

Advisory Committee To The  
Riverside County Children & Families Commission  
Wednesday, January 15, 2003  
First 5 Riverside Office  
Riverside, California

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Jean Benson called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

Advisory Members present: Jean Benson, Jane Block, Sheila Hillis, Carla Lidner, Touraj Shafai, Anne Stephens (representing Supervisor Tavaglione), Karen Vlahos and Judith Wood.

Staff Present: Stella Smith, Deputy Director; Johnathan McDannell, Evaluation & Grants Specialist; Michelle Victor, Commission Secretary.

**II. Chair and Committee Member Comments**

No Comments

**III. Approval of Minutes from July 17, 2002**

*Chair Benson moved to approved the July 17, 2002 meeting minutes. Touraj Shafai seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of the Advisory members present: [Seven (7) in favor, three (3) absent (Hillis, Lidner, Sisson), two (2) vacant, zero (0) opposed.*

**IV. Presentation: Barbara Cory – “Smart Symphony”**

Ms. Barbara H. Cory, M.A., Early Childhood Music Specialist and on the faculty at the College of the Desert presented to the Advisory Committee regarding the importance of music to a child’s early development. Ms. Cory suggested that a music CD be included in the New Parent Kit distributed by First 5 Commissions. Ms. Cory elaborated on brain research that supports the premise of the influence that music has on brain development potential. Ms. Cory referred to an article “Lullabies Tested on Preemies” from The Desert Sun (12/24/02) which detailed a recent project underway, indicating the healing and growth influence of music on babies born prematurely (a copy of the article is on file with the official Advisory meeting minutes.)

As part of Ms. Cory’s presentation she played excerpts from the “Smart Symphony” CD. A brochure was provided along with the CD, which lists simple singing, moving, and other activities for parents to do with their child as they listen to the CD and other like music.

Dr. Carla Lidner and Sheila Hillis joined the meeting during Ms. Cory’s presentation.

*Chair Benson moved that the Advisory members make a recommendation to the Commission that they approach the State Commission about including some musical component information for inclusion in the New Parent Kit. Carla Lidner seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of the Advisory members present: [Nine (9) in favor, one (1) absent ( Sisson), two (2) vacant, zero (0) opposed.*

**V. Meeting Schedule and Location – Stella Smith**

Ms. Smith explained in that in past years each Advisory Committee member hosted an Advisory Meeting to maximize the inclusion of participation from all areas of the county. The next meeting scheduled for April 16 is to be held outside the City of Riverside according to the Advisory Bylaws. The Advisory members will check their areas calendars and contact the Commission office if they are able to host a local meeting.

**VI. Membership Update – Stella Smith**

Maryann Edwards has resigned from Advisory Committee due to personal constraints on her time. The Commission is actively recruiting to replace her and Ms. Edwards has made some recommendations that have been forwarded to Supervisor Buster’s office. Commission Staff will move forward with the review process and complete the required paperwork to execute the appointment. Judy Neiburger, representative from District V has resigned and recruitment for that position is in progress. It was noted that at this time, the Advisory Committee is without a Vice-Chair and until the vacant positions are filled, will remain vacant.

**VII. Reports**

**A. Evaluation Request for Proposal Status Report / Strategic Plan Updates / Review of Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2001/2002– Johnathan McDannell**

Evaluation - Request for Proposal Status Report

Johnathan McDannell updated the status of Evaluation Request for Proposal and has been working with the Riverside County Purchasing Department on the details for what is anticipated to be a multi-million dollar contract. Recommendations for an awarded vendor will come before the Commission in February 2003 for final approval and thus begin March 1, 2003. The contract will run from the award date to June 30, 2006.

Strategic Plan Update

Mr. McDannell gave an update of the strategic plan. Johnathan provided the new timeline. The Commission has elected to extend the process timeline in order to determine the impact of the State budget on our local partner organizations. The revised timeline was presented as follows:

January 2 through February 15, 2003: Regional Planning Groups

- ✓ Review Pathways Localize Strategies & Interventions
- ✓ ID Local Assets (GIS/Local Data)
- ✓ Develop Regional Priority Listing
- ✓ Estimated Costs & Needed Resources

February 15 through March 15, 2003: Advisory Committee Meetings

- ✓ Synthesize Regional Planning
- ✓ Develop Recommended Priorities
- ✓ Allocation Recommendations of Priorities

April 14, 2003: Commission Meeting

- ✓ Finalize Strategic Plan Updates

First 5 Riverside will partner with United Way, Riverside Migrant Head Start and the Child Care Consortium use data and information needs assessments conducted by these agencies. This data will be shared with Riverside County communities as part of the regional meetings to be conducted to update them regarding the Commission's Strategic Planning efforts. Community forums will be held in order to obtain the information regarding prioritizations. The previous Advisory group members that had met to define the prioritizations and criteria materials will be recalled to review all new data and finalize recommendations.

