

FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, November 13, 2014

6950 Levant St, San Diego

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Present: Barbara Wojtach, Wendy Curiel, Mike Palomino, Melinda Verbon, Cindy Pagdilao, Stephanie Tesch, Twila Perucci, Jorge Aguilar, Mike Weissenburger, Dave Lenhardt, Maria Martinez, Jacquie Pusateri, Katie Olson, Noreen Harmelink, Dionne Puckett, Fran Cooper, Alice Kennedy, Ann Fox, Lucia Garcia, Anna Garcia, Bernice Briggs, Debbie Stolz, Susan Moreno, Rachel Napalan, Diana Macis, Laura Vleugels.

- I. **Twila Perucci called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.** All in attendance made introductions.
- II. **Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** November 13, 2014 minutes were unanimously approved.
- III. **Presentation: Headstart – Cindy Pagdilao and Stephanie Tesch**

Headstart is a federally funded program that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. Some program options and services provided are as follows:

- Family Healthcare Home – independently licensed family child care home. The child receives all Headstart services at a provider location that is partnered with Headstart.
- Site Based Program – services are rendered at a Headstart facility.
- Home Based Program – teachers provide services at the child's home.
- Services to pregnant women- offers comprehensive services; making sure women attend medical appointments, education on nursing and early childhood, preparation for Home Based program and Site Based Program.

For referrals to Headstart, foster parents should call the centralized enrollment contact person for their region. An application is then submitted along with a "Letter of Support/Referral" (form 04-100) signed by the CWS social worker. Families referred by Child Welfare Services receive additional prioritization points on the eligibility list.

IV. Discussion:

HHSA & Child Welfare Services – Alice Kennedy

- State Foster Parent Conference: Attendees included Pam Sokol, Twila Perucci, Alice Kennedy, and Diana Macis; gathered information on practices and techniques in other counties.
 - One universal issue was the need to increase communication and shared respect between foster parents and social workers.
 - The conference included trainings on bullying, school discipline, restorative vs. retribution practice, and compassion fatigue/secondary traumatic stress (STS), which is a condition characterized by a gradual lessening of compassion over time – relevant to foster parents and social workers.
 - The conference included discussion on older foster youth and how to keep them out of group home care.

- San Diego County’s Approach to Addressing the Developmental & Social-Emotional Needs of Young Children: Handout on services provided by Child Welfare Services was circulated.
- CWS Staffing – 28 new social workers will graduate from SWIT class on December 24, 2014. In January 2015, a SWIT class of 20 new staff will begin.

San Diego Foster Parent Association – Debbie Stolz

- The Association will hold a Toys for Tots distribution in December. Notification will be sent to foster parents as soon as a date has been established.
- SDFPA implemented a new program to help educate and support pregnant minors and young adults. The program educates young adults on parenting. The Association will hold a baby shower to provide young parents with newborn baby essentials. The Association will connect with the CWS Extended Foster Care (EFC) Unit to expand this program.

Developmental Screening & Enhancement Program – Katie Olson

- Polinsky screenings have slightly decreased; conducted 32 PCC screenings in October.
- Infant massage is offered for babies under 6 months old, regardless of whether or not the baby has identified developmental concerns.
- DSEP trains caregivers on how to conduct infant massage; in process of training two new staff to provide this caregiver training.

Foster Care Education Program—Barbara Wojtach

- Many fall classes are currently being offered; however, attendance has been low.
- Currently working on the spring training schedule (January-April).
- New classes will include:
 - “Emerging Adults”- focus on adolescent development/working with teens and non-minor dependants
 - “Caring for Children who have Experienced Trauma”

Foster Home Licensing—Lucia Garcia

- Commenced the first quarter of the new Orientation schedule and application process. The process is going very well, with good attendance at Orientations. Applications are being received and Licensing is now able to process applications faster.
- A Live Scan machine will be moved to Mission Valley to accommodate customers at that location and to offer limited after-hours LiveScan service.

