



Michigan Child Welfare Improvement Task Force

JULY 23, 2021

WELCOME



Child Welfare Improvement Task Force

Purpose: Time-limited task force to provide legislative, policy, and practice recommendations to MDHHS on the following:

Redesigning a front-end response to allegations of abuse and neglect that is free from bias and distinguishes between crisis and a need for family services and support.

Reducing racial disparities in foster care outcomes through:

- Increased use of supported, safe kinship care
- Improved access to community based mental health services
- Elimination of improper placements in residential settings



MDHHS Updates



Task Force Timeline



January:

Launch of Task Force



May-June:

Synthesis of Recommendations
(No Task Force Meeting in June)



September:

Review and Discuss
Implementation Plan



November:

Monitor and Report on
Implementation Plan

February-April:

Listening Sessions and
Recommendations



July- August:

Planning for
Implementation



October:

Vote and Adopt
Implementation Plan





Recommendations from Residential Facilities (20 minutes)

Megan Cagney Pena, Director of Clinical Operations Hope Network Behavioral Health Services

Emma Schab, Vice President of Regional Operations for Grand Rapids and East Lansing Bethany Christian Services

Janet Reynolds Snyder,
Executive Director Michigan Federation for Children and Families

Michael E. Williams,
President and Chief Executive Officer Orchard's Children's Services, Inc.

Our group's recommendations outline key points to address systemic racism and the disproportionate level of children of color in our care by improving equity throughout the child welfare system. Taking strong actions built on a foundational framework that emphasizes racial equity and dismantles disproportionality is necessary to keep families together and prevent forcible family separation and to safely reduce the number of children in residential treatment.

Recommendation 1

Through training, modeling and mentoring, formalize a generational or 2Gen approach in our priorities for Michigan's children and families where this lens for all our work becomes an intentional and overarching theme in policy and practice. This approach is designed with whole-family involvement with explicit focus on racial equity in meeting family needs and laser focus on reducing the disproportionality of children of color engaged with our child welfare system.



Recommendation 2

In making a difference for the disproportionate level of children of color in our care, we urge expanding and further enhancing approaches embracing an equity frame, already in place, that have shown positive impact on keeping families together and reducing the number of youth in residential treatment:



Expansion of and funding support for the state's use of Blind Removal to reduce the number of families experiencing the trauma of removal of a child and to ensure equitable access to prevention and preservation services.



Expansion of and funding support for the state's use of Enhanced Foster Care (EFC) which has shown significant success in reducing the number of youth in residential treatment and reducing/eliminating recidivism by enhancing family and community-based options. EFC shows a significant increase of children of color receiving EFC services, thereby remaining with family/caregivers in the community, compared to their representation in the general foster care population.



Earmark a new tier of funding designed to ensure equitable access to and assistance in navigating mental health services that are critical for families in providing stability for their children. This new tier of eligibility would create support for a family centered planning process that is both youth-guided and family driven and would bring alignment to availability of services, whether entering through Health and Human Services or Community Mental Health.



Regular assessment of the Residential Placement Unit (RPU) and Maximus as the Independent Assessor to assure residential treatment, when appropriate, is engaged as a specialized opportunity to help with a specific set of needs and circumstances, and to regularly investigate levels of disproportionality in residential treatment settings. RPU has the ability to make placement decisions appropriate to the needs of the youth and to ensure that youth have equitable access to those treatment programs by addressing and decreasing barriers to equitable access.

Recommendation 3

We strongly support recommendation from the Prior Reports Workgroup on the creation of an Oversight Committee:

"Develop a DHHS oversight committee that consists of legal, family court, CMH, education, civil rights, medical, DHHS leadership, DTMB, MCSC, tribal leadership, affinity groups/organizations of private agencies to ensure accountability in achieving task force recommendations. This committee will have budgetary support and legislative mandate to assure anti-racist policies and practices are defined."





Review Recommendations

Task Force Recommendations for Action



1. Redefine Abuse and Neglect/Physical Neglect



2. Implement new SDM tool



3. Use childcare fund for prevention services to avoid removal



4. Work to shift budget line items to allow for more prevention and family preservation



5. New strategy for kinship care



6. Reduce length of stay, and entry for CCIs



7. Increase access to mental health services for children and families to reduce the removal of children from homes.



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Charge New Implementation Workgroup

Members

Chair: Carol Spigner

Anne Farrell

Shayne Machen

Savator Selden-Johnson

Ex-Officio Members:

David Sanders

Tommy Stallworth

Staff:

Paul Elam

Dondré Young

Katie Mauter



60 Day Workgroup. Charged with creating an Implementation Plan to be presented at the September Task Force Meeting.

The background of the slide is a white, horizontally-planked wooden surface. Green leaves and branches are scattered across the top and right sides of the image, framing the central text.

Developing a Report Format (20 minutes)

FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

Task Force Recommendations for Action



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Turning Recommendations SMART Goals



Possible Approach to a Report

- I. Charge of the Task Force
- II. Principles of guiding the work (to be discussed)
- III. Overarching goals
 - I. Reduce unnecessary/ disparate intervention into the lives of children and families
 - II. Increase capacity to serve children and families in their homes and communities
 - III. Restrict the use of CCI to those children whose treatment needs require a structured treatment program



IV. Recommendations

Section 1: Intake and community services (Rx 1-5)

Section 2: Residential Treatment Services (Rx 6-7)

Recommendation #1: *Each recommendation would have the following structure.*

- Current issue/problem
- Goal
- Outcome (specific, measurable and time)
- Action steps and due dates



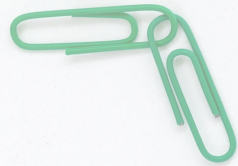
Example of Principles (to be discussed)

Reduce disparities

Reduce the separation of AA children from their families

Build the capacity to serve children and families in their home and cultural and geographic communities

Assure that residential treatment services are provided based on the needs of children and their families.



Issues to be resolved

A top-down view of a desk with various items: a pair of glasses, several paper clips, a pen, a notebook with a checklist, and a succulent plant. The notebook is open to a page with a checklist that includes 'GOAL', 'PLAN', and 'ACTION', each with a checked box. The background is a light, neutral color.

Accountability structure and process

Action to be taken on behalf of children current in CCI.



Workgroup Updates

Upcoming Tentative Meeting Schedule

Task Force Meetings

July 23, 11:00-1:00PM

July – September,
Implementation Workgroup

September 24, 11:00-1:00PM

The Task Force will not meet in August.

Data Workgroup

TBD

Chair: Joe Ryan

MPHI Staff: Monica Trevino mtrevino@mphi.org

Practice Workgroup

July 26, 2021, 3pm-4pm

Co-Chairs: Lara Bouse, Lillie Pinder

MPHI Staff: Katie Mauter kmauter@mphi.org

Legislative/Budget Workgroup

TBD

Co-Chairs: Tommy Stallworth, David Sanders

MPHI Staff: Alison Benoit abenoit@mphi.org

Prior Reports Workgroup

Report out May 2021

Co-Chairs:

Michael Williams, Savator Selden-Johnson

MPHI Staff: Dondre Young dyoung@mphi.org

**Additional dates to be added if needed*