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Allies Protecting Children Meetings in 2015

Thursday, April 16th * Thursday, June 18th * Thursday, September 10th * Thursday, November 19th

Allies' meetings, which are convened by the Center for Children's Justice (C4CJ), provide an opportunity for diverse stakeholders to join together in shared learning and collective action for PA's at-risk and abused children. The format of meetings are to learn from an invited guest speaker(s) to address a specific topic area during the first hour of the meeting and then move to open discussion and strategizing in the second hour of the meeting. The focus of meetings in 2015 will be around three overarching themes:

1. [Nurture and Protect from the Start](#),
2. [Remembering the CHILD in Child Protection](#), and
3. [Advancing Justice for Child Victims](#)

Nurture and Protect from the Start

Cultivating intentional, collaborative and coordinated strategies to improve the safety, well-being and permanency of children birth to age three. Chief among the priorities will be advancing investment in evidence-based strategies and measurement beyond services delivered to outcomes achieved. Focus areas for shared learning and impact will include:

- Promoting connected (and measured) priorities and strategies across maternal and child-serving agencies, especially when needs assessments, state plans, budgets, and actionable agendas are developed (e.g., Maternal and Child Health – Title V, Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, Child and Family Service Plan/Reviews, Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant and the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant, Child and Family Service Review Program Improvement Plan, Needs Based Plan and Budget, and Maternal and Infant Evidence-Based Home Visiting)
- Promoting interdisciplinary study of and policies intended to reduce child abuse fatalities and near-fatalities, including by elevating intentional Plans of Safe Care for Infants born medically fragile or affected by maternal substance use/abuse

Remembering the CHILD in Child Protection

Cultivating interdisciplinary understanding of front-end child protection and safety strategies particularly related to child abuse reporting and investigations as well as the initial interventions available to the child. Chief among the priorities will be advancing investment in evidence-based strategies and measurement beyond services delivered to outcomes achieved. Focus areas for shared learning and impact will include:

- Achieving consistency in the implementation of the 2013 and 2014 child protection reforms (Child Protective Service Law changes) and measuring the impact of these reforms, including unintended consequences
- Identifying and working to secure corrective changes required in response to the 2013-2014 child protection reforms
- Raising awareness about under-served populations (e.g., young child on child incidents)
- Building political will for items remaining on the [Child Protection Check List](#) (e.g., defining a child with a disability, auditor general access to child welfare records, equalizing the criminal and civil statute of

limitations for child sexual abuse, enhancing the child fatality/near-fatality review process, and realizing an independent Child Protection Advocate)

Advancing Justice for Child Victims

Cultivating a commitment to reduce trauma for child victims, to develop easily navigated and funded pathways to healing, and to more fully secure justice for the abused child. Chief among the priorities will be advancing investment in evidence-based strategies and measurement beyond services delivered to outcomes achieved. Focus areas for shared learning and impact will include:

- Prioritizing children in the distribution of key funding streams for victims (e.g., Victims of Crime Act - VOCA)
- Retaining a dedicated (and tracked) line item for children's advocacy centers (CACs) in the General Fund Budget and advocating that the Needs Based Plan and Budgets (NBPB) or some mechanism exist to more fully inform on county practices related to child abuse investigations
- Securing consensus around outcomes Pennsylvania should measure to track trends toward understanding childhood trauma and justice for child victims (e.g., use of videotaped forensic interviews in court proceedings, children connected to a multidisciplinary team to plan for services, utilization of alternative testimony options, children receiving on-going trauma-informed therapy during/after the investigation)
- Developing an interdisciplinary state-level and accountable mechanism to regularly plan for and measure child protection and children's justice in Pennsylvania

Allies meetings in 2015 will be held at the Offices of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), PA Chapter

10:00 a.m. – Noon

425 N. 21st Street, Suite 401

Camp Hill, PA 17011

Find directions at [http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.nasw-pa.org/resource/resmgr/Directions to NASW.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.nasw-pa.org/resource/resmgr/Directions%20to%20NASW.pdf)

***Conference call participation will be possible for each meeting**

To inquire about attending an Allies meeting or to make a recommendation about a guest speaker for a meeting, email contact@C4CJ.org