Foster & Adoptive Resource Family Services Operations—Ann Fox

- Foster Care Services Committee Voting Membership: A vote was held, and Bernice Briggs was voted in as Placement representative/voting member of FCSC effective November 13, 2014.
- December FCSC meeting is cancelled due to the holidays.
- Staffing: Jennifer Fightlin, Sr. Recruiter, promoted to Supervisor at Polinsky Children’s Center. Brian Piepenbrink, Recruiter, promoted to the Internal Security Unit, and is leaving CWS.
- The Adoptions Chargers calendar is being prepared for the Charger’s Blood Drive on November 25, 2014. The official calendar distribution will held be at the Charger game December 7, 2014.
- The Adoption Court Party will be held on November 21, 2014. Twenty families will finalize their adoption that day.
- Computer distribution event will be held December 4 & 5, 2014. 150 computers will be distributed to foster families.
- SD County was invited to participate in the Capitol Heart Gallery in November. Photos of children waiting for adoptive homes are displayed outside the Governor’s office in Sacramento.

- Foster and Adoptive Resource Family Services continues to enhance services to support foster and adoptive families. Bernice Briggs offers ombudsman/mediation support for foster and adoptive parent issues related to placement and transitions.

Maxim Respite Care—Mike Palomino

- Maxim is working to accommodate North County respite providers; looking into holding Orientation at the Maxim office in Carlsbad, possible after-hours meetings, or holding a group session in North County.

Child Welfare Services Policy & Program Support—Wendy Curiel

- **Clothing Allowance:** CWS Budget Team presented on Clothing Allowance eligibility/process:
- There are two available clothing allowances provided by CWS:
 - Replacement Fund –\$106.00. This is an automatic benefit for children ages 10-18 who have been in placement for 12 consecutive months. Caregivers should expect this check between August and October.
 - Back-to-School Fund – \$100.00. This is an alternative allowance if the child is not eligible to receive the Replacement Fund. There is no age limit for this fund; it covers children 0-18.
- If the child was placed after 8/1/14, neither Replacement nor Back to School allowance will be issued.
- Clothing Allowance is automatic; does not need to be requested by social worker or caretaker.
- Clothing Allowance is issued once per year (was previously issued twice per year).
- If caretaker does not receive clothing allowance by the end of November, call the Human Service Specialist.
- Clothing Allowance information is published in the CWS Program Guide and Foster Parent Handbook.
- If any foster parents believe they were due either of these funds last year, please contact the child's Human Service Specialist.
- Resource Family Approval: A handout was distributed outlining the new optional Resource Family Approval (RFA) process. County of San Diego is not implementing the RFA process at this time.
- County of San Diego teamed up with iFoster to reach out to Paul Mitchell School. Free haircuts, shampoos, and blow-dries are now available for foster children and caregivers. Coloring is available at a discounted rate. Flyer was distributed.

V. Presentation: TAR Process – Dr. Laura Vleugels

Effective October 1, 2014, the State implemented new policy in which a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) is required for anti-psychotic medications for beneficiaries of Medi-Cal, including children ages 0-17. For any child on Medi-Cal who is receiving anti-psychotic medication, the prescribing physician must now complete a TAR. The TAR must then be reviewed by a State pharmacist for approval.

Steps of TAR process:

- Prescribing physician will write diagnostic information on the prescription and complete the TAR form.
- The pharmacy will submit the TAR to the State.

- State Pharmacist will review and send a decision back to the pharmacy by the end of the next business day. (Approval is effective up to 12 months.)
- This process must be repeated for each prescription and also for any changes in dosage.

San Diego County created and distributed a Q&A sheet for local pharmacies to help them procedurally through the TAR process. The County prepared a memo for community physicians who have patients in adolescent psychiatry, providing information about the TAR process and how physicians can help expedite the process. The County also developed a memo for physicians and pharmacies which includes a link to the California Department of Health Care Services. The link gives information needed to provide a 72-hour emergency supply during the TAR process.

VI. NEXT MEETING:

**Thursday, January 8, 2015
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
6950 Levant Street, Room 1 A/B
San Diego, CA 92111**

VII. ADJOURNMENT: 2:10 pm