

DC MAYOR'S ADVISORY

COMMITTEE ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT (MACCAN)

January 4, 2017

On behalf of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect (MACCAN), we are pleased to review and provide comment for the Annual Public Report for the 2017 fiscal year. We thank the many represented by this comprehensive report and the team who prepared it for their diligence in serving our families and providing the necessary data to reflect the work that has been done as well as future directions for care. MACCAN serves as a collaborative, advisory body for activities of child abuse and neglect in DC. Commissioned members of the highest standing are appointed by the Mayor and represent governmental and community agencies as well as the public. Public meetings include sharing information/resources and in-depth presentations on cross-cutting and collaborative issues to increase opportunities for partnership to advance the work of the committee.

In a review of the report, the committee highlights a few areas for specific comments. Namely, MACCAN applauds the Clinical Supervision being given to social workers and the increased attention to the issue of domestic violence. Members have also identified a few priority areas where increased data would inform assessment and improvements including services, disruptions, and housing strategies. The Collaboratives are also highlighted for their service as an example of community and government partners that can be integrated more fully to assist with achieving CFSA's Four Pillars Strategic Framework. We also discuss the success of the "Think Before You Spank" campaign for prevention of abuse and other detrimental child outcomes and providing effective discipline. There is interest for future MACCAN campaigns to focus on the prevention of abuse and neglect related to marijuana, alcohol, and phencyclidine (PCP) which will warrant a coordinated response for family services agencies and organizations throughout the city.

Clinical Supervision. MACCAN is very impressed and eager to learn more of the outcomes from the intensive trainings and supervision that social workers are receiving to improve their investigative practice. The partnership with Safe Shores to receive additional training is also promising as MACCAN members and agencies across the city continue to tackle the epidemic of sexual molestation of children. Because this life altering crime against children continues to be under-reported and often times inadequately addressed, prevention and recognition training increases the impact of CPS social worker's protective work with our children.

Domestic Violence. CFSA's increased efforts to help victims of domestic violence is seen as very necessary and impactful to improving both the environment of the home and decreasing the chances that children will be abused by partners as teenagers and adults. The establishment of treatment groups for batterers is also insightful and innovative, recognizing that with the proper treatment, these abusers can make positive life changes and have a healthy impact on their families.

Services. MACCAN applauds the array of services offered by CFSA. However, it is not clear that all of the services listed are functioning at sufficient levels for the needs of the community and have quality and improvement controls. With the Safe Haven redesign, it will be important to get ongoing data on the status of the services in the community for continuing self-assessment for improvement. There are opportunities to continue the trauma-informed models as well as invest in other evidence-based models in

the service array. The disproportionately high numbers of youth in care from Wards 7 and 8 (75%) continues to be very troubling and indicates that this historically neglected area of our city continues not to get the needed resources from CFSA and other entities to truly impact positive change for our families and children.

Disruptions. Data on disruptions is useful not only to ascertain the number of children and families affected but also to understand the cause of disruptions. An increased understanding of the reason for the listed disruptions, how many disruptions occurred, and the age of children when disruptions occurred can inform prevention strategies and services.

Housing Strategies. DC continues to experience increased costs for housing which affect affordable housing options. Housing strategies will continue to be an important component of safety and permanency. Further information on the specifics of who administers the various housing programs (i.e., DC government, partnerships, non-profits, etc.) and the qualifications for the programs, quality, and successful outcomes would be valuable in future planning and reports. Homeless data and integration with other DC homeless programs is also an area of opportunity.

Collaboratives. The collaboratives throughout DC have served a vital role as partners with CFSA. Primarily, they are involved before and after CFSA involvement. It has been indicated by some that reunification support is limited. As CFSA develops existing and new programs, the role and support of collaboratives can be deepened at all stages of CFSA involvement. The collaboratives are strong partners for ongoing feedback and programmatic development with CFSA and both entities should hold each other responsible for their respective missions.

MACCAN Prevention Outreach. MACCAN supports the improvements in services to our most vulnerable children as well as supports to biological and foster families. Child abuse and neglect prevention remain the most important tool in child advocacy. Connections with the Collaboratives as well as other nonprofit agencies to offer parent education and support continues to be a strong agency asset. MACCAN's efforts to further promote prevention and child advocacy supported an informational campaign, "Think Before You Spank" lead by Satira Streeter, Psy.D., Chair, MACCAN. Research indicates that the topic of spanking has not thoroughly been addressed as a possible starting continuum of abuse nor has the harmful impact of spanking been shared with foster and biological parents. The campaign was successful with strong support from MACCAN and CFSA that resulted in wide dissemination across DC community partners, translation by CFSA in compliance with the DC Language Access Act, Public Service Announcements, and over 30 workshops throughout the year. "Think Before You Spank" is a model for future cross-agency partnerships to continue to expand prevention reach and effectiveness. MACCAN has multi-agency and community representatives to facilitate and champion the implementation of evidence-based programs in DC that are eager to engage with prevention efforts, including parental substance abuse and child maltreatment.

MACCAN Partnership. MACCAN applauds DCFSA for its diligent and hardworking efforts demonstrated in the report of the District's accomplishments during FY2017. MACCAN has a full resource of federal and community partners to serve as resources to advance the goals of CFSA. We look forward to being a partner for efforts as represented in this year's summary report and the work of CFSA throughout the year. In the next year, we are committed to active participation in the goals of CFSA represented in the annual report and the daily, tireless work of CFSA staff. We are pleased with the continued communication with CFSA, particularly Brenda Donald, Director CFSA, and her team, and program support for the

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committee by Roni Seabrook, CFSA. We look forward to CFSA continuing to partner with MACCAN, throughout all stages of activities from start-up, innovation, evaluation, adaptation, and reporting. Together, MACCAN and CFSA can continue to advance the safety and well-being of children and families in DC.

MACCAN is pleased to note the continued progress of DC's prevention and intervention of child abuse and neglect documented in this current report. We look forward to disseminating this widely with our partners and the public.

Respectfully submitted,



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On behalf of the members of the MACCAN

Cc: MACCAN members, DC Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)