

FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 9, 2014

6950 Levant St, San Diego

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Present: Jorge Aguilar, Bernice Briggs, Elizabeth Cuevas, Robyn Ericson, Ann Fox, Lucia Garcia, Vickie Gunston, Sharon Ippolito, Linda Johnson, Suzette Johnston, Alice Kennedy, Moira Lewis, Diana Macis, Michele Manley, Tilisha Martin, Mary Jo Meer, Violeta Mora, Twila Perucci, Jacquie Pusateri, Elaine Shelby, Marilyn Sproat, Debbie Stolz, Barbara Wojtach

Minutes

- I. Twila Perucci called the meeting to order.** All in attendance made introductions.
- II. Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** The November 2013 minutes were unanimously approved. There was no meeting in December 2013.
- III. Presentations:**

- 1. Educational Rights—Tilisha Martin, Supervising Attorney, Dependency Legal Group of San Diego & Linda Johnson, Esq., San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program**

As the supervising attorney of foster youth minors' legal counsel, Tilisha Martin addressed the Committee regarding educational rights of foster youth. Her goal is to ensure that foster youth educational rights and services are met by the school systems when experiencing issues like Individual Education Plans (IEP), discipline, expulsion or other issues they may face. The Counsel's office is currently working with the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program (SDVLP) to inform foster parents of available services, and to encourage foster parents to take the role of Educational Rights Holders for their foster youth.

Linda Johnson, Esq., with SDVLP, works with dependency attorneys, educational liaisons, social workers, and caretakers to help them navigate the processes of the school system. She can help get youth enrolled in school, get IEPs, and give advice regarding school suspensions. Linda is available to answer questions or concerns, and to break down complex jargon into simple, understandable terms. If an issue needs dependency court action, a court order will be requested that would allow SDVLP access to the child's records and files and ensure the child rights are upheld. Children have educational rights, and school systems need to be held accountable. Additionally, efforts are being made to recruit interns from California Western School of Law as mentors to train foster parents in the educational rights of foster children.

- 2. Routine Health Care & Release Update—Lea Van Lingen, CWS, Policy & Program Support**

Lea Van Lingen distributed copies of the November 15, 2013 Court Order which authorizes health assessments, routine health care and release of information for children. This Court Order replaces form 04-24, and is intended for general, routine medical care and health assessment only.

IV. Discussion:

HHSA & Child Welfare Services—Alice Kennedy

- Dianne Jacob is the 2014 Chair for the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. Bill Horn is the Vice Chair.
- The Health and Human Services Agency continues to promote the Live Well, San Diego campaign with community partners. We encourage foster parent input and participation in the Live Well campaign.
- Child Welfare Services is recruiting staff; a new social worker class will begin on January 24.

San Diego Foster Parent Association—Mary Jo Meer

- The December Toys for Tots distribution went very well!
- Received \$12,000 donation from Sleep Train, out of which \$5,000 was used to give \$20 gift certificates to Extended Foster Care (AB12) youth for the holidays.
- The Association has \$10,000 available for youth activity scholarships.
- Mattresses, school supplies, and clothes are available at the Association.
- An Eagle Scout provided the Association with duffle bags containing blankets and flashlights. Many were distributed to AB12 youth.
 - **Alice Kennedy:** CWS always has duffle bags available. Foster parents should call the child's social worker to obtain duffle bags.

Child Welfare Services Placement Specialists—Bernice Briggs

- Need placements for large sibling groups.

Polinsky Children's Center—Marilyn Sproat

- The Polinsky population has been in the 50's this month.

San Diego County Office of Education—Viola Mora

- College Connection event is being planned for high school foster children at Grossmont College; date to be determined.
- The Education Summit will be held in June.
 - Watch for an email calling for presenters.
 - Please contact Violeta with names of youth that could act as Student Ambassadors.
- San Diego Tutor Connection offers tutoring for foster youth. Foster parents should turn in requests now for tutoring during the spring semester. Contact your educational liaison for assistance.
- Financial Aid workshops will be held February 5 & 6 at County Office of Education.
- Pre-Employment Training (PET) recruitment is underway. The goal is to help fifty students obtain work experience this summer.

