



Member of the Coastal Tri-Counties Child Abuse Prevention Coalition

May 21, 2020 ♦ **9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**
via Zoom

MINUTES

1. Zoom protocols for Brown Act Meetings

2. Welcome and Introductions

Ashleigh Erving and Alison Wales welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

Attendance: Elizabeth Adams, Katie Austin, Jacqui Banta, Jeff Banta, Florene Bednersh, Maria Chesley, Carrie Collins, Lindsey Day, Ashleigh Erving, Flo Furuike, Lori Goodman, Michelle Graham, Cecilia Herrera, Tony Hollenback, Polly Huffer, Maribel Landeros, Yvonne Nelson, Taundra Pitchford, Shana Pompa, Mayra Ramos, Michelle Robertson, John Ryan, Melana Serka, Kimberly Valenzuela, Alison Wales

Staff: Barbara Finch and Gloria Munoz

3. Approve Minutes from February 20, 2020

Maria Chesley, John Ryan and Melana Serka abstained from voting; all others voted in favor and the February 20, 2020 minutes were approved.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Network Updates: Building Protective Factors during COVID-19

How are you leveraging network connections to strengthen families and support resilience?

Maria Chesley - Network of Family Resource Centers

The FRC's are focusing on basic needs as a way to keep families strong and reduce stress. The need for food and other concrete supports has been overwhelming. Carpinteria set up a call line where folks could call in to get help with income supports – how to sign up for unemployment, applying to United Way, 805 Undocufund and others. The NFRC's are meeting and thinking about how they can be as efficient as possible in meeting the basic needs. Ashleigh added that parents are calling in to share how overwhelmed they are. They have had to shift gears to support parents in new ways, tailoring programs to the current needs and priorities of the family. She was also excited that FRC's had an opportunity to apply for some funding. They were awarded approximately \$76,000 to help address some of the gaps – technology, isolation, and material goods. The schools have done a tremendous job but many families are still home without enough pens, pencils and other kinds of materials needed for schooling. This has provided more opportunity to share resources, successful collaboration, and very fast action.

Taundra Pitchford - Child Care Planning Council

CCPC has been working on supporting the essential needs workers. Many of them go to work and don't have childcare because most of the centers shut down and have not reopened. Many family childcare providers also shut down but they have reopened at a faster rate. CCPC has worked with Children's Resource & Referral and First 5 to link essential workers with open childcare providers. She is also helping support the preschool directors and site supervisors. They meet every Thursday to talk about how they are holding up and how they are supporting their families, teachers, and children. They are providing online learning, virtual group times and activity packets. They also connect families with food resources. The group has been focused on reopening. Programs will look different with the new CDC and licensing guidelines. It is a challenge emotionally and it is tough financially. Some of the providers are fearful and not yet ready to reopen and the ones that are reopening need a lot of support. One of the issues is a lack of cleaning supplies. Resource & Referral and First 5 have been awesome in finding those resources. She added that CALM has been on their Director's calls regularly and focusing on mental health. They know that kids will be coming back with real challenges.

Katie Austin – Child Welfare Services

When schools announced COVID-19 closures, CWS started working with the Children's Resource & Referral to figure out how they could help resource families access childcare. They worked with the County Education Office to get laptops and internet connections to help kids in foster care get their schoolwork done. They partnered with Pathway, a support program for resource families, to answer questions, make referrals, and provide support to caregivers to avoid placement disruptions. CALM started virtual support groups with families including resource families, family reunification and family maintenance. Some counties completely stopped holding Child Family Team (CFT) and Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings but SB immediately shifted to virtual meetings through zoom or on the phone. In-person investigations of child abuse reports are still taking place. The Interagency Placement Committee (IPC) continues to meet every week to support high-needs youth and determine the appropriate level of placement. This collaboration includes CWS, Probation, Behavioral Wellness, Casa Pacifica, Pathway, and Tri-Counties. CWS is still holding RAFT sessions for staff through Zoom to help with secondary / vicarious trauma.

Tony Hollenback – Behavioral Wellness Children's System of Care

CSOC has been sharing strategies for keeping staff engaged and supported. They recognize that people are balancing a lot of anxiety because of COVID, family responsibilities, financial responsibilities, and huge changes. They had a presentation last month on the RISE Program, which focuses on the needs of sexually exploited children within Santa Barbara County. There are concerns regarding sheltering at home, because this can be a source of stress for clients in the BeWell population. They are doing everything they can do to keep themselves visible. He added that they are also seeing growth in the need of deaf and hard of hearing families and children. Tony is working to reinforce available resources. One of his colleagues has just finished a contract for virtual sign language interpretation. He is working on making sure that they are retaining staff, supporting staff, nurturing staff, and helping them to prepare for these very extraordinary times. All the clinics are going through the process to maintain the guidelines from Public Health, secure PPE for their staff and be able to resume and person on site services again.

