

FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 14, 2014

6950 Levant St, San Diego

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Present: Jorge Aguilar, Sandra Boelter, Patty Boles, Bernice Briggs, Barbie Caldwell, Wendy Curiel, Ann Fox, Anna Garcia, Stephanie Gutierrez, Sharon Ippolito, Scott Jaul, Suzette Johnston, Alice Kennedy, Maribel Luna, Diana Macis, Violeta Mora, Susan Moreno, Anya Nevarez, Katie Olson, Twila Perucci, Alicia Rogers, Elaine Shelby, Barbara Wojtach, Danielle Zuniga

- I. **Sandra Boelter called the meeting to order.** All in attendance made introductions.
- II. **Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** The July 10, 2014 minutes were unanimously approved.
- III. **Discussion:**

Loving Arms Foster Family Network—Elaine Shelby

- Association is putting a new Board in place and completing paperwork to obtain 501(c)(3) status.

North County Foster Parent Association—Patty Boles & Barbie Caldwell

- Concern that many foster parents did not receive Back to School Clothing Allowance for 2013. Policy will look into the matter and report back to the Committee.
- New law directs that relatives may be considered up to the .26 hearing. Concern that some children are being removed from long-term placements and placed with non-acquainted relatives. Concern for resulting trauma to the child when removed from long term placement. Caretakers who care long term believe the child will be placed with them permanently, but then learn the child will be moved. Concern that children's attorneys are not advocating for best interests of the children. Adoption staff have great understanding of children's needs and effects of trauma. The Association would like to see all social workers trained in TIPS, attachment, bonding, medical needs, and special needs children.
 - Alice Kennedy: Several things are being implemented to help address this. Pathways to Well Being is being implemented; all social workers will receive Pathways training. Relative Search is being emphasized at the start and throughout the life of every case.

HHSA & Child Welfare Services—Alice Kennedy

- Child Welfare Services is continuing to increase staff. There were 27 PSWs in the last class, and the next class begins soon.
- New simulation exercises in Social Worker Initial Training will better prepare new staff for casework.
- The District Attorney launched a campaign to raise public awareness about human trafficking and commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC). Messaging will appear on billboards and on a new website: www.protectsandiegokids.org. Children in foster care tend to be targets for CSEC. The Child Abuse Hotline is currently tracking CSEC cases. Child Welfare Services will partner with the District Attorney and other organizations to be proactive in prevention of CSEC and to serve this population of children.
- Quality Parenting Initiative: San Diego will host the QPI National Convening, sponsored by the Youth Law Center January 20-22.

Foster Home Licensing—Alicia Rogers

- No new business

San Diego County Independent Living Skills (ILS)—Anya Nevarez

- Independent Living Skills teaches youth ages 16-21 skills needed for independent living.

Foster & Adoptive Resource Family Services Operations—Ann Fox

- **Voting Members:** The Foster Care Services Committee must nominate and vote to recommend a new voting member to represent relative care. The recommendation will be submitted to the Health and Human Services Agency Director who appoints all voting members. The Committee nominated and voted to recommend the following as voting members of the Foster Care Services Committee:
 - Danielle Zuniga, YMCA Kinship Support Services
(Alternate: Melissa Brooks, YMCA Kinship Support Services)
- **Ethics Training:** Reminder that voting members must complete 2-hour ethics training every two years. Emails were sent to voting members with instructions and link to the training website. Please submit your certificate to Ann Fox by August 31.
- **Statement of Incompatible Activities:** This form must be completed by voting members after Ethics training is completed. The form was attached to emails regarding Ethics training. Please submit your form to Ann Fox by August 31.
- **Photographs of Voting Members:** The Health and Human Services Agency will post names and photos of voting members of all advisory boards on the respective Advisory Board websites. Photos will be taken by CWS staff after today's meeting. Members may also submit a photo before September 30. Photos must be close up; head and shoulders only.
- **Term Limits:** Committee by-laws state the term for Committee voting members is four years; members may serve no more than two (2) terms or ten (10) years to complete a partial term.
- **Camp Connect** was held the first weekend in August for siblings who are separated in the foster care system. The camp was a great success and was featured on the front page of last Saturday's edition of the San Diego Union Tribune.
- **Options Picnic** on August 13, was a fun, successful event. Supervisor Dave Roberts attended and visited with foster parents and children.
- **The 29th Annual Foster Family Picnic** will be held on Sunday, October 12 at Admiral Baker Park. Invitations will be mailed this week.
- **Foster Parent Email addresses** have been collected. CWS will soon have capability to send No-Reply email messages to foster parents to provide information and resources. Foster Parent Associations will continue to receive these informative messages as they have in the past. The new notification system is expected to go live in the fall.

