care to adoption or kinship guardianship.

- **CSA – New “Pass” Through law Updates –**

Beginning July 1, 2019, all or a portion of child support payments received through Department of Human Services’ (DHS’s) Child Support Administration will be passed through to eligible TCA household’s Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card. If the TCA household has one child, up to \$100 of the monthly child support payment received will be passed-through to the TCA household. If the TCA household has two or more children, up to \$200 of the monthly child support payment received will be passed-through to the TCA household. The maximum \$100 for one-child households and \$200 for two or more children households remains, regardless of the number of non-custodial parents and the total amount of child support payments received. The first child support pass-through amount will be issued to eligible TCA households in August 2019 and placed on the customer’s EBT card. The CS Pass-Through amount will be added to the customer’s TCA benefit - this means that the customer will not see the CS Pass-Through differentiated from his or her TCA benefit. The Child Support Pass-Through policy is the same for all TCA households. Neither the relationship of the child(ren) to the head of household, nor the relationship of the children to one another impacts the way the policy is applied. For SNAP, the amount of CS Pass-Through is countable

as unearned income and may impact SNAP benefits. CARES has been modified to average three consecutive months of child support payments and determine the unearned income amount that will be counted toward the household's SNAP benefit calculation. Should the non-custodial parent miss a child support monthly payment, CARES will stop counting the CS Pass-Through toward the SNAP benefits. There must be at least three consecutive months of child support payments received before CARES can recalculate the unearned income and begin counting it toward SNAP benefits again.

- **Presentation Schedule for FY2020** – was discussed and January there will be a presentation on FI and Emergency Services and March on events that are being planned for April's Child Abuse Awareness month. April and May of 2020 presentations have not been scheduled and will be discussed with other board members not in attendance this month. Shelly will speak to Sheriff Price to come in June to discuss Kent Goes Purple.
 - **Additional Topics** - SSA has hired a Medical Director, Dr. Rose. He will be overseeing all Foster care homes in the state of Maryland.
Pride training will take place in November. Only those that attend the informational meeting in October can potential attend the training if all criteria is met.
- The next meeting will be held October 21, 2019 at 3:30pm in the Child Support Conference Room, 315 High Street, Chestertown, MD.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Dahle, Recording Secretary