Polly Huffer – Casa Pacifica

Casa Pacifica is currently using Zoom but they are able to go out at times and see clients face to face using protective measures. Their specialists are doing fabulous work with putting together packages for the parents and dropping them off at the house. Their parent partners are also doing self-care things for parents since they are now home with their children. They are also helping them with technology. It has been a little hard for new families that they have not met before because they are having to know them through Zoom. It has been challenging but they are persistent. They can see folks face to face if needed on a case by case basis using protective practices.

Elizabeth Adams – Santa Barbara County Education Office, Transitional Youth Services Program

SBCEO quickly started doing outreach to group homes, homeless shelters, and social services. They have provided educational supplies to homeless shelters and group homes as well as helping them get additional devices and hotspots. They mailed out posters to every business that is open in the county letting people know that that they were available. She added that they saw the number of children detained from their homes by social services drastically increase. They quickly put together a flyer with tips and asked all superintendents to please put it out to their staff as a reminder that they are still mandated reporters.

Florene Bednersh - Early Childhood and Family Wellness Coalition

Their coalition developed a chart of what everybody is doing and shared it so that they know what is going on with the different organizations. Welcome Every Baby has moved to telehealth visits and they are seeing many new mothers struggling with isolation and depression. They added groups for mothers, including one specifically for lactation and one for talking and building social connections. Scales are being loaned because about 50% of the mothers are not taking babies to see their pediatricians. They will be distributing diapers and wipes with the donation from First 5 and Resource & Referral. They are taking First 5 newborn kits to the porches of every parent that they have a telehealth visit with. Under Health Linkages, they have been distributing Family Dental kits donated by Direct Relief.

Jackie Banta – Children’s Resource & Referral

They are partnering with the Network of Family Resource Centers in Santa Barbara County and preparing for the distribution of diapers and wipes. The shipment will include about 1,500 boxes of diapers and 800 packages of wipes. They are working to ensure that they support each FRC with their needs. One of their main focuses has been to continue supporting families with childcare referrals. Since they are mandated by the state to contact every licensed facility twice a week, they have the most up to date information. They have been able to help the essential workforce and at risk families find care right away as well as support with paying for child care. She added that they have preparing for the increase of call volume and ensuring that their database is up to date. Folks are going to be asked to return to work and they will be needing child care for their school aged children. They have been working with Child Care Aware, a statewide database through the Department of Social Services. They have worked with each R&R to export their data and folks can access available spaces anywhere in the state.

Lindsey Day – Good Samaritan

Interactions with families have continued face-to-face and through Zoom. Over 500 food boxes have been delivered to families that are living in permanent housing and outside of Good Samaritan housing. They have partnered up with districts in Santa Maria and were able to help get Chromebooks to the after school program that is on Good Samaritan property. Tutors are available to help children with their schoolwork. They are also providing masks for every adult and child.

Shana Pompa – Fighting Back Santa Maria Valley

FBSMV is supporting students by providing the after school tutoring program for Good Samaritan, helping with distribution of the Chromebooks, and making sure that all the kids have all the resources they need. They are also providing a lot of resources with their homeless services. Their home for supportive housing will be opening soon and it will be available to homeless Transitional Aged Youth (TAY), ages 18 to 24. The facility will open up in the next couple of weeks and hopefully house 4 individuals.

Maribel Landeros - Promotora

Maribel asked folks to please encourage all the families they have contact with to complete the Census. There are a lot of tracks in Santa Maria that have a low response rate. The phone numbers are: English (for 50 states and Washington, D.C.): 844-330-2020 and Spanish (for 50 states and Washington, D.C.): 844-468-2020. The website is: www.2020Census.gov

Mayra Ramos – Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People

PHP kicked off the Great Plates Delivered program, a partnership with FEMA and the city of Solvang. They had their first round of deliveries this morning, they will have another one for lunch, and a different one for dinner. She is grateful to the city and the seniors were thrilled to have warm meals coming through.

6. Parent Perspectives

Lindsey Day – Good Samaritan

It has been a very big transition for parents. She has noticed that many parents are handling it very well, in her opinion, and has seen a lot more assertiveness in getting their needs met. There is a willingness to jump out and ask for support. They did not realize that a lot of their parents are working with anywhere from one to seven different service providers and in the beginning this caused anxiety with parents. She was proud to see a lot of parents using their resiliency and being able to speak to their needs and move forward with what they needed to do and asking for help when needed.

