

FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, September 11, 2014

6950 Levant St, San Diego

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Present: Bernice Briggs, Fran Cooper, Wendy Curiel, Ann Fox, Stephani Gutierrez, Sharon Ippolito, Andrea Jackson, Alice Kennedy, Robert McMonigle, Jessica Morales, Susan Moreno, Mike Palomino, Twila Perucci, Jacquie Pusateri, Jenny Rodriguez, Veronica Sarabia, Anita Secor, Debbie Stolz, Ed Wisz, Barbara Wojtach, Danielle Zuniga

- I. **Twila Perucci called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.** All in attendance made introductions.
- II. **Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** The September 11, 2014 minutes were approved with the following corrections:
 1. Under “Present”: Change name spelling to “Stephani Gutierrez”
 2. Under “DSEP”: Remove second dot point
- III. **Discussion:**

Child Welfare Services—Alice Kennedy

- Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI)
 - In 2012, Child Welfare Services partnered with the Youth Law Center to initiate QPI and rebrand foster care.
 - The State QPI Convening is being held this week in Sacramento.
 - San Diego will host the National QPI Convening January 20-22, 2015. Foster parents are encouraged to participate.
- Staffing
 - Child Welfare Services will continue hiring social workers throughout this fiscal year.
 - New SWIT class starts in October 2014.
 - Please exercise patience as we train new staff; call supervisor if needed to achieve seamless services.

Foster, Adoptive & Kinship Care Education Program—Barbara Wojtach

- Fall training booklet (Pink Flyer) was distributed. Highlights of Fall trainings include:
 - QPI training for regional social workers and foster parents
 - September 2nd
 - September 17th – (Spanish)
 - Self-Regulation & ADHD; presented by Mike Jones, community therapist
 - Parent’s Toolshop; presented by Jody Johnston Pawel
 - Understanding Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children; presented by Lisa Walker Gilbert, Residential Social Worker
 - Caring for Children who Experience Trauma; 8-hour class based on the new TIPS training
 - Theraplay; presented by Denise Phipps; helps parents connect with children through play
 - Holiday Celebrations; how to incorporate children’s traditions in holiday celebrations

HHSA & Foster Home Licensing—Robert McMonigle

- Foster parents are encouraged to call me with questions about investigations: (619) 767-5110.

Foster & Adoptive Resource Family Services Operations—Ann Fox

- Voting Members - Foster Care Services Committee
 - Welcome to Danielle Zuniga as new voting member.
 - Ethics Training: Majority of voting members have completed required Ethics training.
 - Statement of Incompatible Activities form is required from all voting members.
 - Voting members who have not yet completed this, please get the form from Ann after today's meeting and complete it.
- Foster Family Picnic will be held Sunday, October 12 at Admiral Baker Park. The Picnic will include lunch, bicycle raffle, Ronald McDonald, and a *Live Well San Diego* health and wellness section. Invitations were mailed the week of August 28. Ann emailed a "Save the Date" to the Foster Parent Associations.
- Chargers Calendar photo shoots are complete. The calendar will be distributed in November or December.
- Court Adoption Party will be held on Friday, November 21 in celebration of National Adoption Month.
- Foster & Adoptive Support and Mediation Service is now available to assist caretakers with issues regarding placement or transitions. Bernice Briggs is available to facilitate communication between caretakers and regional CWS staff. Contact Bernice through the KIDS line at 1-877-792-KIDS (5437).

Maxim Respite Care—Mike Palomino

- Stephani Gutierrez is covering for Elizabeth Cuevas who is on leave.
- Many new candidates are applying to become respite providers in North County.
- Maxim staff will host a Respite booth at the Foster Family Picnic on October 12.

HHSA- Placement Specialists

- East – Veronica Sarabia: Relative placement is given priority, and placement staff are working well with East region foster parents to make placements. Working hard to assess homes and make the first best placement.
- South- Jenny Rodriguez: Working diligently to place with relatives or in foster homes.
- Central-Andrea Jackson: Very busy with relative assessments. Have a lot of success placing children with foster parents who have adopted their siblings. Mid-City and Mills will be combining offices and moving to the Price Charities building in early December.
 - Alice Kennedy- Would like feedback on how Placement Specialists are working to clear foster homes through PCO.
 - Placement Specialists - Have been working very well with PCO. Jennifer Lucht and Vilma Martinez-Vallecillo respond quickly and are very helpful. They send regular updates to placement units.
 - Bernice Briggs - There have been many young children entering PCC. Last Friday, 30 children entered PCC, many under 6 years old. PCO has been personally calling foster parents that can take younger children and sibling groups; calling all families on the foster parent list to ask if they are willing and available.

