



GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON CHILD SAFETY AND FAMILY EMPOWERMENT MINUTES

November 05, 2015

10:00 AM

1700 West Washington Street, Governor's 2nd Floor Conference Room
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

A meeting of the Governor's Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment (Council) was convened on November 5, 2015 at 10:05 AM in the 2nd Floor Conference Room, 1700 West Washington, Phoenix, Arizona 85007. Notice having been duly given. Present and absent were the following members of the Council.

Members Present

Angela Ducey (Chairperson)	James Molina
Kathryn A. Pidgeon (Vice Chairperson)	Paul Mulligan
Brian Steele on behalf of Luke Barnett	Darlene Newsom
Jay Cory	Julie O'Dell
Terry Crist	Dennae Pierre
Roy Dawson	Leslie Reprogle
Janet Garcia	Warren Stewart
Belen Gonzalez	Andrea Stuart
Kristine Jacober	Jeffrey Taylor
Tyler Johnson	Mark Upton
George Khalaf	Richard Yarbough
Vicki Mayo	

Members Absent

Zora Manjencich

Staff Present

Debbie Moak	Sonya Pierce-Johnson
Billy Thrall	Myriah Mhoon
Deborrah Miller	
John Raeder	

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Angela Ducey called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

2. OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Mrs. Ducey provided a message of conviction for serving and provided background information regarding her story of adoption by her sister through foster care. She expressed her gratitude to the members of the council for their willingness to serve.

Mrs. Pidgeon provided background information on herself as an adoption attorney, and her relationship with the Maricopa County National Adoption Day, the largest adoption day event in the United States. Mrs. Pidgeon expressed her commitment to the children and families in foster care.

3. INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mrs. Ducey welcomed the members and asked them introduce themselves. Mrs. Ducey thanked each member for their willingness to serve.

4. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF YOUTH, FAITH AND FAMILY

Director, Debbie Moak, provided an overview of the agency and background information regarding the creation of the Council, as well as information on other councils that the agency oversees. Mrs. Moak thanked all those on the Council for their service and all those who serve youth in the communities.

5. EXECUTIVE ORDER OVERVIEW

Billy Thrall with the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family provided the Council with copies of the Executive Order which created the Council. Mr. Thrall pointed out two specific areas of the Executive Order, whereby the Governor is calling upon faith-based and community resources to solve the challenges faced by our most vulnerable children and families within the child welfare system. Mr. Thrall stated that the Governor is calling upon the Council to be leaders in the community to be the solution.

6. SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Mrs. Ducey stated that the Council wants to start out by recognizing successes within the Foster Care community, and as such, she presented Janice Myers of the Department of Child Safety with an award for her contribution. Mrs. Ducey read from an email from a family which praised Ms. Myers for her work as their case manager. Mrs. Ducey stated that the people who serve the state and the children are the true heroes.

7. CHILD SAFETY – CURRENT SUMMARY PRESENTATION

Janet Garcia with the Casey Family Foundation presented a summary of Children in the Arizona Child Welfare Summary. Ms. Garcia stated that compared to other states, Arizona relies heavily on foster care and in 2013, Arizona's rate of children entering care was the third highest in the United States. Additionally, in 2013, 14,398 children under age 18 were in out-of-home placements in Arizona, 15% had been in care 2+ years, 21% had been in care at least 1 prior time, 14% were placed in group homes or institutions, and 41% were placed with relatives. Ms. Garcia indicated reasons for children coming into care in Arizona included, 90% from neglect and 10% for abuse. She also indicated that the number and percent of children determined to be a victim of maltreatment is increasing in Arizona as well. Ms. Garcia shared two stories of children in the foster care system in Arizona.

Mr. Mulligan asked what is driver for maltreatment and why is it going up.

Ms. Garcia stated that some changes in statute and policy have been implemented and that there is now less ability to work cases and fewer funds available for case workers, which has impacted the statistics.

Ms. Newsom asked what the key factors for other states success were.

Ms. Garcia stated she did not have that information, but the Casey Family Foundation would look into it.

Mr. Thrall asked if Ms. Garcia would please present at another meeting and Ms. Garcia agreed.

Mr. Stewart inquired about the focus on parent brokenness. He asked how are we, as a Council, going to reach goals if parents have brokenness. Can we look at parent's needs and address how to be better parents.

