

Successful Children and Youth Policy Team

November 12, 2014 Meeting Summary

Key decisions and actions are in **bold**.

SCYPT Members in Attendance:

George Becerra, Bob Bermingham, Tisha Deeghan, Judith Dittman, Jack Dobbyn, Kim Dockery, Cristy Gallagher, Pat Harrison, Bryan Holland (for Ed Roessler), Cathy Hudgins, Rick Leichtweis, Chris Leonard, Jane Lipp, Jeff McKay, Megan McLaughlin, Mary Ann Panarelli, Fahemeh Pirzadeh, Jeff Platenberg, Dave Rohrer, Jane Strauss

Information Item – Northern Virginia Suicide Prevention Plan:

Jesse Ellis presented the Northern Virginia Suicide Prevention Plan. While the plan's goals and objectives are completed, the next steps include the identification and promotion of tools and resources to allow groups to implement the strategies in a variety of settings and sectors and to targeted groups in a culturally competent manner. Jeff McKay noted that it will be important to identify where there are gaps in what is being implemented, so that the County can request resources from the state. Cristy Gallagher referenced the recently released [report of the Governor's Task Force on Mental Health](#) and noted that basic education on mental health and how to access help is critical. Mary Ann Panarelli explained that mental health is incorporated, in developmentally appropriate ways, into health curricula for K-12. Dave Rohrer stated that, in addition to working with firearms dealers, gun owners should also be educated. Laura Mayer (PRS CrisisLink) stated that they have found that families often don't have the right "language" to ask for help. Mr. Ellis noted that the feedback from the SCYPT will be incorporated into the implementation plans.

Information Item – Overview of Existing Goals and Outcomes Related to Children and Youth:

Jesse Ellis presented a brief overview of existing community-level goals for children and youth developed by Fairfax County or Fairfax County Public Schools, in addition to examples from other jurisdictions. Victoria Cardoza Kairys then led a discussion on the importance of developing a set of shared community-level goals to guide the work of the SCYPT. A summary of responses to the key discussion questions follows:

Why does the SCYPT need to establish a set of goals?

- The set of goals established by the SCYPT should be the ONE plan for children and youth that merges all of the work done throughout the county and community. There have never been discussions at a systems level about this. The plan development should provide the opportunity to have a system-wide dialogue around key issues affecting children and youth, and how to address them.
- When the SCYPT was formed, its work was meant to serve as a template for what others should follow at the policy level.
- The SCYPT elevates issues at the Boards' level.
- The SCYPT helps to identify issues and priorities that must be addressed for successful children and youth.

- We all serve the same population. But the SCYPT fills in where boards, independently, do not. Boards do not sit together to discuss what is good for the county. The SCYPT allows a comprehensive look at issues to start identifying best possible solutions. The hope is that the Boards can see the value in this joint approach.
- County agencies have done a lot of work as best they can. As leadership, the SCYPT needs to “set the tone” to have better coordination of services.

What should be the focus of the goals?

- Ensure family and children have best possible outcomes.
- Ensure every child has opportunities through services that are provided equitably. It’s not always obvious across the county where changes are needed.
- Identify pockets of where resources don’t exist, where there are fewer opportunities.
- Budget defines what gets done. The SCYPT can use goals to make recommendations that will shape the budget. Goals can be used to better inform decisions about resource allocation. Fairfax County is very large, and very resource-rich. We need to have more opportunities to bring resources together for greater impact.

How will the SCYPT use the goals?

- Goals will help make recommendations to decision-making bodies. Goals must be presented to the Boards.
- Goals will help provide the best services, ensuring the best use of existing resources.
- Goals will improve coordination of resources.
- Where we see a problem, these goals can help come up with better approaches.
- Ensure there is consensus among all Boards to make decisions about funding.

How will accountability be established for achieving the goals?

- Ensure that both Board of Supervisors and School Board are in agreement with the SCYPT’s approach.
- Need to identify who implements these goals.
- Need to identify who is to be held accountable and who sets accountability.
- Through these goals, ensure that everyone understands the system, their role, and the pieces they own in the services provided for successful children, youth, and families.
- Need data to support progress and outcome monitoring; need to know what strategies work or do not work. Need to correct strategies that do not work and continue improving efficiency.
- Ensure that community is included in conversations. There has been very little opportunity for the community-based organizations to provide input, although there is much they can contribute. Community can provide feedback about what’s working or not working at the grassroots level. (Need: Increased community representation in SCYPT, define their role, and facilitate their participation in discussions.)
- Caution against thinking that one plan will solve all issues.