

## **FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, January 8, 2015**

6950 Levant St, San Diego

**12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Bernice Briggs, Wendy Curiel, Ann Fox, Margo Fudge, Lucia Garcia, Sharon Ippolito, Andrea Jackson, Alice Kennedy, Diana Macis, Mary Jo Meer, Violeta Mora, Katie Olson, Mike Palomino, Twila Perucci, Jacquie Pusateri, Marilyn Sproat, Debbie Stolz, Barbara Wojtach, Danielle Zuniga, Maria Martinez, Shannon Jimenez, Jenny Rodriguez, Susan Moreno, Keila Martinez, Rachel Napalan

I. **Twila Perucci called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.** All in attendance made introductions.

II. **Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** January 8, 2015 minutes were unanimously approved.

### **III. Presentation: LinderKids – Ashley Hope Linder**

LinderKids sponsors foster youth for CrossFit gym memberships:

- Youth ages 12-17
- 1-hour after school program 3 days per week
- Youth must meet individual and monthly education requirements to maintain their sponsorship.
- Provides foster youth an opportunity for a health and fitness through sports, exercise, and mentorship.
- Goal is to create stronger youth; stronger in body, mind, heart, and relationships.
- For more information, please contact [info@linderkids.com](mailto:info@linderkids.com)

### **IV. Discussion:**

#### **HHSA & Child Welfare Services – Alice Kennedy**

- Supervisor Bill Horn is the new 2015 Chairperson for the County Board of Supervisors.
- The County will launch an initiative to enhance customer service in all departments.
- **Live Well San Diego** continues to be promoted through commercials, partnerships, and community outreach.
- Child Welfare Services (CWS) is now a Title IV-E waiver County. This will allow more flexibility, both fiscally and in how we administer services. It will allow CWS greater opportunity to perform prevention activities.
- Staffing –The next SWIT class will begin in late January.
- CWS is continuing to develop the Quality Parenting Initiative to strengthen relationships and develop a system that better supports children and families.

#### **San Diego Foster Parent Association – Mary Jo Meer**

- Holiday toy distribution went well! Association received donations from Toys for Tots, Promises 2 Kids, and Sleep Train.
- Association received more Sleep Train donations for scholarships.
- Sleep Train mattress sponsorship has been suspended.
- My Stuff Bags are available at the Association; children select their own supplies to fill the bags.
- Food drive for AB12 youth will continue year round.

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

- The CASS Sr. Director is attending CWS unit meetings to inform social workers about the CASS program and how CASS serves/supports families.
- CASS staff are presenting at new social worker SWIT classes.
- Currently no waiting list for CASS.

### **Developmental Screening & Enhancement Program – Katie Olson**

- DSEP is now fully staffed.
- Added a bilingual Developmental Specialist in North County.

### **Foster Care Education – Barbara Wojtach**

- Distributed Spring Training Flyer (Pink Flyer) for January through April 2015.
- New caretaker trainings include:
  - “Baby Basics”- led by Public Health Nurse and foster parent monitor
  - “Nuts & Bolts”-refresher course on placements
  - “Working with Birth Parents and Social Workers”-focuses on teamwork
  - “Know the Regulations to Avoid Allegations”- Foster Home Licensing worker and foster parent will present this class multiple times through the semester
  - “Caregivers Serving Emerging Adults”-presented by Debbie Stolz; focus on working with non-minor dependents and adolescent development
  - “Roles & Responsibilities for Educational Rights Holders” – presented by Attorney Tilisha Martin
  - “Cultural Considerations – Hair and Skin Care for Multi-ethnic Children” - presented by Dionne Puckett and Julie McClure
  - Nutrition class; presented by San Diego Food Bank January 22<sup>nd</sup> and March 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Debbie Stolz is working with the County to be a foster parent presenter for the Pathways to Well-Being trainings.

### **Foster Home Licensing —Lucia Garcia**

- Continuing to work on streamlining the Orientation process.
- Taking Care of Business Day was held on Saturday, December 13; was a great success!
  - 25 prospective caretakers attended.
  - Provided TB testing, Live Scan fingerprinting, CPR/First Aid class.
  - Licensing staff reviewed applications with prospective foster/adoptive parents.

### **Foster & Adoptive Resource Family Services Operations—Ann Fox**

- Staffing – Dionne Puckett promoted to Sr. Protective Services Worker in Adoptions.
- Hold policy is being reviewed. The goal is to reduce the number of holds and time foster homes are on hold.
- KIDSline has been enhanced; added prompts that lead to information on how to become a foster parent, Orientation, Special Care Rates, Placement Coordinator’s Office, resource information, and the new Foster Care Ombudsman program. Prompts are offered in both English/Spanish. KIDSline number is: 1-877-792-KIDS (5437)
- Holidays for Foster Teens was an idea that originated from the QPI Steering Committee. Foster teens were invited to share holiday dinner with host foster families. Three foster parent volunteers hosted five teens for holiday dinner.