Child Welfare Services Policy & Program Support—Wendy Curiel

- Smoking policy: Received good input from foster parents. Written policy will be finalized in two weeks and will be mailed to all foster parents.
 - No smoking in house or car, and no smoking allowed around children.

- Smoking is allowed outside only if no children are present.
- Robert McMonigle - Vaping is considered smoking.
- Back to School Clothing Allowance of \$100.00 will be issued between August and October.
 - Foster parents request it through the child's eligibility worker. Distributed chart with clothing allowance eligibility and information.
 - Action: Wendy will follow-up on whether Back to School Clothing Allowance is automatic or must be requested.
 - Action: Wendy will revise the clothing allowance chart to clarify eligibility and process (automatic issuance vs. issuance by request).
- Policy staff will provide regular updates to this Committee on any policy or legislative changes that will affect foster parents.
- Firearm Safe Storage training was presented to Relative Home Approval and Foster Home Licensing staff. The training was presented by Senior Probation Officers.
 - Action: Can firearm training be incorporated into Grossmont FAKCE training for caretakers?

Polinsky Children's Center (PCC) - Fran Cooper

- PCC law enforcement entries are increasing; 46 entries today due to DEC raid.
- Emergency Shelter Care Unit (ESCU) is working closely with foster parents and regional Placement Specialists to identify foster homes. Looking for placements for challenging youth and teens.
- "Me at PCC" forms are provided to foster parents for children under age six. This provides a brief description of the child's likes, dislikes, eating and sleeping habits, etc.
- "Just Me" program: Foster parents receive books and workbooks for latency age children and toddlers, to help explore trauma and feelings through animal stories.

YMCA Kinship Support Services -Danielle Zuniga

- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren event was held on August 23; 150 people attended. Received good feedback; attendees appreciated the event being regionalized. Dates for East and Central events will be scheduled.
- Hosted the first family event on Saturday, September 7 at Mission Trails Park. 20 relative families attended; families enjoyed the intimate feel.
- "Grandparent's Guide" revisions are expected to be finalized in November.
- Affordable Care Act now allows counties to elect to supplement CalWORKs for relative caregivers in order to match the basic foster care rates.
- Interns: Four interns from University of Southern California (USC) started this week; will provide supportive case management services to relative caregivers.
- Kinship Navigator:
 - Averaging 45 referrals per month; 50% from CWS; 50% from self-referral or other agencies.
 - Partnering with Grossmont College FAKCE program to provide Kinship Support Group.

Comprehensive Assessment/Stabilization Services (CASS)—Jacquie Pusateri

- Staffing: Hired Barbie Caldwell as Family Partner; will start next week.
- Current waiting list due to referrals increasing as behavior issues are identified with return to school.

HHSA-Child Health Disability Prevention (CHDP)—Anita Secor

- Reminder to caregivers to keep up children’s medical and dental exams; submit medical and dental forms to Foster Care Nurses and HEP clerks. Instructions are attached to forms; have medical provider complete a post-visit summary. Call the Foster Care Nurses or Anita Secor with questions.

Developmental Screening & Enhancement Program—Ann Fox for Maribel Luna

- DSEP will provide 2-hour training in each CWS region for CWS staff; training will focus on attachment, bonding, trauma, placement stability, transitions, and community mental health resources for young children.
 - Action: Ann research whether foster parents may attend the DESP training.

San Diego Foster Parent Association—Debbie Stolz

- Respite-Transportation Policy: Respite providers may not transport the respite children. This limits respite providers who must to transport other children to school or visits. The Association would like this policy reconsidered.
 - Mike Palomino: Maxim understands the dilemma, and will look into this further.
 - Action: Mike Palomino will follow up on Maxim transportation policy.
- Association would like the Clothing Allowance policy addressed.
 - Wendy Curiel- Per update from Maria Martinez, children ages 0-18 are eligible to receive clothing allowance. Wendy will research clothing allowance further.

San Diego Unified School District—Ed Wisz

- Ed works for San Diego Unified School District; works with children and youth in transition; many are from foster and military families.
- Currently housed at Polinsky; has worked with all CWS regions in the past.
- Ed’s program sets up supports for homeless foster youth, provides food and shoes; supports after-school programs.

Foster & Adoptive Resource Family Services Operations/ Placement Services—Bernice Briggs

- Foster & Adoptive Support and Mediation Service: Bernice is attending foster parent support groups to inform caretakers of this new service.
- Bernice is presenting training at support groups entitled, “Your Placement Worker & the Importance of the Needs and Services Plan.” The training is offered in both English and Spanish.

IV. NEXT MEETING:

**Thursday, October 9, 2014
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
6950 Levant Street, Room 1 A/B
San Diego, CA 92111**

V. ADJOURNMENT: 1:21 pm