

**State of Connecticut**  
**Child Safety & Crisis Response Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**January 27, 2010**  
**DEMHS, 25 Sigourney Street, Hartford**

**Attendees:** Amparo Garcia, DSS; Betsy Hard, DEMHS; Tom Gavaghan, DEMHS; Brenda Bergeron, DEMHS; Bruce Lockwood, CEMA; Lisa Marcinkowski, UCONN; Jessica Koehler, Military OneSource; Scott Newgass, Dept. of Education; Peter Palermino, DSS; Sgt. James Thomas, CT State Police; Sandra Baker, DEMHS; Mary Kate Lowndes, Commission on Children; and Barbara Parks Wolf, OPM

**1. Welcome & Introductions:**

The meeting was called to order at 1305. Betsy Hard, Deputy Commissioner and Brenda Bergeron, Legal Counsel, co-chaired the meeting in the absence of Bill Hackett, Emergency Management Director.

**2. Report from DEMHS:**

A. School Security Grant Update – The 1st year budget for this grant was 5 million dollars and most of the funds have been expended. The 2<sup>nd</sup> year budget was 1.8 million dollars with 94% expended. Thirty four school districts were awarded school security grant funds in the second year. The funds were awarded under a statutory formula, and in particular helped communities in need to improve school security with specifically-allowable equipment purchases. Tom Vannini was the project lead on this grant until his recent appointment as the DEMHS Region 5 Coordinator.

B. STEP One Program – Student Tools for Emergency Management (STEP) is a FEMA Region 1 program that began as a pilot to encourage emergency preparedness planning in school children grades 3-5. CT has expanded the program to 4500 students in 52 schools. Melanie Kerr, DEMHS Project Manager oversees the program for CT. The State of Rhode Island has a website for their program that may provide some best practices ideas-<http://www.riema.ri.gov/step>.

C. H1N1 Updates – DPH is the lead agency for H1N1 with assistance from DEMHS. The campaign is less active at this time; however there is a possibility of a third wave in the Spring. DPH completed an H1N1 statistics report with data collected from 3400 individuals. Out of that number in the age group of 0-4 years 11% of the population was infected; 5 – 18 years – 34%; 19 – 24 years – 9%; and 25-49 years – 27%.

**3. Emergency Planning for Schools Workshops Fall 2009:**

Tom Gavaghan provided the history of the program that began in the year 2000. Meeting participants received a copy of the report from the school workshops that were conducted last Fall. There were a total of 58 participants; 2 were superintendents. Continuing education credits were offered as an incentive for attendance. As a prerequisite, students were required to complete an online FEMA training course - Incident Command System (ICS) for Schools. Advertisement went out to Local Emergency Management Directors and School Superintendents.

An open discussion took place with meeting participants providing suggestions on how to increase participation from the school communities in the future. Ideas included conducting an abbreviated ICS course at a Superintendent's meeting; offer more CEUs and conduct the training in a more centralized location.

#### **4. Day Care Centers & Pre-School – Planning Document:**

Peter Palermino, DSS reported that emergency plans are being developed. The subcommittee would like to develop a statewide plan for CT. There are new funds available from federal stimulus money to support the initiative. Bruce Lockwood suggested that individuals review the interim report on the National Commission on Children and Disasters website to assist with writing justifications. The Department of Public Health (DPH) has been conducting training and 2-1-1 outreach is being funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS). Mary Kate Lowndes advised that there is private funding for disaster training for childcare providers. New guidance allows for profit daycares to tap Stafford funds in an emergency. Brenda Bergeron reported that State agencies are reviewing what rules they would need waived on the state level in a disaster. She recommended that DSS begin the process of reviewing their needs and develop a report for submission to DEMHS and the Governor's Legal Office.

Brenda Bergeron stated that Mary Rose Duberek, Emergency Program Specialist in the DEMHS Radiological Emergency Preparedness Unit may be able to provide some guidance to individuals working on planning documents for daycares. She has been working with DPH on emergency preparedness for daycare providers in the Millstone area.

#### **5. Open Discussion:**

Bruce Lockwood is a committee member for the National Commission on Children and Disasters. He provided an update on the various issues that are of concern with regard to children during and after disasters. The next Commission meeting is scheduled for 2/1/10 in Washington, DC. An interim report developed by the Commission is available online at <http://www.childrenanddisasters.acf.hhs.gov>. The Commission's final report to the President and Congress is due October, 2010. The Commission is seeking an additional 12 month term to review progress made as a result of the final report. The National Level Exercise will incorporate meeting the needs of children. 25% of children's needs must be met when conducting drills. Commission had the opportunity to author appendixes to UASI & other grants to ensure needs of children are met. Plan to meet with the CDC for Public Health & HERSA Grant. HLS Grants approved equipment list had 32 items that met the needs of children. The list is being enhanced. The new administrator is committed to this effort.

Additional items covered under open discussion:

1. Children & Recession Task Force (Mary Kate Lowndes)
  - A public hearing was held and children spoke on how they are affected.
  - Copy of report provided to meeting participants.
  
2. School Crisis Drills (Scott Newgass)
  - Schools are required to conduct 3 crisis drills; mandate passed in the last legislative session.
  - Conducted phone survey with 60 School Districts in Nov 2009 – most completed drills.
  - Items of concern were identifying incident commander and lack of funding for training.
  - Work continues with districts in reviewing their crisis plans.

3. Assistance to Military Families/Children (Lisa Marcinkowski/Jessica Koehler)
  - Operational Military Kids
  - Military OneSource
  - CT National Guard Family Program
  
4. Child Abduction Response Team (James Thomas)
  - Next meeting scheduled for 6/10/10.
  - Reviewing what agencies need to be involved.
  - Planning to develop laws to flag child education records; Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) does not apply in an emergency.
  - National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is seeking to have specific language for parental abductions.

**5. New Business:**

None

**6. Next Meeting**

Wednesday, April 28, 2010 at 1:00 pm; DEMHS, 25 Sigourney Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Hartford