Girls Secure Program
August 8, 2013
Meeting Minutes

Prior to the meeting a number of participants toured the Pueblo unit.

1. **Welcome and Orientation**
   Dr. Michael Schultz began the meeting by welcoming and thanking all members for their time. Due to hectic schedules, some were unable to be at this meeting but were able to send representatives on their behalf. We also need to be mindful of those who should be here; one group that we know is not represented is the clients we will serve. All are asked to be mindful of the age, race, culture, spirituality and sexual orientation of the girls we will serve. This is an opportunity to start a conversation that will take us into the future and synthesize a collaborative approach with working with the families.

All were asked to introduce themselves and to offer what they hope to gain from this meeting. The following are the responses:

William Rosenbeck, Superintendent, Connecticut Juvenile Training School (CJTS)
- Introduction and welcomed the group.
- Will oversee this DCF Girls Program as part of Superintendent role at CJTS.
- Background with girls and the Terri Thomas Program in Springfield - dedicated to a worker who was the victim of domestic violence.
- Wants to learn from all in the meeting about the girls and how best to meet their needs in this program.

Michelle Sarofin, Superintendent of the Albert J. Solnit Children's Center
- As this program will be on grounds of the Solnit Center, is happy to collaborate.
- Very excited about this endeavor and philosophically this is my passion.
- The Solnit Center just opened its third Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) unit and is well aware that start up is difficult and requires a lot of people.
- It is important that there is a linkage with the Girls Private providers to ensure we are going through this process with them.

Mark Hagelston, Congregate Care Unit with DCF
- Has a passion for this population and looking to learn about what is being discussed and considered in the development of this program.
- Sees a bigger system that needs addressing.

Kelly Stutzman, Deputy Superintendent, CSSD
- Came today out of interest and curiosity how DCF will manage girls that may be the same population CSSD serves.
- Has a lot of information as she started up and shut down a number of programs.

- Wants to be helpful.

Doreen Thompson, Program Operations Director, Community Partners in Action
- Oversees 5 juvenile programs supervised by CSSD.
- Has an investment in the girls they serve and wants a voice in the quality of care when they leave them.
- Gain knowledge where the girls will go when they leave their program as they serve 22 girls at any given time in their two programs.

Mickey Kramer, Acting Child Advocate, Office of the Child Advocate
- Greatly invested in all of Connecticut's children and wants to actively be involved in discussions and developments of the girls program.
- We need to focus beyond bricks and mortar.
- Need to learn how the girls are coming in.
- Wants to contribute and learn about the development of this program.
- Expectations are extremely high.

John Mattera, Principal, Cady School, CJTS
- Having worked at the Children's Home of Cromwell, Gray Lodge, taught at IOL and in the public schools; looking to bring his experience to the discussions.
- Have a son and 5 daughters . . .
- Hopes to learn and fix what we may have done wrong in the past.

Sonia Ikenson, Department Head, Cady School, CJTS
- Here to learn and bring experience not only from having worked in the public schools but also at the Long Lane School.
- Had an intimate experience working with the girls at the Long Lane School and was there when the program closed.
- Knows the intimate problems that girls have and the love that comes out of them as well.
- Here to learn, listen and challenge.

Debra Collins, Program Manager overseeing Staff Liaisons in the Detention Centers and Correctional Facilities
- Has been in the field for 33 years.
- At one point had over 30 girls and saw a pattern that they have been everywhere.
- Wants to eliminate those patterns as we can do much better for this population.

Sarah Gibson, here on behalf of Linda Dixon and works in the Congregate Care Unit
- Works specifically with therapeutic group homes.
- Sees the struggles that some strong programs are having when one girl is not appropriately placed and sees the needs of other girls diminished.
- Sees how hard the programs are working to maintain the girls.
- Hopes her experience will be helpful in the process.

Jonathan Simpson, Director of Journey House

- He is part of the continuum of care.
- Wants to ensure that the same mistakes are not made.
- One size never fits all.

Debra Bond, Clinical Director at CJTS

- Worked in the private sector, community health centers, inpatient facilities, St. Raphael's and private practice.
- Loves DBT and will be a constant DBT champion as we need a common language.
- We have to figure out how we move the girls in the continuum of care.
- Have to figure out what we want to accomplish in each place.
- Need to build a culture that will be respectful and strength based.
- Treatment to meet their needs educationally and clinically.
- Is here to help and be part of this team.
- While at a visit at Journey House observed how they problem solve and are respectful and how that translates to the girls.

