

MINUTES

Monday, December 13, 2021 12:00 P.M.

Law Enforcement Planning Council Palm Beach County School & Community Safety Initiative Behavioral Health Track

Online via Zoom



Members Present:

Captain Randy Foley, Chair, Behavioral Services Division, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D., Vice Chair, CEO, Children's Services Council of PBC

Nicole Bishop, Director, PBC Justice and Victim Services Division

Melody Bonomo, Director of Behavioral Health, Prestige Health Choice

Chief Sean Brammer, Chair, CJC Law Enforcement Planning Council and Chief of Police, Florida Atlantic University Police Department

Megan Eaton, Circuit 15 Juvenile Justice, Advisory Board Co-Chair

Tammy Fields, Director, PBC Youth Services Department

Nicholas Fricke, Director of Acute Care, South County Mental Health Center, Inc.

Dr. Barbara Cox Gerlock, Organizational Development Consultant, Systems Integration Services

Alexa Lee, M.S., Director of Programs, Palm Beach County Substance Abuse Coalition

Keith Oswald, Chief of Equity and Wellness, PBC School District

Dr. Gena Rowlands, Senior Planner, PBC Sheriff's Office

Chief Javaro Sims, Delray Beach Police Department

Jill Sorensen, Director of Children's System of Care, SE FL Behavioral Health Network

Greg Starling, Chief Probation Officer, Department of Juvenile Justice

Sharon Tarlow, Education Coordinator, Behavioral Health Services, JFK Medical Center North Campus

Diane Wyatt, Director, Palm Beach Safe Schools

Grant Evaluation Partners:

Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, Ph.D., Associate Director and Associate Professor, FAU

Vaughn Crichlow, Ph.D., Associate Dean and Associate Professor, FAU

CJC Staff Present:

Regenia Herring, Executive Director

Katherine Shover, Senior Criminal Justice Analyst

- I. Welcome and Opening Comments by Captain Randy Foley, Chair.
- II. Chief Sean Brammer, Chair, Law Enforcement Planning Council mentioned that he had a conversation with Director Herring regarding concerns about both the Chair and Vice Chair being representatives from law enforcement. Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D. was the previous Vice Chair so they asked if she could step into the role to ensure balance. Director Herring mentioned that Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D. has been an excellent partner. She also recognized Deputy Chief Robin Griffin-Kitzerow for all the work that she has done for the committee. Chief Javaro Sims agreed with this decision. Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D. commented that she is happy to serve the committee in this role. Chief Brammer also reported that the Law Enforcement Planning Council (LEPC) recognized Judge James Martz for his outstanding service to the LEPC and School & Community Safety committee at a recent LEPC meeting.
- III. Agenda/minutes were approved by consent. Motion was made by Chief Sean Brammer and seconded by Dr. Barbara Cox Gerlock.
- IV. **Juvenile Justice and School Safety Trends:** *Regenia Herring, Director, Criminal Justice Commission, Keith Oswald, Chief of Equity and Wellness, PBC School District, Kevin McCormick, Director, Exceptional Student Education, PBC School District, Dr. Barbara Cox Gerlock, Organizational Development Consultant, Systems Integration Services, Greg Starling, Chief Probation Officer, Department of Juvenile Justice, Major Michael Waites, PBC School District Police Department, and Tammy Fields, Director, PBC Youth Services Department* Director Herring recognized the committee members for their hard work on this project in which they updated the data in response to the Moms Demand Action presentation. Each of the committee members provided an overview of their section.

Dr. Barbara Cox Gerlock advised that this data is a snapshot of what is going on in Palm Beach County. She also mentioned they are acknowledging that juvenile violence is a public health issue that is not only impacting children, but schools, families and society. The way to address the issue is from early in the child's life. She remarked that Palm Beach County through collaborative systems planning, integrated funding and community commitment to youth development is earnestly engaged in funding strategies and programming to enhance successful outcomes for youth. Significant process has been made over the last two decades in developing a system of care for youth that went from a silo approach to an integrated one. Supportive relationships can decrease violent behaviors and disrupt a "cycle of violence". Education on life skills and conflict resolution at an early age can also prevent violence. The deficit in life skills is evident with the effects of the pandemic.

Greg Starling, Chief Probation Officer noted the decline for felony and misdemeanor arrests of youth in PBC. Highlights are listed below from the DJJ data. The number of intake/arrests have declined over time. There is still work to do in terms of addressing racial equity and disparity issues. Dr. Gerlock advised that the data showed that approximately 90% of the cases that came to School Police were diverted. This shows the level of collaboration between school police and local law enforcement. One of the initiatives that is critical to changing the dynamics for kids is to have a better understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), as well as the resiliency skills necessary to overcome them. Information was provided about the risk and protective factors from the DJJ Prevention Assessment Profile. There are some areas that need improvement in working with parents and kids.