Maxim Respite Care—Scott Jaul

- Currently there is only one Maxim respite provider in North County. Please encourage potential respite providers to contact Maxim.
- Maxim partnered with the North County Foster Parent Association to provide orientation at Straight from the Heart.
 - It was suggested that Maxim consider conducting a one-day event for people to complete Maxim orientation, CPR/First Aid, and fingerprinting.
 - Violeta Mora offered use of the SDCOE training lab to complete Maxim online training.
- A new North County respite recruitment flyer will be emailed next week.

Polinsky Children's Center—Anna Garcia

- In an effort to minimize trauma, Emergency Shelter Care staff are holding weekly phone conferences with PPAU to discuss placement of children who may require concurrent referrals and children who have special circumstances.
- Looking for exceptional families who are willing to take on challenging teens!
- The Stars Program in East County holds 3-day training that caretakers may attend regarding CSEC and caring for the CSEC population. More information may be obtained from Nancy McLean or Charisma De Los Reyes.
 - Alice Kennedy: CWS is making adjustments to Orientation to be clearer about what types of children need placement.

Child Welfare Services Policy & Program Support—Wendy Curiel

- State directives on new smoking regulations have been received. CWS developed a draft Special Notice to mail to all caretakers. Committee members are asked to review and comment on the draft Special Notice, which will be emailed next week. Please provide feedback to Wendy Curiel @ Wendy.Curiel@sdcounty.ca.gov by September 2, 2014.
- The County is looking at opting into a new initiative called Approved Relative Payment (ARP). ARP will grant CalWORKs funding for relative caregivers at the same rate that is given for foster caregivers.

San Diego County Probation – Jorge Aguilar

- No new business

YMCA Kinship Support Services -Danielle Zuniga

- Kinship Support Services Program is contracted with the County to provide countywide services including:
 - Kinship Navigator services, information, referral, and resources
 - Case management
 - Respite care; 120 hours of respite per child per year
 - Handbook for relative caregivers
 - Regional family events
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren event will be held this weekend in San Marcos.
- Developing a workgroup to identify the needs of relative caregivers in San Diego County.
- Flyers and referral form for kinship services and respite services will be sent to the Committee by email.

San Diego County Office of Education—Viola Mora

- The SD County Office of Education has moved to the Casey Family site; 2nd floor.
- San Diego Unified Schools are making positive changes to meet the new Accountability Plan for serving educational needs of foster children.
- Caregivers are encouraged to respond promptly to letters received regarding tutoring or supplemental education services; those services have strict registration deadlines.
- Emergency contact cards at schools must be kept up to date by caretakers.

San Diego County Adoptions—Diana Macis

- Adoptions is hiring additional PSWs and a new Supervisor.
- Chargers Calendar photo shoots will be completed this month. We anticipate the calendar will be distributed in early December.

- Adopt 8 will feature a birth mother and the North County foster family that helped her reunify with her child.
- QPI 3-hour trainings will begin in September; will be presented by a foster parent and a social worker at monthly foster parent support group meetings.

Developmental Screening & Enhancement Program—Maribel Luna

- Katie Olson was introduced as the new lead Developmental Specialist for DSEP.
- Contract with the County was renewed to continue DSEP services.
- DSEP has moved to the Plaza at Rady’s Children’s Hospital.
- DSEP 2-hour training for CWS regional staff will focus on attachment and bonding this year.
- Staffing: Hired two developmental specialists to be stationed at Polinsky. Will be hiring a bilingual developmental specialist.
- In July, DSEP provided 65 in-home screenings in addition to screening all children ages 0-5 at Polinsky.

Foster Care Education—Barbara Wojtach

- The Curriculum Development Advisory Committee met on August 6; received good feedback and ideas for future trainings.
- The new Fall Training Flyer (pink flyer) will be available in September.
 - Two 3-hour CSEC trainings will be presented by Lisa Walker Gilbert from Residential.
 - A workshop for resource parents on caring for children who have experienced trauma will be held in fall. Curriculum is from the National Child Trauma Network. Three sessions will be available in both English and Spanish.
 - Eight QPI trainings are now featured in the pink flyer
 - Jody Johnston Pawel will return for future trainings with San Diego Youth Services, the Adoptions support program, and two trainings specifically for FAKCE.
- Seven FAKCE trainers are being certified to teach the Positive Discipline Parenting curriculum.
- Kinship training provided at monthly support groups is now being advertised in the pink flyer.
- Development of “Katie A” training is underway.
- QPI trainers were invited to travel to Nevada in September to conduct a TIPS Training for Nevada staff.

Foster & Adoptive Resource Family Services Operations—Bernice Briggs

- Bernice Briggs is now the Foster/Adoptive Resource Family Ombudsman.
- Working with families regarding placement or transitions; will conduct mediation and facilitate communication between families and caseworkers.
- Contact Bernice through the KIDSline at 1-877-792-KIDS (5437).

IV. NEXT MEETING:

**Thursday, September 11, 2014
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
6950 Levant Street, Room 1 A/B
San Diego, CA 92111**

V. ADJOURNMENT: 2:20 pm