

**FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016**  
5469 Kearny Villa Road, San Diego, CA 92123, Ste. 3700  
**12:00 PM – 2:00 PM**

**Present:** Amanda Amabile, Patty Boles, Lodia Ruiz, Miriam Curiel, Wendy Curiel, Breanna Davila, Yoly Dayrit, Gloria Escamilla-Huidor, Shlyn Guarian, Brenda Jones, Nikki Kelsay, Alice Kennedy, Diana Macis, Maria Martinez, Mary Jo Meer, Jessica Morales, Katie Olson, Twila Perucci, Jacquie Pusateri, Marilynn Sproat, Debbie Stolz, Mirtha Valadez, Barbara Wojtach, Alfredo Guardado, Javier Torres, Troy Rippengale, Carol Kozik-Sproule

- I. Twila Perucci called the meeting to order at 12:00p.m.** All in attendance made introductions.
- II. Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** The September 2016 minutes was unanimously approved.
- III. Discussion:**

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

- Thank you to foster parents and caregivers for attending meetings and support groups that provide updates on Continuum Care Reform (CCR) and Resource Family Approval (RFA) implementation.
- The agency is currently recruiting for a new Director of CWS.
- Funds were awarded by the state for resource parent recruitment that impact contracts for services and childcare. Changes will be made to respite with more to come from the state on that.
- The implementation plan for RFA was submitted by our county in September.
- Last year, 80% of new entries coming to Polinsky where there for 10 days. In July, 2016, 100% of new entries, left before the ten day mark. The agency is looking into new strategies for finding placements for children with special needs, mental health issues, for those who are medically fragile, and teens.

*Debbie Stolz – Has there been an update on B.A.C.A.?*

*Nikki Kelsay – Yes. Policy Analyst, Veronica Sarabia, who is not present, provided an update. The agency's County Counsel has reviewed this question and the request will need a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or memorandum of agreement (MOA), for the agency to work with B.A.C.A. This does break the confidentiality of the child to let anybody know that they are in foster care. We will continue to look into this resource.*

*Mary Jo Meer – Can the association call Placement Coordinator's Office (PCO) to confirm if a child is in foster care for eligibility on scholarships?*

*Nikki Kelsay – I will review the agreements currently in place and look into it.*

*Mary Jo Meer – Is there a way for CWS to assign Education Rights on babies and have that follow them, in the event that they are placed in more than one home?*

*Nikki Kelsay – That is something that the court decides in a hearing.*

**North County Foster Parent Association – Patty Boles**

- There is a pediatric practice that would like to reach out to the community. They are giving backpacks and school supplies for foster children, from 10 – 12:00 pm on 10/22. And for families, they will issue \$15.00 gift certificates, courtesy of Sleep Train.
- Looking into getting car seat grants and furniture.
- Toys for Tots for the holidays.
- Women's Club is holding a Hoedown fundraiser, on 10/22 at Williams Barn in San Marcos, 6 p.m. There will be dinner and drinks with raffle prizes.

**HHSA, CWS Policy & Program Support Division – Nikki Kelsay for Veronica Sarabia**

- S.A.Y San Diego plans to extend Project KEEP services for foster parents and kinship caregivers of children ages 13-18 years old. The curriculum is called Project KEEP safe, and it addresses teen specific

issues. The intention of the program is to prevent drug use, pregnancy, sexually risky behaviors, general behavior problems, and is scheduled to begin 1/01/2017.

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

- End of September was the national convening in Cleveland, Ohio. The highlights and major presenters: birth parent panel; youth panel who have been in foster care; presentation on developmental studies and research; and workshops. Los Angeles County was present, which is their first convening with QPI. Workshops included QPI and the Judicial System, discussing how to engage judges and attorneys. This is something that we are planning to do in San Diego in the next year. Next convening will be in New Orleans, in January 2018.
- Next quarterly training countywide will cover RFA. Currently, all support groups also RFA trainings.
- On the 19<sup>th</sup> is the quarterly centralized steering committee meeting, email reminder will be sent.

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

- CASS was in attendance for the annual Foster Family Picnic.
- 3 week waitlist due to staffing shortage.

### **Developmental Screening and Enhancement Program (DSEP) – Katie Olson**

- Currently working on the backlog and continue to see children within 30-45 days of their CWS case opening. There are a large number of Family Team meetings, which are increasing and have been successful.

*Patty Boles – St. Augustine, in San Marcos, conducts occupational and physical therapy at Straight from the Heart. You can refer parents there too. They get to come once a semester.*

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

- We are into the second month of the pink book with really great classes. The Psychotropic Medications training, led by instructor is Sarah Pauter, a former foster youth who is now an advocate, will be on 10/25 at Straight from the Heart.
- Mental Health First Aid, with 22 attendees. You become certified for Mental Health First Aid. We will try to offer this again in spring. The training is also provided in Spanish.
- Tonight there is a training called Overview of Addiction 101.
- In January, we will publish the pink booklet in two months increments. Post cards will be sent to highlight classes.

### **HHSA, Foster Home Licensing (FHL) – Wendy Curriel**

- 19 new staff will be joining licensing to help with RFA implementation. Diana, Veronica, and Wendy are going out to all the support groups to talk about RFA. Wendy encourages foster parents to attend the training to answer any questions.

