

St. Mary's County Department of Social Services
Board of Directors Meeting
April 23, 2013

Attendance:

The regular meeting of the Board of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services was held on April 23, 2013. Board members in attendance were: Richard Buckler, Chairperson; Cynthia Brown, Lynn Fitrell, Pamala Emplit, and Wanda Brown. Also present were Ella May Russell, Director; Tammy Loewe, Child Protective Services Program Specialist. Absent: Susie Fowler, Leisha Wood, Ella Somerville.

Minutes:

The minutes for the February 26, 2013 meeting were approved.

Education Session:

Child Protective Services (CPS) – Tammy Loewe, Child Protective Services Program Specialist presented an overview of the CPS program—mission, regulations and tools used to determine if a report meets the level of an investigation, types of investigations and response times, etc. The changes that will occur with the implementation of *Alternative Response* beginning July 1, 2013, statewide were discussed. St. Mary's county is in the third tier of implementation and will most likely not begin until late fall or early 2014. Currently, the average number of referrals for the department are 90-130 per month, the six department CPS investigators average 15 cases each per month.

A hand out was provided.

Chairperson's Report:

No legislative update.

Carol Ann Pingleton resigned from the Board and has moved out of state. A letter was sent to the Commissioners by the Director.

Director's Report:

Auditors

The auditors came on March 16, 2013, and expect to finish by Thursday, March 25, 2013. An exit conference will be held on April 25th.

Personnel

Staff have several committees that are working on the staff retreat to Camp Maria and health and fitness activities.

Family Investment

WPR: Work Participation Rate (WPR) is at 60% for both Leonardtown and Lexington Park offices.

Services

This year's Foster Parent Appreciation celebration will be held at Camp Maria. The last four years it was held at the Maryland Blue Crab stadium.

The number of children in foster care continues to decline. Many children are moving into Kinship Care. St. Mary's has the highest number of children in Kinship care in the State which is good for the children and families.

Ready by 21 – One of the things being recognized is that foster care children aging out of the system have a hard time seeing themselves as anything else other than a foster care child. Keisha Atlee attended the Child Welfare League of America conference in Washing D.C. and has new ideas from the conference on helping this population.

New Business:

Richard Buckler asked the Board for input into areas they would like to have in the Education Session. It was requested that Adult Services and the State budget process be in upcoming sessions.

Wanda Brown discussed with the Board the possibility of the Board organizing a 5K race to raise funds for programs such as Ready by 21. The Board members present were agreeable and Ms. Brown will gather information for further discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

The next meeting will be May 28, 2013.