

## FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

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

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

**Present:** Jorge Aguilar, Amanda Amabile, Michelle Bailow, Breanna Davila, Yoly Dayrit, Gloria Escamilla-Huidor, Shlyn Guarian, Sharon Ippolito, Brenda Jones, Nicole Kelsay, Alice Kennedy, Claire Lynch-Dwight, Diana Macis, Jessica Morales, Eileen O'Malley, Twila Perucci, Barbara Pike, Jacquie Pusateri, Jenny Rodriguez, Debbie Stolz, Mirtha Valadez, Barbara Wojtach, Dany Wilson

- I. Twila Perucci called the meeting to order at 12:00p.m.** All in attendance made introductions.
- II. Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** Correction completed for the June 2016 minutes as follows: page 4, Maxim Respite Care, correction on “contact” to “conduct”. The June 2016 was unanimously approved upon correction.
- III. Discussion:**

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

- Announcement of new executive, Kim Gallo, on the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) regional management team, replacing regional general manager, Marie Brown-Mercadel, who oversaw Child Welfare Services (CWS), public health programs, and Aging and Independent Services in East Region. Kim Gallo comes to us from the First 5 San Diego Program, where she was the director.
- 2016 Live Well 5K, held at the County's Waterfront on Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup>. Deadline for early-bird registration is Friday, July 15<sup>th</sup>. Online registration at Live Well San Diego website. All community partners, foster parents, and staff are invited to participate. This is a fun event with resource booths from service providers, provides opportunities to network, and a chance to exercise.
- Reminder to families about pool safety. There have been reports of drownings this summer. For those who work directly with clients and families, or are fostering children, please convey the need to pay special attention to supervision of children in pools and at beaches.
- Reminder to families about fire safety. The County's Office of Emergency Services and Animal Services have been involved in recent local fires during home evacuations and animal rescues. Be prepared by having an emergency kit with important items secured, including extra clothing, comfortable shoes, a laptop, and emergency contact list, in the event of evacuation. All County employees are emergency/disaster workers and may be called into action.

*Nikki Kelsay* – Reminder to families, if you are being evacuated during a disaster, please contact your social worker (SW) or call the KIDSline at 1-(877) 792-KIDS (5437).

- CWS and Public Health Services (PHS) continue to partner to coordinate to update medical and dental records for children in care. The process of how the results of exams are communicated to the workers and recorded in CWS database in a timely manner has been reviewed and we continue to work to ensure there are no gaps. There are areas where the goal of having 100% up-to-date exams has been reached. Thank you to staff for ensuring information is recorded and to the families reaching out to workers to provide results in a timely manner.
- Resource Family Approval (RFA) steering committee continues to plan for implementation of RFA, which will begin January 2017 in San Diego County. Other counties in the state have been involved in early piloting of RFA, and are identifying issues, challenges, and improvements it brings. Positive input has been provided by relative caregivers who have participated in RFA,

because they are feeling supported now that they are integrated in the process. The implementation of the new reform is currently a work in progress for all counties. The most significant piece of reform would be the timeframe of approving emergency placements within 90 days. A person is eligible not only to foster, but to adopt as well, with RFA. We are looking to streamline any challenges as we get closer to the implementation date. In the next week, a letter will be issued to foster parents that will give preliminary information about RFA, explaining what to expect, and addressing question for existing foster parents and how they will be approved under RFA. The new process is meant to retain families and the agency will strive in converting existing families with minimal impact, the goal is to continue to foster.

- The Foster Parent Customer Survey was mailed to all caregivers and results were posted on the Clerk of the Board website. The agency wants to be transparent with the information provided by caregivers and will continue to seek foster parent and stakeholder input about how to improve services and increase efforts to involve foster parents in decision making. We want to continue to build relationships in an atmosphere of trust with our families and sustain our foster parents.

*Twila Perucci* – How many surveys were returned?

- 1,400 surveys were sent and we received 372 responses in both English and Spanish. Overall, it comes to the communication and responsiveness of the social worker along with placement needs and services. These are themes that the agency will continue to work on.