San Diego County Adoptions—Diana Macis

- Welcome to Genny Wrocklage, new Sr. PSW Adoptions Recruiter.
- The 2014 Charger calendars have all been distributed.

Alice Kennedy:

- Adoptions is working on efficiencies to streamline the process for adoptive families.
- A Lean Six Sigma team will study and evaluate the process that families go through from the time they first contact CWS until finalization occurs.
- CWS will work with a consultant and hold adoption focus groups to obtain input on how to improve the adoption system.

Comprehensive Assessment/Stabilization Services (CASS) — Jacquie Pusateri

- CASS currently has a 10 day wait list.
- Cass and Grossmont College FAKCE staff are presenting at foster parent support groups on Recognizing Children's Emotional Needs.

Child Health Disability Prevention (CHDP)—Moirra Lewis

- CHDP is currently working to improve dental and physical exam reports.

Developmental Screening & Enhancement Program (DSEP) – Pat Thompson

- DSEP hired two additional Screening Specialists; appointments are scheduled within 30 days.
- DSEP currently has seven certified Infant Massage therapists.
- DSEP hired a part-time pre-school teacher for Polinsky.

Grossmont College—Barbara Wojtach

- Barbara Wojtach introduced herself as the new Program Director for the Grossmont College FAKCE program.
- Barbara will attend foster parent support groups to discuss FAKCE services and obtain feedback on what types of training foster parents are interested in receiving.
- Distributed the foster parent training flyer (pink flyer) for January through May 2014.

Foster & Adoptive Family Resource Services—Ann Fox

- Thanks to all who helped load and distribute items for the Toys-for-Tots distribution!
- The annual school clothing allowance was mailed in mid-December. Caretakers who have not received the clothing allowance should contact the child's social worker.
- The Computers for Foster Families Distribution Event was held on December 5 & 6. This year 150 computers were distributed to caretakers. The County of San Diego partners with San Diego Futures Foundation, which refurbishes gently used computers.
- Ethics training is required for all Foster Care Services voting members every two years. Reminders will be sent by email to those who must renew their training this year. Contact Ann Fox if you have any questions.

Quality Parenting Initiative – Diana Macis

- Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) training for foster parents, CWS staff, and community partners, will start in February. Four separate trainings will be held in different areas of the county. The training is advertised in the pink flyer, page 24. Flyers were circulated within CWS to encourage staff to register in LMS and attend the training.
- The QPI National Convening will take place in February.

Alice Kennedy—San Diego County held four QPI forums. Attendees included foster parents, social workers, community partners, County Counsel, and foster youth. Key areas were identified for San Diego County to work on to improve the foster care system. A QPI Steering Committee was established. Subcommittees were developed to address the four key areas. The upcoming QPI training is the initial introduction for foster parents, social workers, and stakeholders to learn about QPI as San Diego County works to rebrand foster care. All are encouraged to attend the QPI training.

Foster Home Licensing—Lucia Garcia

- Foster Home Licensing is currently transitioning smoothly.
- Licensing should be fully staffed in the upcoming months.
- Foster parents can call Lucia Garcia directly @858-694-5272 if they have any questions or concerns.

Maxim Respite Care—Elizabeth Cuevas

- Three additional respite providers have been certified for North County as a result of the recent recruitment flyer. Maxim hopes to recruit seven additional providers for the North County.
- Respite hours are available to foster parents at 25 hours per quarter with no carryover; the current quarter runs January through March 31.

V. NEXT MEETING:

**Thursday, February 13, 2014
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
6950 Levant Street, Room 1 A/B
San Diego, CA 92111**

V. ADJOURNMENT: 1:45 P.M.