

CHINS – Data Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
June 26, 2006

Attendees: Jill VandenBosch, Chief-of-Staff Office of Senator Spilka; Mary Anne Padien, Chief Legal Counsel Office of Senator Spilka; Lisa Rosenfield, Chief Legal Counsel Representative Owens-Hicks; Erin Bradley, Policy Analyst Office of Senator Spilka; James Morton, Courts; Glenn Daly, EOHHS; Ros Walters, DSS; Ruben Ferreira, DSS; Patricia Walsh, Probation; Nikki Pangonis, Probation. From VERA – Claire Shubuk, Arnold Son, and Rick Valesquez

The meeting commenced with VERA describing what they do and giving a refresher on who they are and their mission.

VERA then reviewed their findings in regards to data information gathered in Massachusetts CHINS cases. VERA had spoken with members from the Courts, DSS, DMH, EOHHS, and DYS. Please see handout for review of complete findings.

Currently, in Mass. CHINS has good information: - aggregate baseline information through the court system (total number of CHINS cases broken down by region, information on petition total numbers, regional breakdown of applications & petitions). Through DSS we have placement total numbers, ethnicity, race, gender and age.

*We do not capture any petitioner information or allegation information

VERA looks at the CHINS system from four points:

Total Applications, Diversion (a.k.a. informal assistance), Petition, and Disposition

Data Sub-Committee looks at it in five phases: Diversion, Application, Informal Assistance, Petition and Disposition

All of these sections are broken down demographically – gender, race, and age to see if the system responds to certain types of behaviors and who the system is bringing in.

*Probation noted that they divert prior to application and possibly after application but they do not have documented records of that diversion.

VERA has three recommendations for the Data Sub-Committee to move forward:

- Quantitative inquiry
 - o Use a Survey that asks demographics on all four points of the system (court processing time, DMH evaluations)
 - o VERA has created mock survey for the Data Sub-Committee to reshape and use as the committee feels necessary
- Qualitative inquiry
 - o Each area would describe the CHINS process on a survey
 - o Distribute a survey, to be filled out for 3 months. Each area should create a report that is rich in detail about CHINS in their area. This would show the diversity and identify the diversion rate.
- Look into supplementing aggregate report that we currently have– court, dss
 - o Through the Court and DSS: race, ethnicity, age, allegation & petitioner

Members of the Data Sub-Committee expressed interest/support for implementation of a prospective data survey – questions were raised as to implementation and analysis of the survey. Also agreed that the survey provided by VERA is a sample and could be changed to meet the needs of Massachusetts and gathered over time.

Important questions were raised for the sub-committee to determine:

- Who oversees the survey and collection process?
- How is information collected?
- Who analyzes the information gathered from the survey?
- Does the survey only cover certain regions or entire state? (regional differences)

There was consensus that in theory this was a valuable piece of information but that additional information was needed and further discussion would follow regarding this. Also, it was mentioned that all agencies needed to work on the same page and to work state wide to get full prospective on CHINS cases. Once survey is determined data sub-committee will gather input from other sub-committees as to feedback and implementation.

EOHHS and DSS agreed to compile same information

Probation agreed to compile aggregate data and give it to the Sub-Committee (this report was shared previously, but we are asking for it again).

Next Steps:

1. Each member of the Data Sub-Committee will speak with their respective departments and get permission to conduct a survey.
2. Each member of the Data Sub-Committee is to gather aggregate statewide data from the 2005 calendar year to present to the sub-committee in August.
3. Data Sub-Committee to have a meeting in August. Date TBD
 - a. This meeting will review each department's findings and determine the survey to be used and the time frame and implementation of the survey.