#### **San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), Foster Youth Services – Michelle Bailow**

- Replacing Violeta Mora, who is no longer with foster youth services.
- Currently runs Tutor Connection, which provides free in home tutoring. Works with the students from Cal State San Marcos and San Diego State, who are taking courses to become teachers. We are in class throughout the semester, teaching students about trauma and how to support kids in foster care. The students provide 20-30 hours of one-on-one in home tutoring a semester or in group homes. The tutoring is supervised and available to any child/youth, K-12, with an open CWS case.
- Request a referral at [mbailow@sdcow.net](mailto:mbailow@sdcow.net)

#### **San Diego Foster Parent Association (SDFPA) – Debbie Stolz**

- There was a concern for a parent who requested Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA) on their case and was informed that they could not use BACA. Is there a policy that states they can't?

*Alice Kennedy* – This is a specific case that will need to be reviewed. We will follow up on this issue.

- Received bike donations from Donovan and school supply donations will be coming in from Sleep Train. There are plenty of funds for the scholarship program, for children with an open CWS case to purchase enrichment passes. Call the office or go on the website to fill out a scholarship application and mail it in.
- Rummage sale held at offices on the last Saturday of this month.

#### **HHS, San Diego Adoptions – Gloria Escamilla-Huidor**

- Over 500 adoption finalizations were completed for the 2015-16 fiscal year. Thank you to staff, the foster parent community, foster and adoptive families, and service providers for all your efforts.
- Adoptions continues to work on child permanency, Telling Takedowns, and planning for RFA, in order to have as many foster parents approved before January 2017 and maximize placement for our children.

### **HHSA, Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) – Diana Macis**

- Completed the second quarter of training and preparing for the third quarter on “Transitions”. Central, South, and East regions are scheduled for August trainings.
- The QPI Centralized Steering Committee quarterly meeting will be held next week.
- The last quarterly training will be on Resource Family Approval (RFA).

*Nikki Kelsay* – The Youth Law Center started QPI statewide and now is going nationally. There were three leaders who came to observe how we regionalized QPI to take to other larger counties. They attended the East region steering committee, with discussion being about the barriers of placement, such as children in wheelchairs. They also attended South region QPI training on “Confidentiality,” with a mixture foster parents, community partners, and social workers. They were impressed with the County’s work and favored the idea of regionalization and want to learn more about this structure.

### **Comprehensive Assessment/Stabilization Services (CASS) – Jacquie Pusateri**

- Cass has no waitlist.
- Social workers can refer when placing a child in a non-relative home who has never fostered. Often we can identify within the first month if they qualify for CASS. We can provide families with resources and connect them to the foster parent community. This opportunity allows families to become more successful and maintain placement.

*Nikki Kelsay* – Are there specialized populations that you work with?

- Mostly the younger age range of 2-10 years old, with a lot of success.

*Alice Kennedy* – Do you find your staff are asked to participate in Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings at the time of initial placement?

- The triage coordinator would be the one to attend those meetings, maybe 2-3 times in a month.
- More referrals are coming in as they go through Polinsky and having the Child Family Team (CFT) process, if held there. Also receiving referrals from DSEP for CFT’s. Families need support when having an emergency placement because it can become fragile.

*Alice Kennedy* – As we move towards RFA, the goal is to be able to identify a family for placement. Good to know that CASS can be a resource at the earlier point and be present from the beginning.

- Children do need to be dependents of the court to receive services and we can hold onto a referral for 30 days. With any referral questions, contact triage coordinator, Anna Maria Lamanati, at cell phone number 619-876-9951.

### **HHSA, Public Health Nurse (PHN) – Claire Lynch-Dwight**

- Provided list of dentists that take Medi-Cal by flyer.
- Will continue to follow up on Vaseline in child’s hair while in Polinsky.

### **Developmental Screening and Enhancement Program (DSEP) – Dany Wilson**

- Currently fully staffed and no major changes in the past month.
- Took back concerns shared about confidential nature of addresses to his organization and made sure that DSEP is connecting with the social worker to ensure they have submitted any special requests, prior to going out to the home. Also, providing parents with options to hold meetings at a different office, location, or a park, if that is something they are interested in doing.
- Continue to educate more on CFT’s with responses coming back a lot quicker.

## **Grossmont College Foster & Adoptive Kinship Care Education Program (FAKCE) — Barbara Wojtach**

- Classes continue throughout the summer.
- Super Saturday training had 150 attendees with 50-60 children in childcare. Feedback was positive from kinship providers regarding childcare at training, which allowed them to attend.
- Currently in the process of finishing the fall schedule, for the pink book will be ready in September. Special trainings held in the fall will be on addiction, psychotropic medication, and transitions.

