

Child Safety & Crisis Response Committee

Minutes – July 17, 2006

Brainard Field, 269 Maxim Road, Hartford

Attendees: Brenda Bergeron, DEMHS; Ellen Blaschinski, DPH; David Brown, ARC; Patricia Estill, COC; Peggy Freidenfelt, DPH; Thomas Gavaghan, DEMHS; Stan Kasanowski, DCF; David Larson, CAPSS; Scott Newgass, DOE; Robert Rader, CABE; Wayne Sandford, DEMHS; James Thomas, DEMHS; and Elaine Zimmerman, COC.

1. Welcome: The meeting was called to order by Commissioner James Thomas at 1pm.

2. Report from SDE:

- Scott Newgass updated group regarding RESC training for crisis response. Two training sessions this year, and one scheduled for next year. Requests for additional training are going to CREC and then to Scott.
- Elaine Zimmerman raised the issue of crisis response training for day care, preschool, after school programs. 200,000 kids are in this type of setting at some point during the day. Certain obstacles were discussed, including:

--Staff usually can't be released, so needs to be more localized

--Training sometimes anticipates certain educational background, but staff often is pre-baccalaureate.

--The biggest concern is home day care providers and there is no plan for this.

--Further regulatory requirements may make it harder for quality home day care providers to stay in business. DPH staffing is limited—inspections occur once every 3 years.

--DPH does a pamphlet with basic information on what to do in certain circumstances. This could be included.

The group discussed the possibility of making crisis response a part of First Aid training, which is a mandated training obligation for home day care providers, as well as the possibility of coordinating training at a regional level. DPH will look into possible requirement of including emergency planning as part of First Aid curriculum.

- Elaine Zimmerman suggested setting up a subcommittee to explore this issue of emergency planning for this important group of care and education providers. A sign-up sheet was circulated. Elaine Zimmerman and Ellen Blaschinski from DPH will co-chair.
- The group discussed School District Pandemic Flu Planning Guidelines. David Larson indicated that the guidelines have been sent to all Superintendents. Scott Newgass said that although this a largely local issue, state guidance and involvement is still important. The group discussed possible gubernatorial involvement in encouraging towns to develop pandemic plans. Group members will explore what activities have been or are taking place at the local public health department level regarding this issue. Commissioner Thomas will follow up this discussion with Dr. Galvin.

3. US Department of Education Grant:

Scott Newgass indicated that no applications have been received for the ECRM grants. A group of this committee will work to put guidance together for schools to follow if a grant opportunity is provided next year. Some school systems have purchased emergency notification services or systems.

4. Media Campaign:

Commissioner Thomas and Deputy Commissioner Sandford updated the group on the media campaign. This public education endeavor is moving along well, and will go forward next year also. The "See Something, Say Something" commercial will begin airing shortly and will appear on all major networks and CPTV. There will be a live town meeting on CPTV on homeland security issues hosted by Deputy Commissioner Sandford on August 14th. The "Be Aware, Be Prepared" commercial will be released in September. A live CPTV town meeting on disaster preparedness will be held on September 21st and will be hosted by Commissioner Thomas. Elaine Zimmerman suggested that maybe someone from DEMHS could present something on evacuation on time provided by the Commission on Children.

5. HSIN Portal Status:

At the federal level, vendors were switched. On October 19th, the fall Superintendents' meeting will be held at the Aquaturf. Perhaps the Deputy Commissioner of DEMHS could give a 15 minute presentation on this issue.

6. TIPS Hotline:

Contact Mike Savage of the CT Association of Independent Schools regarding sending out these educational materials.

7. Other:

- a. The group decided that it might be a good idea to invite some private school representatives to these meetings, such as Mr. Savage, Douglas Lyons, and/or a charter school representative.
- b. Elaine Zimmerman asked for input on questions or topics to be posed to CT school students regarding terrorism, natural disasters.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm.

Next Meeting: October 16, 2006