

**Child**r**en’s Cabinet Advisory Board Meeting**

**Unapproved Minutes**

**March 25, 2024**

**Member Name: Attendees**

Ursula Anderson Shanna Beber

Teressa Falgoust Julie Foster-Hagan

Julio Galan Sarah Hinshaw-Fusilier

Amy Hook-Poirier Krystle Mitchell

Chenier Montz Amanda Moody

Susan East Nelson Cody Roi

ReShonn Saul Ernise Singleton

Libbie Sonnier Stephanie Sterling

Karen Stubbs Angela Wiggins-Harris

Gina Womack Lenell Young

**Staff:**

Jolie Williamson, Children’s Cabinet Executive Director

Michele M. Rabalais, Children’s Cabinet Executive Assistant

**Guests:**

Dr. Shawnell Ware, LCSW-BACS

Michelle Strickland

Storm Ehlers

**Welcome and Call to Order**:

ReShonn Saul, Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and all present were welcomed.

**Roll Call:**

Michele M. Rabalais, Children’s Cabinet, Executive Assistant, called roll.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Susan East Nelson made a motion to approve the minutes from the following meeting(s): September 12, 2023, November 14, 2023, and January 30, 2024. Ernise Singleton seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried.

**Opening Address**: Jolie Williamson, Children’s Cabinet Executive Director, welcomed Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board Members, and gave an update of her activities.

* March 27 – Louisiana Children’s Trust Fund (LCTF) Coffee and Conversations: monthly virtual speaker series
* April 22 - LCTF Annual Child Abuse Prevention Conference will be held at the Cajun Dome Conference Center in Lafayette
* LCTF 2025-2030 State Plan entitled ‘Louisiana Caucus for Children’ is in the planning stages.
* LCTF will produce a coloring book that will focus on bullying and stranger danger etc.
* Attended two school visits with the Louisiana Youth for Excellence (LYFE) program.

**Navigating the Managed Care System Humana**:

Dr. Shawnell Ware, Behavioral Health Strategy Specialist with Humana and Michelle Strickland, Humana, presented information regarding Navigating the Manage Care System. Humana works to make sure clients get the services they need throughout the state and in their communities.

Ms. Strickland reported that she is working with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) to make sure that children are receiving the proper level of care. Anyone working with children such as courts and teachers can reach out for services. Humana is currently working on building services and clinicians such as telehealth workers for rural areas. Discussion followed.

**CASA/FINS/Court Improvement Louisiana Supreme Court**:

Storm Ehlers, Deputy Judicial Administrator and Saul, Families in Need of Services (FINS) presented information regarding CASA, FINS and the Court Improvement Program.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) is a national association in the United States that supports and promotes court-appointed advocates for abused or neglected children. CASA volunteers are from the community who complete training that has been provided by the state or local CASA office. The CASA program is funded by federal and TANF funds.

Families in Need of Services (FINS) is a state funded legal process not a program written into the Children’s Code that addresses non-violent offenses. Referrals to the FINS program can come from teachers, law enforcement, school personnel etc. It is required that every court with Juvenile Jurisdiction have a FINS officer.

FINS has two sides:

Informal FINS: the Families In Need of Services legal process that requires a family meet with a FINS Intake Officer and go through an informal process of risk and needs assessment and connections to services Informal FINS is voluntary with no Court Intervention

Formal FINS: the Families In Need of Services formal legal process that requires hearings in front of a Judge – Court Intervention

The goal of the FINS program is to keep the child at home and in their community. Discussion followed.

Louisiana Court Improvement Program: The Louisiana Court Improvement Program is coordinated by the Pelican Center, under an agreement with the Louisiana Supreme Court. Within this project, training and consultations to help improve Child in Need of Care (CINC) cases are conducted using various methodologies. Discussion followed.

## Subcommittee Updates:

Early Childhood Experience**:** Sarah Hinshaw-Fusilierreported that the Early Childhood Experience Committee continues to meet monthly. The focus remains on early childhood supports and services. Focusing on sustainability and looking at other funding resources. Discussion followed.

ReShonn Saul, CCAB Chair, requested that all sub-committee chairs send updates on their committees and requested that they meet monthly.

**Department/Agency Updates**:

Jolie Williamson, Children’s Cabinet Executive Director, reported that she is continuing to work on the Children and Youth Planning Board(s). The CYPS’s assists in the development, implementation and operation of services which encourage positive youth development, reduce youth crime and help curb juvenile delinquency. Ms. Williamson suggested that the CYPB’s be moved under the Boys and Girls Club(s). Discussion followed.

**Other Business**:

Susan East Nelson provided an update on current legislation. A link to bills was emailed to CCAB member. Currently there are about 100 bills and legislators have until April 2, 2024, to submit any new bills. It was also discussed that the CCAB bill has passed the House Committee. Discussion followed.

Karen Stubbs discussed the Homebuilder’s program which provides services for Medicaid members from birth to 18 years of age.

Homebuilders is an intensive, in-home evidence based program (EBP) utilizing research based strategies (e.g. motivational interviewing, cognitive and behavioral interventions, relapse prevention, skills training), for families with children (birth to 18 years of age) at imminent risk of out of home placement (requires a person with placement authority to state that the child is at risk for out of home placement without Homebuilders®), or being reunified from placement.

Ms. Stubbs reported that you do not have to be in DCFS custody to be in the Homebuilders program, but you do have to be referred by the state. At this time seven of the nine regions are participating in the Homebuilders program. At this time Lake Charles does not offer this program and clients are referred to Lafayette.

ReShonn Saul informed CCAB members that the FINS Conference will be held May 8-10, 2024, at the Double Tree in New Orleans.

The International Network for School Attendance will hold it’s annual conference October 30-November 1, 2024, at the Crowne Plaza in New Orleans.

Discussion was held concerning holding a second Vulnerable Youth Summit.

**Public Comments:** No public comments**.**