

FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, April 14th, 2016

5469 Kearny Villa Road, San Diego, CA 92123, Ste. 3700

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Present: Amanda Amabile, Sharon Ippolito, Brenda Jones, Nicole Kelsay, Alice Kennedy, Claire Lynch-Dwight, Diana Macis, Violeta Mora, Mike Palomino, Jacquie Pusateri, Jenny Rodriguez, Veronica Sarabia, Anita Secor, Elaine Shelby, Mary Jo Meer, Marilyn Sproat, Debbie Stolz, Mirtha Valadez, Keila Martinez, Miriam Curiel, Yoly Dayrit, Arthur Hom-Shaw, Lvelyn Blunt, Shlyn Guarian, Jessica Morales

- I. Brenda Jones called the meeting to order at 12:00p.m.** All in attendance made introductions.
- II. Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** No corrections indicated.
- III. Discussion:**

San Diego Foster Parent Association (SDFPA) – Debbie Stolz & Mary Jo Meer

- Sleep Train has donated \$9,000 to the San Diego and North County Foster Parent Associations. The El Cajon office is planning to give away funds by the end of the month to foster families. The North County office will be giving away \$15.00 gift cards this week.
- The San Diego office currently has “extracurricular” funds available, \$100.00 per foster child. Please call the SDFPA office, at 619-579-4900, for more information on obtaining donations.
- Foster parents interested in participating in “giveaways”, please call the office and sign up for the foster parent email tree.

Loving Arms Foster Family Network – Elaine Shelby

- The group is in need of the list of foster parents who live in their area to bring awareness of support offered.

Nikki Kelsay – FARFS will assist in providing outreach to the foster parents in the North Central area.

HHSA, Polinsky Children’s Center (PCC) – Marilyn Sproat

- 27 children are currently in PCC, with 2 children over 6 years old in wheelchairs, who are pending placement.

Nikki Kelsay – In collaboration with Kimberly Washington, Special Care Rate (SCR) coordinator and Fire Marshal liaison, the agency is working to streamline the fire clearance process for families who are able to take in medically fragile children with wheelchairs. The goal is to support families in obtaining clearance from Fire Marshals in every participating family’s neighborhood.

Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA), Child Welfare Services (CWS), Deputy Director – Alice Kennedy

- Debra Zanders-Willis is currently on leave. Cathi Palatella, is the acting Director for the agency until further notice.
- A Parenting Expo will be held on Saturday, May 7th, from 8:00a.m. – 1:00p.m. The events will be held at the Four Points Sheraton on Aero Drive. This will be a free event that provides parent education and information to parents in the San Diego community.
- Environmental safety regarding mosquito borne illness, Zika virus. The HHSA is bringing awareness to how standing water can harvest mosquitoes, becoming feeding grounds and dangerous to children. More information to come in a flyer from the Fight the Bite campaign.

- The Live Well 5k is going to be held in July this year. Online registration is currently open and more information will be sent to the committee by email.
- Currently the agency is focusing on having children's medical and dental exams up to date. CWS and public health agencies are working closely to provide families with forms and resources to get children to doctor visits and obtain the paperwork verifying the visits. The agency appreciates caregivers' support in improving in this area of care. If there are any barriers or additional supports needed, please let your mentor, Nicole Kelsay, or Alice Kennedy know.
- The Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council is holding the annual STARS Awards event on Thursday, April 21st, from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. at the DoubleTree Hotel. The RSVP will extend until Monday and there are plenty of seats available.

Marilynn Sproat – Medi-Cal question regarding children been seen by a physician in a timely manner when released from PCC or a hospital to a new caregiver. If children are currently enrolled in health plans prior to coming into CWS custody, can the child be disenrolled from health insurance and enrolled into different plan in mid-month?

Anita Secor – Yes, a child can disenroll immediately. Contact the Human Services Specialist (HSS) to switch plans. This process can take 24 hours. If any issues come up, please contact Anita.

- There will be a representative from Foster Care Eligibility for the next FCSC meeting.

