

**FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
5469 Kearny Villa Road, San Diego, CA 92123, Ste. 3700  
**12:00 PM – 2:00 PM**

**Present:** Bernice Briggs, Claire Dwight, Gloria Escamilla-Huidor, Lucia Garcia, Brenda Jones, Nicole Kelsay, Alice Kennedy, Mary Jo Meer, Mike Palomino, Twila Perucci, Dionne Puckett, Jacquie Pusateri, Veronica Sarabia, Barbara Wojtach, Gino Montessi, Georgette Wilburn, Mirtha Valadez, Katie Penninga, Michelle Cirna-Flores, Patricia Coleman, Rhonda Sarmiento, Shannon Jimenez, Jessica Morales

**I. Twila Perucci called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.** All in attendance made introductions.

**II. Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** October 8, 2015 minute corrections suggested are as follows:

- Correction on flu shot reminder website: [www.sdiz.org](http://www.sdiz.org)
- Name correction on agenda: Veronica Sarabia
- Add Michelle Cirna Flores for Maxim Healthcare Services to roster

**III. Discussion:**

**Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) – Georgette Wilburn**

- CQI unit will conduct the Child & Family Services Reviews required by the Federal government.
- Reviews include interviews with children of age, biological parents, step parents, grandparents, foster parents, resource families, and relative caregivers.
- Required 100 reviews in one year – have selected their first 25 families.
- Reviews include open and closed cases.
- Email regarding services assessment will be sent to resource families.

*Twila Perucci* – Suggested the information be posted on the Foster Parent Association websites for notification.

**San Diego County Adoptions – Gloria Escamilla-Huidor**

- Resource Family Approval (RFA) Steering Committee meeting monthly.
- RFA Sub-committees in place are: Permanency Assessment; Emergency Shelter Care Unit (ESCU); and Communication committee; Communication committee started meeting in October.
- Foster parents are participating in RFA and ESCU committee.

*Nikki Kelsay* – Communication sub-committee needs foster parent participation.

- Mass Adoption Finalization on October 30<sup>th</sup> was a success with 40+ kids finalizing in October.
- Another mass Adoption Finalization is scheduled in November and it will be celebrated with a Court party.

**Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA), Child Welfare Services (CWS), Assistant Deputy Director – Alice Kennedy**

- HHSA will continue to request LIVE WELL partners throughout the county to support the County's new focus to Thrive. The goal is to bring awareness in the community to all of our accountability for the health and well being of San Diego residents.
- Continue hiring and a new Social Worker class is currently in session. In March, two additional classes will be added. Every month an average of 5 to 6, Protective Services Workers (PSW) leave the agency. The agency's hiring continues in part to address new initiatives like RFA,

Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) programs. CCR comes from state level starting in 2016. RFA process will follow CCR and directly impact foster homes in 2017.

- The state recognized transition in Child Welfare reform and are asking for Recruitment and Retention plan of County in recruiting and retaining caregivers. A plan is to be submitted to the state by December that the state will be funding. San Diego will include in our proposal, a request to cover child care to support caregivers.

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

- The Association is giving away clothes and shoes on 11/13, from 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- Christmas dinner catered for members only; Currently 22 foster parents are members of the association.
- Shared Pam Sokol may be leaving in December and Debbie Stolz is her possible replacement.
- Toy drive letter information requested for December from Foster and Adoptive Resource Family Services. Possible dates as reference for letter 12/15; Discussion on letter only to foster families and/or to include kinship families.

*Bernice Briggs* – To follow up on request of letter.

#### **Quality Parenting Initiative – Nicole Kelsay for Diana Macis**

- QPI is now regionalized with 4 out of 6 Steering committees scheduled in regions.
- Monthly Steering committee meetings held at East, Central, South, North Central, North Coastal, and North Inland regions.
- All regional committees have met, except in North County.
- Training will start after January for Social workers and caregivers. Possibility for quarterly trainings to replace the steering committee meeting on scheduled future dates. All trainings will be same for each region and have the same staff conducting training for consistency. Foster parents encouraged to attend their region or agency close to home.
- East region is first to establish their Steering committee with Ambassador, Shannon Jimenez.

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

- New clinician to start on Monday will help wait list that currently extends 2-3 weeks out.
- Clinician returning from leave in November.

#### **HHSA, Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care, Public Health Nurse (PHN)– Claire Dwight**

- Reminders that PHN's are updating medical and dental information to get Health & Educational Passport (HEP) cards up to date, please submit as soon as possible.
- Roster of PHN staff will be sent to doctors so they have the PHNs' contact information.

