

## **Child Fatality Committee**

### **State Board of Social Services**

**April 18, 2013**

**2:00pm**

#### **Present**

Trudy Brisendine; Robert Spadaccini; Willie Green; Margaret Schultze; Al Wilson; Alex Kamberis; Karin Clark; Mary Walter, Rita Katzman; Paul McWhinney; Joann Wilson-Harfst; Virginia Powell; Jack Knapp; Betty Wade Coyle.

#### **Absent**

Tommy Casteel; Maggi Luca; Wayne Handley; Jim Pope.

#### **Call to Order**

Trudy Brisendine called the meeting to order and introduced members of the committee.

#### **Minutes**

By consensus, the committee agreed to accept the meeting minutes from February 20, 2013.

#### **Regional Child Fatality Review Team Update**

Rita Katzman and Virginia Powell presented a draft report for the regional child fatality review teams' findings and recommendations for SFY 2011. This report did not include demographic information. All five regional teams identified unsafe sleep environment or practices as a significant risk factor. Other risk factors identified by more than one team included substance exposed infants, children less than one year of age, African American males, unrelated caretakers, prior involvement with child welfare, young parents, single mothers, poverty, inadequate or unstable housing, substance abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, prior criminal activity, failure or untimely reporting of abuse or neglect, and inter-jurisdictional or inter-state coordination of responses and services. The major findings and recommendations by region were then reported.

The committee discussed the issue of safe sleep. Each region has identified this as a concern. This is not just a concern for social services, but rather is a public health issue. Safe Sleep information is available in the [2013 Child Abuse Prevention Month Packet](#). A video regarding safe sleep, produced by Eastern Virginia Medical School, is also available on the [Spark Plug](#). Dr. Powell pointed out that the Central Regional Child Fatality Review Team has a very strong advocate for educating others about safe sleep.

The committee discussed mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect as well as some issues about not reporting. While the recent changes in CPS policy do support giving more credibility to reports made by mandated reporters, Dr. Powell said the healthcare system overall is reluctant to report. A suggestion was offered to design a mandated reporter on line course specifically for health care providers, similar to the one for educators.

The committee did agree to review the draft report presented and table further discussion until the final report is presented at the June meeting.

### **Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) Conference**

The first conference in Virginia for CFRT members and State Board staff is April 30th-May 1st at the Sheraton Hotel on Midlothian Turnpike in Richmond. Rita discussed the agenda items and gave a brief description of the breakout sessions to be offered.

### **Child Fatalities SFY 2012**

Rita presented a brief overview and update of the child fatalities for SFY 2012. The preliminary report will be presented at the next meeting. Preliminary numbers include 110 children that were involved in 107 child fatality investigations. Of those, 37 children have been determined to have died as a result of abuse or neglect. One discussion from this information concerned caretakers who had been known to foster care as a child. Margaret Schultze asked if the CFRT will know this information and Rita Katzman replied they would. Rita further reported that she is working on several additional questions that each team will be asking during their reviews beyond the key question of preventability.

### **Next Steps**

Trudy Brisendine reported knowing a policy specialist with the FBI whose specialty is mothers who kill their children. She is a member of the Northern CFRT and Trudy said she would invite her to the next State Board meeting.

### **Next Meeting Date, Time, Location**

The next meeting of this committee is June 18th at 2pm. This meeting will be held in Virginia Beach, the exact location to be determined.