San Diego County Office of Education – Violeta Mora

- College and Career Day will be on Friday, April 22nd, at Southwestern College.
- Updates on the USD Kinship Wish List event – they were able to fulfill 150 students' wishes. Support group leaders can pick up items at YMCA locations. Items, such as backpacks with school supplies, were distributed.

HHSA, San Diego Adoptions – Nikki Kelsay on behalf of Gloria Escamilla-Huidor

- A Telling Take Down will be held on Saturday, April 16th. This supports children being adopted timely and increases permanency. The agency is on target to meet its goals for adoptions completed this fiscal year.

HHSA, Quality Parenting Initiative – Diana Macis

- The next Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) quarterly training in regions will be about confidentiality. The first confidentiality training will be held in East Region, on Monday, April 27th.
- QPI is expanding to Residential, Foster Home Licensing (FHL), and Adoptions. Programs will be involved in trainings and initiatives for QPI.

Nikki Kelsay – In addition, there will be identified Adoption staff at each regional meeting to provide the Adoption perspective. Residential Services will likely hold their meetings with FFA families.

Shlyn Guarian – Central region will be having their quarterly training on Wednesday, June 8th, from 9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.

Mary Jo Meer – At TIPS training, is the issue of loss and coping with reunifying children to their birth parents addressed for foster parents?

Alice Kennedy – There needs to be a continuous discussion with families in this role to further explain the system and what the agency is charged with regarding reunification and searching for relatives. Whenever a child comes into care, it should be seen as temporary. However, if the child is unable to go home, permanency is important. Support groups and mentors are there to support families in these situations, and to coach and explain the process. With QPI expanding, regional ambassadors and staff will begin to know families in their region and can coach them and explain the process.

Nikki Kelsay – We need to support transitions for children and their foster families who are moving through the grieving process.

Alice Kennedy – The QPI ambassadors in regions are there to support families during transition. Supporting caregivers during transition will help retention. The agency will continue to focus on this issue.

Brenda Jones – In the Needs and Service Plan, the social worker should open up the line of communication about the child's plans for permanency and help bring closure when a child leaves caregiver's home.

Nikki Kelsay – We might also need to advocate for the court to consider time for transition when a child is returning to their family of origin.

Comprehensive Assessment/Stabilization Services (CASS) – Jacquie Pusateri

- Currently 2 people are on the waitlist, due to need for a male therapist. A male therapist will be assigned in a week.

HHSA, Public Health Nurse (PHN) – Anita Secor

- Reminder that immunization laws are changing and going into effect this school year. This will affect K – 7th grade, who are required to have updated immunizations.
- For caregivers who have infants at home, the following immunizations are recommended:
 1. Flu Shot
 2. T-dap
- Questions, please call any Child Welfare Services Public Health Nurse, Claire or Anita regarding concerns like: Medi-Cal, health questions, enrollment issues, or access to medical or dental offices.
- Please continue to submit paper work from medical or dental exams, and the follow-up visits.

Alice Kennedy – For the immunization changes, is there any public campaign in the communication plan? This information needs to be given to foster parents, relative caregivers, and staff.

Anita Secor – will be sending out flyer with immunization information to the committee.

Mary Jo Meer – How does the agency handle families that refuse immunization?

Anita Secor – Families are no longer able to refuse immunizations, unless there is a medical reason. The state has zero tolerance for untimely immunizations.

Grossmont College Foster & Adoptive Kinship Care Education Program (FAKCE) — Brenda Jones on behalf of Twila Perucci

- The new pink flyer for summer classes will come out soon.

HHSA, Foster Home Licensing (FHL) – Alice Kennedy

- Announcement of new program manager for Foster Home Licensing will be made at the next meeting.
- The FHL program will be under Deputy Director, Alice Kennedy.

HHSA, Independent Living Skills (ILS) – Amanda Amabile

- A Graduation Event will be on Wednesday, June 29, from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m., and the location will be at the waterfront. Please work with assigned Protective Service Workers (PSW) to submit verifications needed for children to be on this list.
- The WAY Career Fair event went well. The application process is currently in review from attendees.
- The Housing Workshop will commence once more before the end of the fiscal year. Once the location is determined, information will be shared with committee.