Joanne Norman, Juvenile Parole Supervisor, DCF

- Has worked at DCF for 23 years.
- This program has been long time in coming and wants to know the girls are safe.
- Their needs are so complex.
- From parole's perspective, do not believe in locking kids up, however, we can't treat girls if they are hopping from place to place; they need to stay put.
- Need to develop relationships and work on their needs.
- Ensure the programming is gender specific and not correctional based.

Trung Le, Regional Parole Manger, DCF

- Has worked as regional parole manager for 2 years and is here to learn about the program with the hopes that regional staff can start continuum of care planning from day one.
- Need to get the children into the community as quickly as possible with safety as the perfect balance.
- Partnering is key.

Lara Herscovitch, Deputy Director at the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance

- Abby Anderson sends her regards as she could not be here today.
- Echo a lot of what has already been said.
- Appreciates the openness and culture of the Department and has a lot of respect for that spirit.
- Here for clarity.
- Interested in getting it right as we have failed these young women in many aspects of their treatment and we need to figure this out.
- Need to develop a program and get the continuum right within Juvenile Justice and far beyond.

Mallory LaPierre, Policy Associate with the Juvenile Justice Alliance

- As this is a new field, this will be a learning opportunity.

Marisa Halm, Director of TeamChild Juvenile Justice Project, Center for Children's Advocacy

- Here representing Martha Stone as she very much wanted to be here.
- Wants to see what is happening with the development of this program with a critical eye.
- As her background is in education, is interested in what the plan is for them after they leave here.
- Here to learn and ask questions.

Heather Panciera, Assistant Child Advocate, Office of the Child Advocate

- Role is to look at the kids in residential care, prisons and hospitals. In that process has learned a lot from these girls and we need to be mindful of that.
- Important thing is that most of those girls are coming from residential.
- Doing focus groups could be beneficial.
- Their stories are different than what we see it as.
- How do we help them practice what they see, we need to give them that opportunity and need to teach them they can do it in the community.
- Education is huge and it needs to be integral in the planning as it keeps these kids in where they are.

Stephen Tracy, Superintendent of Schools, DCF

- Role is to ensure the youngsters are getting the very best they can and lift up the significance of education. Education is a critical part of how they get better.
- Education is a normative experience as everybody has a teacher.
- If you work hard you can change the course of your path.
- Commit to finding out the source of problems and planning for the future.
- Law is to have a student success plan and ask what they see themselves doing into the future.
- Ensure that the kids have a thoughtful education plan.
- Interest here is to learn what the plans and intentions are so their experience is seamless and sensible.

Frank Gregory, Director of Program Operations, Solnit Children's Center

- Wants to be part of collaboration and partnership.
- As Solnit operates female units, feels he has some information to share but a lot to learn . . . beg, borrow and steal.
- Hopes to have an opportunity to collaborate on which girls belong where.
- Think about how we individually serve the girls but together share responsibility for all kids.

Maria Koslawy, APRN, CJTS

- As her background is from York, she sees that the kids at York are treated as inmates, whereas at CJTS as residents.
- Starting this program is huge, as the girls are isolated at York.
- Having experience in women's health, the medical portion for this age group is challenging.
- Need to ensure good education of birth control and child care, as some may be moms.

Christine Martinez, Rehabilitation Therapy Supervisor, CJTS

- Worked at Long Lane School with the female population.
- Very happy that something is happening for the girls and that it is being addressed here.
- During rehab activities, the therapists are able to bond with the kids and develop trust. Hope to do the same with the girls.
- CJTS started the Baby Elmo program as some of the boys are parents; hope to bring the same program to the girls.

Cindy Butterfield, Chief Fiscal Officer, DCF

- Here to oversee the fiscal piece of the programming.

Cindy Rutledge, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, DCF

- Is very excited about this program as she worked in public sector and set up girls programs.
- Key concern is education as one thing the girls want is their high school diploma.

Lindsey Guerrero, Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Juvenile Post-Conviction and Re-Entry Unit

- Represents the girls on parole status.
- Need to break the cycle of in and out.
- Need for permanency when they do go home.

Mildred Dooty, Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Juvenile Post-Conviction and re-Entry Unit

- Here to listen and is grateful to be able to offer our perspective.
- The girls, by the time they get to a secure place, have been in many placements.
- Identify the most appropriate placement for the girls and begin discharge planning from day one.

