



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board

Summary of Ad-hoc Committee Meeting

Ad-hoc Committee:

Race & Equity	1:00 - 2:30 pm
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Date: Wednesday, June 8, 2022

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Facilitators: Sandra McBrayer

Meeting Staff: Emily Lay, Stephanie Heying

Race & Equity Ad-hoc Committee Summary: 35 attendees took part in the Ad-hoc Committee.

Advisory Members Participating: Carolyn Griesemer, Stephen Moore

Sandra provided a brief overview of the agenda and the purpose of the Ad-hoc committee. Sandra then explained how the meeting was being conducted via the Zoom platform and provided attendees multiple ways to ask questions during the meeting. Lastly, Sandra encouraged participation from all attendees.

Update on Community Session – Racial Bias in Child Welfare that occurred on April 8th

Agenda item was moved to the August meeting due to the presenter having a last-minute conflict.

Data Review of the Zip Code children resided in and the Zip Code of the homes they were placed in

Sandra opened the agenda item and turned it over to Balambal Bharti to present on the agenda item.

- Balambal gave an overview of the removals and placements of youth in San Diego County.
 - Of the 175 removals of African American youths, 160 were placed in a different zip code (but could be in the same regions or neighborhood).
 - More than half of African American youths placed with relatives were placed in the same zip code.
 - Of the 14 removals of Native American youths, ten were placed in a different zip code.
- Balambal discussed the difficulties with categorizing data by zip codes as zip codes are connected to one another so it is hard to tell if youth are in different zip codes but are actually still in the same general neighborhood or region.
 - Patricia Bevelyn questioned the physical distance between removals of African American youth and their placements. She asked for data that is broken down by region or neighborhood, zip code, and type of placement.
- Sandy stated that the data will be available at the August meeting. She also mentioned that CWS will be reviewing the hotline calls by geographic location, referring agency, and types of calls.

Goal for Ad-Hoc Committee – Eliminate Racial and Ethnic Disparities in CWS – Moving forward

Sandra opened the agenda item and proposed several questions to the group.

- How do we strengthen families and what can be done to support them prior to their contact with the County of San Diego or Child Welfare?

- How do we redirect resources from “after” contact with Child Welfare to “before” contact with Child Welfare?
- How do we transition from mandatory reporting to mandatory supporting?
- Discussion:
 - A participant stated services could be more accessible and preventative if we have more beds for addressing domestic violence and drug abuse, prioritizing and expediting Section 8 housing to ensure families stay together, expansion of livable wages, trainings for women in non-traditional jobs, developing extracurricular activities geared toward expanding growth and development for children.
 - Participants asked about regional services and assessments associated with infants and babies that are removed from their parents. Members discussed more frequent interaction with infants and toddlers for more success with reunification.
 - A participant suggested that it would be helpful if funds were available to be used for services such as camping, family-bonding, and family-enrichment activities to aid preventative measures on the front-end.
 - It was asked if Section 8 housing could be expedited through the County. This would be helpful in keeping families together. CWS said they are unclear and will check
 - A participant suggested that the County partner with the City of San Diego and other interested parties to ensure youth are employed during the summer. The more youth with summer jobs, the lower the youth crime rate.
 - It was asked if there are programs in place that cover the cost of summer camps for youth in foster homes. Participants responded that CWS and Voices for Children do have programs sending youth to summer camps.
 - A participant stated that she felt that entities that provide supportive services are not responsive, effective, or timely. She stated that number of people served does not equal a high success rate.
 - A participant stated that families often forget what services are available and suggested that CWS case workers could send out quarterly reminders.
 - Sandy stated that an independent Ombudsman that does not report to CWS has been hired and is on board at Health and Human Service Agency (HHS). Participants asked if the Ombudsman could attend the next ad-ho meeting to share their background and explain their roles and responsibilities.
 - A participant asked if the County has a toll-free number for youth, families, and clients to register complaints to CWS.

Next Meeting: August 10, 2022 1:00 pm

Sandra concluded the meeting by reviewing agenda items for the August meeting.

- Update on S.B. 354 with the all-County letter and the interpretation from the County.
- Review of where hotline calls are coming from and what entities are making those calls.
- HHS Ombudsman Introduction.
- Data review of the region/community children resided in and the region/community the homes they were placed in.
- Petitions filed by race and population.
- Update on Families First.
- Progress report for Jewish Family Services efforts to-date.
- Compare and contrast data review of mothers who have lost their parental rights in the last 3 years by race.