Between 2015-16 and 2019-2020 felony and misdemeanor arrests for Palm Beach County youth

- *School arrests declined 50% from 344 to 191 compared to the statewide decrease of 35% from 8,317 to 5,298.*
- *Community arrests declined 20% from 2,380 to 1,772 compared to statewide decrease of 14% from 45,258 to 28,287.*
- *All arrests in PBC declined 24% from 2,724 to 1,963 compared to statewide decrease of 18% from 53,575 to 33,585.*

Keith Oswald, Chief of Equity and Wellness, PBC School District reviewed the services provided by the Palm Beach County School District. They have added a lot of resources over the past few years (see snapshot below). The Marjory Stoneman Douglas Act provided additional funding for the School District. They also received a more substantial source of funding from the referendum. Information was provided about the PBC School District student support initiatives, career and choice programs, as well as training and professional development. Tammy Fields, Director, PBC Youth Services Department reviewed the training data. Approximately 23,000 people have been trained in the community for trauma informed care. She also reviewed Trauma 101 (628 trained), Mental Health First Aid (6,500 trained), Racial Equity Institute (1,286 trained), behavioral and mental health prevention and intervention programs and strategies for School District staff (39,433 trained), Exceptional Student Ed staff (2,158 trained over 5 years), and training for School Police (179 officers trained). Trauma informed bench cards were also provided to Judges. Director Fields reviewed the list of professional development training that has been provided. She also discussed the list of all the training provided by the PBC Youth Services Department from 2018 – 2021.

- *School counselors 1:552 students*
- *School psychologists 1:1193 students*
- *Nurse in every school*
- *School Based Behavioral Health Staff 1:559*

Includes: Licensed Mental Health Counselors, Registered Mental Health Counselor Interns, Marriage and Family therapist, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Registered Licensed Clinical Social Worker Interns, Behavioral Health Professionals and Co-located therapists

Other services provided by Youth Services

- *Palm Beach County Youth Services provides a Family Violence Intervention Program (FVIP) which is a diversion program for youth who commit violence within the home – Anger Management and Therapeutic Services offered for these youth.*

- *Palm Beach County, through its Youth Services Department, funds multiple mentoring programs and has recently established a pilot Enhanced Mentoring Program for youth in the dependency and delinquency systems in partnership with the Children Services Council and United Way Mentoring Center.*
- *Palm Beach County, through its Youth Services Department, funds three Youth Empowerment Centers that focus on out-of-school time engagement and offer career opportunities*
- *Palm Beach County Youth Services provides free residential, outpatient and in school therapy for youth up to the age of 22.*

Recommendations include:

- *Address DMC/RED (Racial Equity and Disparity) issues on a community-wide systemic basis.*
- *Expand current level of funding for school-based behavioral health prevention, intervention and short-term treatment services.*
- *Develop a racially, culturally and linguistically diverse cadre of staff for both school-based and community behavioral health services.*
- *Focus on collaborative and integrated funding and programming for all youth from Birth to 22.*
- *Expand funding for prevention programs to address ACEs and reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors.*
- *Expand current level of community funding for behavioral and mental health intervention and treatment services.*
- *Educate all community stakeholders and parents on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and resiliency.*
- *Develop a system of interagency data sharing and program evaluation.*
- *Continue the development of trauma informed care in educational, behavioral health, judicial and law enforcement systems.*
- *Provide an array of alternative options and intensive treatment for youth and families.*

Director Tammy Fields mentioned that they are working with Dr. Miguel Benavente from the PBC School District, the United Way, and BeWellPBC to develop a proposal for a mental health tech certification at the high school level. They are hoping to develop a pipeline for kids to pursue education in this area. The proposal was submitted to the State on November 1st. They expect to hear back around the beginning of the year. Palm Beach County led this effort, but it will benefit all students in the State of Florida.

Chair Foley recognized that this was a huge undertaking and thanked all the committee members for their hard work on this project. Director Herring also thanked the group for their tremendous efforts on the presentation. She noted that this information can be used to support the Moms Demand Action group so they have current information for Palm Beach County. The next steps are for the group to look at the recommendations for the Board concerning funding and collaboration. Dr. Gerlock recommended sharing the information to ensure that local officials know about the level of collaboration in Palm Beach County. Megan Eaton, Circuit 15 Juvenile Justice, Advisory Board Co-Chair noted that it is important to acknowledge that the Moms Demand Action presentation helped the group to identify some significant issues and follow-up steps to address these areas of concern.

V. Business

A. Prevention and Intervention Working Groups – Chair Foley reported that each of the groups have met a couple times. The plan is for them to bring back their recommendations to the main committee at the February meeting then the reaction group will be formed. He felt like there was a lot of great information and suggestions from today's presentation for both groups to review. He also mentioned that they may want to review the recent Michigan shooting as there are discussions about charging the parents and members of the school board for failure to act. This might be an area that the group wants to address to ensure that parents are locking up their guns in their house. Also is enough being done on the intervention side to immediately address any issues?

B. Introduction Video for the Aware and Care Site – the video prepared by the PBSO Graphics Department was played for the group. There was a lot of great feedback about the video. Director Herring thought the video was excellent, but

suggested that they may want to remove one of the graphics. The group agreed to make this change.

VI. Next meeting will be held on February 14, 2022 at 1 PM.

VII. Adjournment