Mrs. Ducey responded that she believes the Council can work to empower families to stay together and as a Council can provide assistance to parents.

Mr. Crist asked when the 2014 would be available.

Ms. Garcia stated she would check into that and provide response at a later meeting.

Mr. Yarbough asked if the Casey Family Foundation compiles data on the correlation of economic conditions and the upward trend of Foster Care numbers.

Ms. Garcia stated she did not.

Mrs. Ducey thanked Ms. Garcia and the Casey Family Foundation for the presentation.

8. SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND FOSTER CARE PRESENTATION

Mr. Jeff Taylor with the Phoenix Advisory Board presented an overview of substance abuse and its relationship to foster care. Mr. Taylor stated that 85% of parents, where the child is removed from the home, reported substance abuse within the prior 30 days. Mr. Taylor stated that we have a drug problem worsened by the wreckage of addiction. Mr. Taylor stated that addiction affects most cases of child abuse and neglect. Mr. Taylor stated that solution must include investing in families and providing for those in recovery the skills and tools to be good parents. By investing in the family, we will decrease the numbers coming into foster care. Mr. Taylor stated that we have the expertise to make it safe in Arizona for our most vulnerable.

Mrs. Ducey thanked Mr. Taylor for his presentation and for his service on the Council.

9. AZ 127 – MODEL PRESENTATION

Dr. Terry Crist with the City of Grace Church introduced Ms. Katie O'Dell who provided a presentation on the AZ 127 Model. Ms. O'Dell stated that the goal of AZ 127 is to fully engage churches in every part of the state working in collaboration to help families and

children thrive through a holistic ministry model. Ms. O'Dell stated that the values of AZ 127 included; embracing the child and everyone in that child's life, every church activated to care for children and families in their church or through relational ministry to that child and their family, and partner with government, agencies and other community stakeholders. Ms. O'Dell stated that since AZ 127's inception in 2012, over 2600 families have attended an AZ 127 orientation and over 600 kinship, foster or adoptive homes have been sustained, as well as over 1500 adoptions finalized.

Mrs. Ducey thanked Ms. O'Dell for her presentation.

10. SAFE FAMILIES MODEL PRESENTATION

Mr. Mark Upton with Christian Family Care Agency provided a presentation on Safe Families for Children. Mr. Upton stated that the goal for Safe Families is to host vulnerable children and create extended family-like support for families in crisis through a community of compassionate volunteers, and then ultimately reunites them with their families. Safe Families has over 11,000 volunteers, 3,200 host families, provides for 18,000 children at 75 active sites in 28 states. Mr. Upton stated that Safe Families provides an alternative to child welfare custody, overwhelmed and resource limited parents with a safe, temporary place for their child, and family support and stabilization. The average length of stay is 31 days, the average age of the child is 5, and 94% of the children are reunited with their families. Mr. Upton stated that the program was launched in Chicago in 2002 and that Christian Family Care launched Safe Families for Arizona children in 2012.

Mrs. Ducey asked how many Safe Families are available in Arizona.

Mr. Upton stated that 12 families located in the Phoenix, Casa Grande and Tucson areas.

Mrs. Garcia asked if Safe Families intersects with DCS.

Mr. Upton stated that the program is voluntary and not government mandated, so they have not intersected at this time, but there is a high need to work with other agencies and receive referrals if necessary.

Mrs. Ducey thanked Mr. Upton for his presentation.

11. COMMISSION GOALS AND COMMITTEES

Mrs. Ducey stated that the Council would be providing four ways to make a difference and see outcomes. Mrs. Ducey introduced the committees and the Chair for each committee, then provided time for members of the Council to break for 10 minutes to meet with committee Chairs.

Outreach Committee

Mr. Terry Crist will Chair committee.

Support Committee

Ms. Leslie Reproggle will Chair committee.

Prevention Committee

Ms. Vicki Mayo will Chair committee.

Partnerships Committee

Ms. Janet Garcia will Chair committee.

12. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

The public did not respond to the call.

Vice Chair Mrs. Pidgeon shared her celebration of 10 years working with foster families and thanked each of the Council members for their time, compassion and knowledge.

13. ADJOURN

Mrs. Ducey adjourned the meeting at 12:00 PM.

DRAFT