*Alice Kennedy – What are the key questions that foster parents are asking?*

*Patty Boles – They are worried about the psycho/social assessment piece and the mechanics of the home study, which can be lengthy. Should one put in a request now?*

*Barbara Wojtach – Linda Schulte, shared in communications meeting, that if you currently do not have an adoptions worker, that means your home study is closed. If your home study is closed, then you would need to go through the psycho/social assessment.*

*Brenda Jones – They are asking, when one is exhausted and eligible to take a break, how long can you have the break?*

*Patty Boles – Some people are concerned, where they fostered before and decided that they want to just go to adoptions, is there a place for those families?*

*Alice Kennedy – This will help the agency to know the key things to add at the presentations held at support groups to answer those questions.*

*Shlyn Guarian – Foster parents who are not taking placements would like to keep their license and support in another way. They do not want to throw their knowledge and experience away.*

*Alice Kennedy – There are a lot of new things the agency will try to support families. Currently we are revising and renewing the ESCU plan called, Nurturing Evaluation and Stabilization Team (N.E.S.T.). We are trying to come*

*up with parameters and procedure that would identify caregivers for ESCU. We are trying to create different avenues and pathways to keep families who are experienced caregivers. The state is making adjustments as we move forward. Starting 1/1/2017, we will have licensing cases to work on, adoption home studies to complete, and a parallel process in rolling out RFA. The agency will be transparent with what is happening, what our needs are, and the conversion process.*

*Mirtha Valadez – for kinship purposes, one of the key questions is what is needed for a caregiver to receive funding with RFA? What does the timeline look like? What do I need to do now? And when will I receive funding?*

*Alice Kennedy – I will be sending an email to have someone talk about the rate structure.*

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

- 14-15 year old ILS classes to roll out in the next couple months. The kids will not have an ILS worker; the contract is with regions to get the kids to their classes. There are incentives for that.
- Need names for the graduation list for Spring

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

- 643 attendees at the Foster Parent Picnic; 208 foster parents and 283 children in foster care
- Join the Team calendar with the Chargers to be distributed on 11/13, at Charger game.

**Maxim Respite Care – Mike Palomino**

- Attended the Foster Family picnic and had a great time.

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

**East Region – Yoly Dayrit**

- Attended the Foster Family Picnic and gave out books at her book. Also had kids make their own bookmarks. Next year, we will ask for donations on Spanish reading books, since there were families expecting books in Spanish.

**Central Region – Shlyn Guarian**

- Attended the Foster Family Picnic, our team did arts and crafts.
- Last QPI meeting was yesterday.
- 1 child currently in PCC from Central Region.
- Hoping to have a respite night in December.

**South Region – Javier Torres**

- Attended the Foster Family Picnic.
- QPI meeting today, with a general discussion on RFA.
- 13 children were diverted/prevented from entering Polinsky.
- 4 minors in PCC and 3 with special needs.

**HHSA, Polinsky Children Center – Marilynn Sproat**

- Population currently at 20.
- Kids with special needs continue to stay longer and are harder to place.

*Alice Kennedy – There are factors that would impact the caregiver ability to do what they need to do, we are shifting to meet the needs of the child.*

**HHSA, Foster Care Eligibility – Maria Martinez**

- In regards to rates for caregivers beginning in January, we received a final notice. Every child will receive \$889 at phase 1 next year; other rates will be delayed. Maria will be going to Sacramento on Thursday to discuss rates for foster homes, group homes, FFA's, guardianship, KinGap, and AAP. This is under discussion.
- New families coming in after 1/1/2017 will receive new rates.
- Regional Center rates had increase July 1<sup>st</sup>. Rates differ depending on number of beds.

### **YMCA Kinship Support Services – Melissa Brooks**

- Averaging 30-50 referrals every month.
- Currently have a waitlist of 30 clients.
- Approving around \$30,000 of emergency funds per month.
- East County family event this Saturday at Horse of the Sun Ranch in Pine Valley.

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

- Staff have been selected, 10 case workers, to transition into RFA. This staff will be conducting the permanency assessments for the RFA process.
- There will be four RFA training academies for staff.
- Adoptions will pilot the 12-hour TIPS training in early November.
- Telling Takedowns continue for placement purposes.
- On November 18<sup>th</sup>, the annual Adoptions Court party will be held at Meadowlark Court. We have 20 families who will be finalizing their adoptions.
- We encourage caregivers to work with their applicant workers to complete their home studies and attend specialty classes.

### **Roundtable**

#### **HHSA, Foster and Adoptive Resource Family Services (FARFS) – Carol Kozik-Sproule**

- Computer Giveaway in early December for foster and NREFM families at Future Foundations. You can also recycle your electronics. Date to be determined. No laptops.

*Mary Jo Meer – Are you able to also mail info that Futures Foundations also allows foster families to purchase computers there? Many homes do not know that. They can also fix your computers for \$50. They offer a lot of services for foster families.*

*Mary Jo Meer – Can social workers include in IAP's about SELPA? They help the homes and kids. There is one in National City and East County. There are families who do not know about it.*

*Brenda Jones – St. Regents is having their 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Health Resource fair this Saturday, from 11-3 pm. They will have flu shots and health screening. On Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 9:30-3pm, Grandparents raising Grandchildren will be held in South.*

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

**Thursday, January 14, 2017**

**12:00p.m. – 2:00p.m.**

**5469 Kearny Villa Road**

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

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT: 1:42 p.m.**