- For the students who met their graduation requirements, but did not pass the CASI exam, they are no longer able to be held back from graduating. For more information on this topic, please contact the child's high school or the County Office of Education.

HHSA, Foster and Adoptive Resources Family Services (FARFS) – Nikki Kelsay

- The 55th Annual Foster Parent Appreciation Banquet will be on Friday, May 20th, at the Mission Valley Doubletree Hotel.
- The agency will have a booth during the San Diego County Fair, starting Friday, June 3rd, through Monday, July 4th. The booth location will be the same as last year.
- Protective Service Supervisor, Miriam Curiel, will be starting in the program on Friday, June 29th. Miriam will supervise the Special Care Rate, Placement Coordinators Office, and Retention with an Ombudsman component. For foster parents who have an Ombudsman issue, Miriam will be the point of contact for services and information.

Maxim Respite Care – Mike Palomino and Keila Martinez

- Staff change, Michelle has transferred to Orange County office and Keila Martinez is replacing Michelle.
- Maxim is prepared to provide extra childcare for families who need it to attend the Annual Foster Parent Banquet. Foster Parents are encouraged to use their extra hours for respite.

HHSA, Child Welfare Services Placement Specialists – All Regions

East Region –Yoly Dayrit

- Announcement of new supervisor, Diana Shreckengost.
- QPI training held on Wednesday, April 27th, from 10:30a.m.-11:30a.m. The topic will be on confidentiality.
- Zero population at PCC.

Central Region –Shlyn Guarian

- 10 children currently in PCC.

South Region – Jenny Rodriguez

- Announcement of new Program Manager, Joline Martina.
- Thank you to Options Coordinator, Cristine Rosas-DiMaggio, who did an amazing job helping find placement in a challenging situation.
- Zero population at PCC.
- They are working hard to find families who have siblings of a child needing placement and to consider placing children in familiar environments.

CWS, Policy and Program Support –Veronica Sarabia

- Resource Family Approval (RFA) update: Currently the seven subcommittees (Communication, Emergency Shelter Care, Permanency Assessment, Emergency Approval, Background & Exemption, Training, Investigation & Complaint) are meeting monthly and reporting back to the steering committee on a monthly basis. The agency continues to work on the structure and implementation plan for RFA.
- Recently attended the southern counties monthly meeting, where other counties meet and discuss their RFA implementation plan, barriers, and support.

Nikki Kelsay – Orange County went live with RFA and they are the closest county in size to San Diego to have started RFA. We are learning a lot from them.

Alice Kennedy– In the past 2 years, five counties have rolled out RFA as part of the early implementation. One of the great things that they shared during their process for RFA, was that the

training for resource families stayed at 20 plus hours. The feedback from relative caregivers was that they appreciate receiving training. The feedback from foster parents and relative caregivers has been positive and they are responding well to RFA

Roundtable

San Diego Foster Parent Association –Debbie Stolz

- There should be a trauma centralized pre-school/nursery/childcare for children who are in transition. This can give the children some form of familiarity when everything else is changing.

CWS, Deputy Director –Alice Kennedy

- Proposals have been made for emergency childcare/daycare vouchers for families.

Foster and Adoptive Resource Family Services –Nikki Kelsay

- Community Care Licensing issued the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard Resource guide. More information to report for next meeting.

Foster and Adoptive Resource Family Services –Diana Macis

- On May 11th, there will be a Teen Panel. This will be an internal recruitment event hosted by foster parent, Debbie Stolz, and PSW, Nicole Espinosa. This event will provide information about taking placements for teens.

Independent Living Skills –Amanda Amabile

- A dual jurisdiction unit for children on probation, who are also in CWS, has been formed in Residential Services.

Foster Parent –Brenda Jones

- F.A.N.C.Y Teen Girl Expo, on Saturday, April 23rd, held at the O’Farrell Charter School. This is a free event, from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., ages 11 and up. Address is 6130 Skyline Drive, San Diego, CA 92114. Flyer is distributed.

IV. NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, June 9, 2016

12:00p.m. – 2:00p.m.

5469 Kearny Villa Road

San Diego CA 92123 (Seville Plaza Building, Suite 3700)

V. ADJOURNMENT: 1:30p.m.