### **HHSA, Independent Living Skills (ILS) – Amanda Amabile**

- Graduation was a success, kids had the opportunity to see their friends and reunite.
- New ILS class calendar is out and begins this month.
- Contracts are currently in review for youth ages 14 and 15. In September, there should be a class schedule on a semester system.
- ILS should be fully staffed by September.

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

- Options Foster Parent Picnic, on Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 9:00-2:00 p.m., held at De Anza Cove in Mission Bay. There will be booths and activities for children.
- There was feedback that foster parents were utilizing Polinsky as a respite provider. Foster parents were going out of town and dropping off kids at PCC. Just a reminder, that caregivers should not follow this practice. There is Maxim, who provides respite services for foster parents. Please call the KIDSline to look for other resources or options if needed.

*Sharon Ippolito* – Maxim does not cover vacations or employment. Families are given 25 hours quarterly and you can request more hours through your social worker.

- Options families get 48 hours monthly and can be used for vacation. Parents can utilize either Options or Maxim, not both.

*Alice Kennedy* – In identifying contract issues, as laws are now changing, looking into CASS and Maxim, this is something to review as it relates to Continuing Care Reform (CCR). The needs of the agency are changing and contracts need the flexibility to support the families that are caring for our kids in an effort to reduce the trauma through stability is something that needs to be elevated at a state level. Currently looking into increasing hours for childcare.

### **Maxim Respite Care – Breanna Davila**

- Will follow up on respite hours for vacation.
- Trainings due last month at the end of the month. Corporate will review in streamlining training geared towards foster care.

### **HHSA, Child Welfare Services Placement Specialists – All Regions**

#### **South Region –Jenny Rodriguez**

- Kudos to foster parents in spreading the word in taking placements. There has been an increase of foster parents calling in and letting us know they are open for placement.

#### **East Region –Yoly Dayrit**

- East Region placement will be present at the Options picnic

- Kudos to Options social worker, Cristine Rosas-DiMaggio. She is responsive to placement needs and was able to find placement for a sibling group of 3. Thank you to admin for approving respite requests right away and Maxim for childcare.
- QPI training will be held next month. For the last two months, there have been back to back emergency placements and the office has been busy.
- No kids currently at PCC.

#### **Central Region – Shlyn Guarian**

- Currently a lot of transition in placement, interviewing for new a placement supervisor. Please be patient when calling placement, due to staffing issues. Program manager Shelly Paule, will be covering the placement unit until further notice.
- Next QPI meeting is on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 9-11 a.m.
- 9 kids in PCC currently.
- There will be a Sleep Train pick up next week at Promises to Kids for this region.
- Permanent Connections with YMCA, Central region will be the first region to roll out in August.
- Participated in SheFest, with worker Crystal Irving, from Foster and Adoptive Resource Family Services. It was a well attended event, with over 100 people interested and thankful that the agency was there. Provided information on becoming foster and adoptive parents.

#### **Fred Finch, Polinsky Behavioral Health Program – Eileen O’Malley**

- Population is at 36.
- On a weekly basis, Fred Finch program has a Polinsky Transitional teaming meeting. We present kids that have dangerous propensities that look bad on paper. Social workers can call in and discuss how their children are doing at Polinsky. In partnership with CWS Pathways, we are looking to determine the best way to have the CFT’s for each child.

#### **HHSA, Foster Care Eligibility – Barbara Pike**

- Gearing up for the rate increase of 2.6%. An instruction for staff through “Special Notice” is pending review and is working with Cal-Win payment system to make sure there is follow through. Tentative dates for a trial run through are: Adoptions assistance on July, 16<sup>th</sup> and Foster Care on July 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Preparing for the clothing allowance. Emergency shelter care clothing allowance is \$100.00. After the 30 days, if the child remains, it is possible to get the remainder of the funds determined by the child’s age.

#### **Roundtable**

#### **IV. NEXT MEETING:**

**Thursday, August 11, 2016  
12:00p.m. – 2:00p.m.  
5469 Kearny Villa Road  
San Diego CA 92123 (Seville Plaza Building, Suite 3700)**

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT: 1:45 p.m.**