Maribel Landeros - Promotora

One of the things they are being contacted about is the trustworthiness of the information and resources they are seeing. A lot of the population that they work with is asking if they have access to services even if they are undocumented. It has been difficult for their Hispanic community to get through with certain services. A lot of families live in small housing with other families and they don't have the privacy and ability to share what is happening emotionally. Being able to connect through text messages has been really helpful. She also reminded folks to be respectful of people's privacy when they go to agencies to get resources. She is aware that staff tends to want to take pictures to show their work but this can be a deterrent for people, especially if they have never had to go to a food bank before.

Cecilia Herrera – Parent Educator

There is fear and uncertainty about whether they will be able to get the help they need. She works for Santa Barbara City College and there are folks from Iran, China, Brazil, etc. and they are all learning English. They feel fearful to approach agencies because they are not sure if they will speak their language. She has been giving them resources and placing calls for them. She has also gone to the food distribution sites so that they won't feel ashamed to go alone.

7. Update from the Santa Barbara County Prevention Team

Child Abuse and Neglect: Prevention Priorities, Resources & Concerns

Barbara stated that DSS received inquiries from the State Office of Child Abuse Prevention and the California Welfare Directors Association about child abuse and the increased risk for child abuse during COVID-19. The prevention team that went to a summit in San Diego and new key partners met yesterday to highlight the importance of partnerships with schools. The Partnership for Strengthening Families started out with CAPC and early care and education. They then brought in the Network of Family Resource Centers and this year it was CWS. It is important that these partnerships have a variety of partners but schools have been a challenge because there are 20 different school districts and they are all independently operated. One of the silver linings from COVID-19 is that the County Education Office has been able to work with all the districts because they all have similar challenges. Their relationships have been strengthened and SELPA has been working collaboratively with all the school psychologists and counselors from all the different districts. This may be an opportunity to connect the districts to the community providers that are in that district as well as the community. They also talked about the importance of school partnerships and the support for teachers. A lot of the CBO's on the call talked about helping them track down kids that weren't showing up for classes and meeting needs for technology.

Tony added that they have been hearing reports that there has been a rise in suicides within Santa Barbara County. Folks are feeling alone or isolated and seeing clinicians or therapists on the computer screen is

very different from being in person. He is not sure what is being done right now, from a suicide prevention perspective, but it's important to do what we can to prevent it.

Ashleigh mentioned that while clinicians can play a helpful role in the prevention of suicide, so can the FRC's. It does not require clinical intervention to help address some of the isolation needs of parents and youth. She added that they have discussed this in response to the increased rate of suicide attempts and completions since the pandemic started and 5% of calls to their parent coaching line has been youth. It has been an important opportunity for them to connect and engage with youth. The FRC's are part of the solution to suicide.

Jacqui, on Jeff's behalf, added that he is the lead crisis counselor for Crisis Support Services through Tri Counties Regional Center. They are currently doing telehealth as well as intervention and they have not had any successful suicides with his population. During COVID, they have been able to successfully deescalate over the phone with residential staff. He added that they have seen a decrease in the need of intervention because there has been less social demand on the population of developmental disabilities. They are missing their friends, families and work so their focus has been offering resources and activity options for them in their place of home, with no face-to-face interventions. He added that there has been a challenge with law enforcement not responding unless someone is actively pursuing suicide.

Yvonne feels that there are a lot of mental health needs. One of the big impacts is isolation and the kids are experiencing that in their peers and families are experiencing that from other families. One of the things that she took away from the meeting is: How can we strengthen the relationships with the teachers, support families, and support individual children during this difficult time? We are moving into a new season where school could potentially not be as social as it has been in the past. The impact of this over a long period of time is going to be pervasive. She looks forward to finding ways to support those different groups and come alongside them through mental health consultation, the FRC's and individual therapy.

Kimberly

Reminded everybody that as a provider, if you are worried about a client that has reached out, you can call SAFTY. A lot of teachers that are watching and monitoring what the kids are doing on their Chromebooks and they are calling them with concerns if they see a lot of searches about suicide or things like that. She asks that they let the youth know that they are going to call them and they will follow up with the family. They have seen an increase in calls for children on the spectrum but it seems to have gone down. The SAFTY crisis line: 1 (888) 334-2777.

8. Member Updates & Announcements

- **Barbara** shared that the next Strategies 2.0 Southern California Learning Community is scheduled on the same day as our CAPC meeting and it starts at 9:30am. The Learning Community is *CAPC's Rise During the COVID-19 Health Crisis: Leading the Strengthening Families approach for rebuilding communities*. She asked folks if they would like to attend that instead of CAPC. Folks decided to keep the momentum and make it an action oriented CAPC meeting. She also mentioned that the Trauma Resource Institute has a lot of webinars and resources about resilience.

9. Adjourn at 11:00 am - Next meeting - June 18, 2020

The meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gloria Munoz