



UPDATE

OCA CHILD FATALITY REVIEW

OCA's upcoming report on the 2013 fatalities of infants and toddlers in CT will include specific recommendations to prevent future child deaths through early intervention, effective parent-child treatment services and enhanced child welfare quality assurance.

OCA EDUCATES

On June 10, OCA provided training to lawyers new to the practice of juvenile law on strategies to improve outcomes for abused and neglected children. The training was held at UConn Law School and led by the Center for Children's Advocacy.

OCA also is fortunate to have a 3rd year law student from UConn, a 2nd year law student from Suffolk University and an undergraduate student from Hofstra University working with us this summer. OCA is committed to multidisciplinary workforce development and seeks to provide all its student interns with opportunities to examine services provided to children and participate in system reform initiatives.

OCA RESPONDS TO CALLS FOR HELP

As the ombudsman office for CT's children, OCA staff connects daily with callers looking for information or expressing concerns regarding the provision of services to children. OCA is currently helping a number of children who have developmental and mental health challenges access quality supports and services in the least restrictive environment. In addition during June, OCA has been contacted regarding the state's response to teens reported as missing, concerns with services offered to children suspected to have been victims of abuse/neglect, and school discipline practices.

OCA PARTNERS FOR CHANGE

On June 19th, OCA and the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) led a roundtable of participants at the Legislative Office Building in a discussion about addressing and preventing family violence. OCA and CCADV will be collaborating with state and local groups to develop a strategic plan to improve supports for families struggling with domestic violence. We hope to have a final plan ready for publication in early 2015.

In addition this past month, OCA staff participated in 1) a multiagency discussion convened by a local pediatric primary care provider regarding practices and policy related to prenatal exposure to marijuana where stakeholders agreed to explore best practices and continue the discussions and 2) a roundtable discussion focused on child health and safety facilitated by Casey Family Programs and Prevent Child Abuse America.

OCA ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

On June 3rd, the OCA attended the first meeting of a working group convened by the Office of the Healthcare Advocate (OHA) to implement PA 14-115-focused on connecting the public to behavioral health care services.

On June 9th, in response to concerns expressed regarding lengths of stay and discharge planning, the OCA traveled to an out-of-state psychiatric hospital that is frequently utilized to assess and stabilize CT children who have significant behavioral and developmental challenges.

On June 17th, OCA participated in the state's advisory committee for development of a children's mental and behavioral health plan, due in October 2014.