2. <u>Administration</u>

Mr. Rosenbeck reported that we are looking at approximately 42 positions to run the unit with 30 new positions. The funding for the new positions will come from the DCF budget from the personal services account. We are looking at a 1 to 3 staffing ratio. Some positions are at the Solnit Center which will be moved over. We have a good staffing plan in place and Commissioner Katz is working with DAS to get approvals. The current management team at CJTS will oversee this program and will be working hard to incorporate the added functions into their day to day work. The only position that we may be looking to refill is a Director of Residential Care. Even though the unit is physically located on Solnit Center grounds, it will be a free standing program managed entirely by CJTS staff. We will identify staff at CJTS who will be trained to work with girls so in case of an incident that requires support, those staff will come to assist as we want programming to continue with the rest of the girls on the unit. We will also do cross training for staff from PRTF units, as some girls may be able to transfer from CJTS to PRTF. We will rely more on Youth Service Officer positions to greet families coming in for visits and not Buildings & Grounds staff as we do at CJTS. This will allow the staff to have familiarity with the girls and promote an even flow of consistency. Law enforcement will be used as a resource officer so the girls will have an opportunity to get to know them and not just during crisis situations. We want to be trauma informed, but not just for the girls but for staff who practice self care so they can integrate their skills to the environment they work in.

We are communicating with all labor unions to ensure that not just seniority plays a role in the hiring process but rather the best person for this setting.

There is bonding money that was set aside from the Bridgeport Project from years ago for renovating the unit. We estimate total cost of modifications will be $3.5M and we are in negotiations with the Department of Construction Services to work out who will oversee the project. We have a walk through planned for tomorrow to prepare a list of what exactly needs to be done.

A concern was raised about the increased population at CJTS and if this will have an impact on managing the girls program. The key is finding the appropriate manager to run day to day operations and be the connection to CJTS. Rehab Department feels confident with their staffing levels. Clinical Department requested a supervisory position and received approval for a supervising psychologist. We are in negotiations with Michelle Sarofin to use a Solnit Center Psychiatrist. Tammy Sneed will be spending a great amount of time as the linkage with the Girls Network and will look at the girls programming. Educationally there is a Department Head in the budget and we will not use any unlicensed psychologist in this site. Gary Kleeblatt, of our Public Relations office, will be participating in these meetings as we want to ensure that information is timely and accurate. Conversations around CJTS needs and concerns are taking place at the Senior Leadership meetings with the Commissioner and Area Office Directors on a regular basis. It was suggested that the Girls Network group join the next meeting with this group. We know that prevention and early intervention is key and discharge and aftercare planning is dependent on each other.

3. <u>Clinical, Educational and Medical Services</u>

The *Secure Assessment, Education and Treatment for Girls and Youth Women: Fostering a Family-Centered, Gender-Responsive and Solution-Focused Continuity of Services* handout dated May 20, 2013 was available to the meeting participants. Dr. Schultz made reference to pages 15 and 16 which offers related references and recommended reading. A lot of this is around families, and we identify families in the broadest sense of the word. It was suggested that family advocates be invited to participate in these conversations. Many of our parents have suffered through their own tragedies and many are stuck in exactly where their children are, so we need to be able to address this. The Connecticut Parenting website is also a wonderful resource. Parenting adolescents is very different. The age may have to change to 13 - 20 rather than 18 as many kids coming into York are 18 year olds. This program will take congregate care and parole admissions and at this point we don't know if courts will be involved. Knowing not only who our girls are but who our staff are as we need to be thinking about offering family care not just child care.

4. <u>Specialized Care</u>

One of our bigger challenges currently is the human trafficking and in many ways the department is leading the country in this area. This is a whole different clinical work and a huge challenge. At the last human trafficking operation, we apprehended five girls and three have managed to go back to where they came from. Journey House is full and has been at capacity for the last three years with an average length of stay at 268 days. The young girls are

difficult to discharge. A lot of work needs to be done around after care, with specialized foster care and group homes. What Journey House struggles with is the girls who have graduated as there is not a way to be reimbursed for them. State facilities by statutes have to pay for education. Under PREA we are able to have 18 year olds unless they incur adult charges and that may change, otherwise they are covered in the juvenile area. Communication between juvenile facilities is very important.