### **Maxim Respite Care—Mike Palomino**

- Welcome to Keila Martinez who joined the Maxim team!
- Maxim is moving to a new office with larger orientation rooms and more computers. Flyer distributed.
- Orientations and interviews can now be conducted in the Carlsbad office.
- Caretakers should continue to contact the Mission Valley Maxim office to schedule respite care.

### **Child Welfare Services Placement Specialists - All**

- **Central – Andrea Jackson:** Central Region CWS is now combined in one new office at the Price Charities building at 4305 University Avenue, San Diego 92105. Need to recruit more foster homes in Central Region.
- **East – Shannon Jimenez:** Respite Night was held at Helix High School with volunteers from the La Mesa Rotary Club; 73 kids attended. Holiday Gift Wrap was a success with volunteers from Pathways Church, Promises to Kids, West Hills, Sleep Train, and the San Diego Foster Parent Association serving 300 children! Need to recruit more foster homes in inner East Region (Alpine, Dulzura, Campo).
- **South – Jenny Rodriguez:** South Region Placement staff will begin attending foster parent support groups. Making many placements with relatives, and conducting searches for absent fathers. Need more foster homes in South Region.
- **Bernice Briggs – Computers for Foster Families:** On December 4 & 5, 150 computers were distributed to foster and relative caregivers. Retention staff helped arrange Holidays for Foster Teens and assisted in KIDSline enhancement.

### **Child Welfare Services Policy & Program Support Division – Wendy Curiel**

- iFoster Navigator will available January 21. iFoster is a user-friendly resource portal available to foster/relative/NREFM caregivers, social workers, and service providers.

### **Polinsky Children’s Center – Marilyn Sproat**

- PCC population is averaging 50 children.
- ESCU staff are being trained to conduct family finding and relative home assessments.

### **Kinship Support Services – Danielle Zuniga**

- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG): Four regional GRG events were held this year. Details on future GRG events will be emailed to the Committee.
- CWS Data Unit showed 40% increase in placements with Kinship families.
- Currently receiving about 50 referrals a month and providing service to approximately 400 caregivers in a 6 month period.
- Students from the USD MSW Program will begin interning with KSS.
- Will be getting a grant for another Kinship Navigator.
- KSS is receiving some funds for emergency services to families.
- Holiday 2014 – partnered with Street Masters Club club held a car show and collected toy donations in lieu of car show registration fee.
- Reapplying for Aging & Independence Services (AIS) respite contract which provides out-of-home respite for relative caregivers age 55 and older.

### **San Diego County Office of Education – Violeta Mora**

- Service Providers Workshop will be held January 28 Anyone helping a student fill out financial aid applications for college may attend, including caretakers and CASAs.

- Youth Workshop will be held January 29 from 3pm-5pm at the San Diego County Office of Education computer lab. This workshop will assist students filling out FAFSA forms.

#### **San Diego County Adoptions – Margo Fudge**

- New orientation video is featured on the I Adopt U and San Diego Foster Kids websites; changing our messaging on what Foster and Adoptive Resource Family Services is and the types of children needing homes.
- Enhancing the adoption application process through use of new technology; using a public portal by which people may obtain and submit information.
- The I Adopt U website will also be redesigned in keeping with new messaging and technology.
- Adoptions will now triage applicant cases based on the types of children currently needing adoptive homes and prioritizing older children.
- Dionne Puckett was promoted to Sr. Protective Services worker in Adoptions, and will also continue working with community outreach.

#### **Quality Parenting Initiative – Margo Fudge/Diana Macis**

- QPI National Convening will be held at the Crowne Plaza from January 20<sup>th</sup> – January 22<sup>nd</sup>. 400 people are registered. San Diego will be well represented with 54 foster parents and CWS staff participating.
- QPI Ambassador Program will be piloted in Central Region. Would like 1-2 foster parents to team with Central Region Placement Workers to promote QPI.
- Diana Macis presented the *2015 Join the Team* Adoptions calendar which profiles exceptional children waiting for adoptive homes along with San Diego Chargers players.

#### **V. NEXT MEETING:**

**Thursday, February 12, 2015  
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm  
6950 Levant Street, Room 1 A/B  
San Diego, CA 92111**

#### **VI. ADJOURNMENT: 2:00 pm**