Review of the Riverside County Children & Families Commission Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2001/2002 – Johnathan McDannell

Mr. McDannell also presented an overview of the Annual Report to the State Children and Families Commission for Fiscal Year 2001/2002. Mr. McDannell highlighted the information contained in the report including the geographical description and population statistics, which included 23,232 births for the year 2001. The report also included the Status of Reporting and Data Collection for all projects funded during this time period. The Summary of Innovative and Promising Practices highlighted six programs across the various funding categories to give an indication of the local amount expensed, as well as any First 5 California funds appropriated to those programs. The final report will incorporate all of the above information, and will be professionally printed and reformatted for public relations dissemination purposes.

B. Dental Program Update – Dr. Carla Lidner

Dr. Lidner reported on the status of the State Commission earmarking \$10 million for dental health care. Prior to the state meeting a survey was distributed among the commissions for feedback. Dr. Lidner initially had some concerns regarding the funds not being used to the fullest. However, just prior to the vote, Dr. Lidner attended a state Denti-Cal meeting and heard a professor from UC San Francisco speak about a remarkable breakthrough in the discovery of a missing component in the bacterial transmission between child care provider and/or parent

to child. Prevention measures discussed included the use of Zylotol to minimize the number of dental caries resulting from bacterial transmission from person to person.

The \$10 million dollar initiative passed with \$3 million going to a Denti-Cal Insurance Fund. \$7 million will be going to develop dental education materials for all of the counties. Dr. Lidner would like to see some funds go toward researching the use of Zylotol as a prevention measure. Another benefit of this being approved as a state initiative is that it will free up local funds that would have otherwise gone towards supporting this very important component of Proposition 10.

#### C. Staff Report – Stella Smith

Ms. Smith's report updated the Advisory Committee regarding the staffing plan. At its November meeting, the Commission approved staff's recommendation to expand staff to enhance the capability of the Commission to meet growing demands. New staff will be added to provide support and facilitation to the various Commission work groups and advisory bodies. Commission outreach to all areas of the county and technical assistance capabilities will greatly improve due to the number and level of positions added.. Advisory Committee Chairperson, Jean Benson asked the that the Commission review the roles, responsibilities of current staff to determine whether current position levels are appropriate. Based on the recommendation from Ms. Benson, the Commission appointed a subcommittee to review the approved staffing plan and to evaluate the level of current staff positions. The subcommittee is currently in the process of doing a comparative study. Information is being obtained from other counties regarding their staff size, their staff structure, what their allocations are, the types of granting and funding mechanisms.

Ms. Smith updated the Committee on new hires which include: Michelle Victor has been hired as Commission Secretary, Deborah Harr as Accounting Technician and Trudy Guthrie, Budget and Contracts Analyst.

#### Public Relations – Stella Smith

The First 5 Riverside logo has been registered as a Service Mark which is good for ten (10) years.

#### AmeriCorps/Vista – Stella Smith

Ms. Smith discussed the status of the AmeriCorps/Vista pilot project. The Commission had signed up for the project through the State Association of Children and Families Commissions to begin work on utilizing a number of volunteers to provide support to the various areas that the Commission funds. Because of staffing constraints and other projects the Commission staff was

working on, the pilot project could not proceed as initially planned. The Commission staff is in contact with the state to withdraw from the pilot, but did register their intent of going forward with the three (3) year plan once that is ready to go this fall.

D. Subcommittee/Workgroup Reports

1. Home Visitation

Ms. Smith reported that the Commission is working on the Request for Proposals (RFP) with the Executive Committee from the Home Visitation Workgroup. Work is being done to finalize plans to release that proposal. However, based on the conversation that took place at the Commission meeting on Monday, January 13; about slowing down the efforts on the Strategic Plan Review; the release of the RFP may be postponed. The original release date had been planned for release in February or March of 2003.

2. Playgrounds

No report.

3. 2-1-1

Sheila Hillis reported out on the status of the 2-1-1 workgroup. Ms. Hillis was on the local selection committee formed for the purpose of selecting steering committee for the 2-1-1 proposal. The job of the Steering Committee will be to provide oversight for the agency that is awarded the 2-1-1 contract. Jean Macomber from the Volunteer Center (INFORM Riverside) was the coordinator of the group. Burt Walridge, who has spearheaded the states efforts to formulate the 2-1-1 information resource line, laid out the structure for the group. On October 3, 2002, the final meeting was held. The selection committee reviewed the recommendations and a Steering Committee was formed. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) will be the entity responsible for preparing and issuing the RFP.

4. Homeless

No Report.

**VIII. Public Comments**

There were no public comments. Advisory member, Dr. Shafai did comment on the Medical Home Work Group and some of the processes that were taking place. Stella Smith expanded on the discussion by giving a detailed description of

the Medical Home Work Group along with the purpose. More information and the progress of the group will be addressed at future Advisory and Commission meetings.

**IX. Future Agenda Items**

There were no future agenda items.

**X. Adjournment to next Advisory Committee Meeting – April 16, 2002 at 1:30 p.m.**

Location to be determined

The meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.