5. **Discussion, Questions and Next Steps (What are we missing?)**

The following are responses to the next steps:

- Population and Length of Stay.
- If longer stay, what does the program look like.
- Human trafficking.
- Celebrating diversity and inclusion of all.
- Ensure gender is appropriate when selecting staff. At Solnit the Girls PRTFs are managed by female staff and it is working out very well. When girls are escalating and restrained by males it adds to their trauma.
- Move to nuts and bolts sooner rather than later.
- Identify the age.
- More often than not when starting up a new program there will be bumpy roads and people need to give it a chance to move forward and not be quick to criticize. Need to give it a chance to launch.
- Work on programming for these girls. Need a continuum of care. Most of these kids are under the care of their parents and need to go home. If they need a longer term go to Journey House.
- Revocation hearings need to be worked out.
- Bed capacity (hard to assess at this time).
- Look at the 13 and 14 year olds whether they are appropriate for this unit.
- Continued collaboration between facilities and area offices.
- Bring in stakeholder from the community as they are key to success.
- Set discharge dates early on as kids in facility for long stays is not good.
- Anyway Journey House can support this program, they are here for us.
- Hope to find a way to provide a positive, engaging and challenging school experience. Fear that we may not be able to reach them in the short amount of time they are with us.
- Detentions are seeing more 15 and 16 year olds and are staying longer. Need intensive well run small program as girls do better in smaller settings.
- The age range may not be a concern as older girls tend to take care of the younger girls.
- The environment must be conducive and critical to this program.
- Can not look at one program to solve all problems. Not one place will be all things for all situations.
- Transparency, flexibility and communication are critical.
- We can't always control the kids but we can the staffing and that is the most important thing in any program.
- Engage communities.

- Defining the population. Hopes that it enables a broader conversation of what is missing for the girls as this is not going to fix all.
- Fear is that we are going to lock up more girls.
- Build it and they will come . . . feel it will be filled within a short time, how do we make it work.
- How do we encourage the communities to work with their kids.
- How do we work with girls who aren't treatment ready.
- We will learn a lot as we go along, hope we are patient, thoughtful and not reactive.
- Office of the Child Advocate has extensive experience looking at state run programs and have concerns that there are no external overseers.
- Result based accountability is important
- Are the girls going to be better off having been in this program
- There is a risk as we can't be everything to everyone.
- Need to be clear about admission criteria.
- Need to be able to communicate when kids are ready for discharge. Plan for discharge and develop a process for when there are different views in making the decision as what is best for the kids.
- Create a life that is worth living and want them to be safe.
- Number 1 risk factor related to recidivism is return to an unsafe neighborhood.
- Have to value every persons opinion. Be respectful, realistic and meet immediately when something goes wrong and not blame and point fingers.
- Have an ability to talk to each other to share success story what worked and what didn't.

All were asked to write down top three admission recommendations. The following are the responses:

1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
Girls who need help to be ready for treatment	Girls and young adult women with a high level of specialized treatment needs who are stuck in detention / York CI	Girls who are brought back into placement after an initial lengthy stay and an unsuccessful step down to home / group home
Violent, threatening to public safety (serious offenses) - scored high on validated risk assessment tool	Not able to succeed in other parts of continuum (failed in less secure environments)	??
No direct placements	Ages 13 - 20; 10-12 beds	Shorter stays - crisis management
Parole placement	Court ordered placements	Need to get the girls out of York
Hard to maintain youth who need treatment	Community Safety risk - high risk classification	York Diversion

1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
"Difficult to Treat" girls (i.e., girls that have been unsuccessful in other treatment settings)	Emergency placements (i.e., short term stabilization and return to previous placements)	CJTS is the "3rd of the line" and should not be a destination, but rather should function to boomerang kids back up the line towards less restrictive settings
16 - 18 year olds	Trauma	High risk, high aggression
Highly aggressive	Not responding to engage in treatment	High risk of elopement
Self and community safety	Non compliance in productive activities	Delinquent mental health
This should be the last stop, the girls have exhausted all other placement so those who are not treatment ready, and are too aggressive / destructive at previous placement		
*Girls who are disrupting significantly from a facility and injuring staff	Girls facing incarceration	Girls disrupting from home / community family context

**I believe we should use Solnit PRTFs psychiatric facilities or Journey House for the girls facing potential psychiatric hospitalization or referral to an emergency room. I also don't think we can take direct admissions at this time.*

Conclusion

Mr. Rosenbeck thanked all for their time. This dialogue was well beyond expectations and through open discussions we can become a better facility.

The next meeting date is **Thursday, September 12, 2013 at 1:00 p.m**. at Solnit Center South, in the Silvermine Conference Room.

Meeting Notes Submitted by Irene Yanaros