#### **Developmental Screening and Enhancement Program (DSEP) – Katie Penninga**

- Update on expansion research which started in October to see voluntary and family cases; Receiving referrals for every child under 6 who has an open child welfare case regardless of their placement.
- Started the Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings for child under 6, and piloting to each region at a time. By January, all children that come through DSEP will receive a behavior screening. If behavioral and mental health services are needed at that time, they will refer the child to a CFT meeting. Foster parents will be encouraged to participate.

#### **North County Foster Parent – Mirtha Valadez**

- Nothing to report

## **Grossmont College Foster & Adoptive Kinship Care Education Program (FAKCE) — Barbara Wojtach**

- Spring calendar completed to cover January through April.
- Pink flyer will be out by the end of December or early January.
- Website will post new class information for registration by January 1, 2016.
- The second Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) training will be held on December 8.
- October CSEC training had 21 foster parents attend; 22-23 registered for the December 8 training.
- Two additional CSEC trainings are scheduled in Spring adding new trainings and support groups.
- Advisory Committee Meeting will be held on December 7, at the Foster Parent Association, 10 AM – 12 PM to receive feedback on trainings. They will post meeting on Facebook. Refreshments will be served.

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

- Continuing to build relationships with foster parents, reaching out to the community and hearing what they have to say.
- Informal meetings are successful to resolve issues with foster parents. Foster parents are pleased with outcomes and meetings will continue until RFA is in place under new directive.
- Partners with Nicole Kelsay during informal meetings to release Holds of placements.

*Nicole Kelsay* – Foster parents have opportunity to discuss Hold and voice concerns, receive support needed and address issues. Mentors are encouraged to attend.

*Twila Perucci* – Impressed with relaxed, non-threatening informal meetings she has attended as a mentor.

## **HHSA, Independent Living Skills (ILS) – Rhonda Sarmiento**

- Rhonda Sarmiento for ILS; on record
- Fully staffed
- This month graduation list goes to San Marcos State University. Social workers to submit referrals for priority enrollment to San Marcos State.
- Holiday parties and job fairs with contractors; YMCA- North County, South Bay YMCA – South; San Diego Youth Services- East; Access, Inc.-Central/North Central

*Nicole Kelsay* – clarification on process for graduation list

Submit name information of student set to graduate to Rhonda Sarmiento; all submissions taken; ILS eligible students, ages 16-21, who are set to graduate, receive \$500.00.

## **Foster and Adoptive Resources Family Services– Nikki Kelsay**

- Charger's calendar to distribute at Chargers game on 11/22.
- Chargers Blood Drive on 11/24; Chargers calendar to distribute countywide after blood drive.
- Court Party – 20 families finalizing adoption process (closed event).
- Futures Foundation's Computer giveaway, held on December 8, 9, and 10, for foster families currently fostering a child. Futures Foundation refurbishes county computers and gives them to foster families.

*Alice Kennedy* –Foster parent survey results will be announced at the first Foster Parent Forum scheduled for 11/17. It will also be an opportunity to discuss new initiatives with Director, Debra Zanders-Willis. Caregivers can share input as to how the agency can better support caregivers. An email was sent out regarding the Forum. Childcare will be provided with RSVP request. Additional Forums expected early next year and notification of future Forum dates will be emailed and sent by mail.

### **Maxim Respite Care –Mike Palomino**

- No updates to share.
- Holiday time is busy for respite. Please notify respite services in advance for staffing purposes.
- Verbiage in contract agreement states biological children, in addition to foster children, are eligible for services, and the provider will be compensated accordingly.
- Every caregiver is eligible for 25 hours per quarter; additional respite hours are only for emergency purposes.
- Any dependent child of San Diego County Court is qualified for respite.

*Mary Jo Meer* – Clarification on Maxim care provider selection process:

- Process is case by case basis, most foster parents have designated care provider selected; Maxim will provide a match if needed.

*Mary Jo Meer* – Clarification on Maxim care provider requirements:

- Care provider needs to be on Maxim respite list and the requirements are:
  1. Annual Tuberculosis testing
  2. Annual First Aid & CPR certification
  3. Annual compliance/privacy training
  4. Background check
  5. Paid to attend trainings

*Mary Jo Meer* – Suggests Maxim should review compliance training

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

#### **East Region -Shannon Jimenez**

- QPI Regional Steering committee meeting held last month and is meeting again next week.
- Placement workers in East are distributing the Partnership Plan for QPI since the special notice has been distributed. Every social worker assigned to a case will review and sign the Partnership Plan with Foster Parents when they have their first meeting to place a child.

*Alice Kennedy* – What has the response been from foster parents to staff regarding the Partnership Agreement?

- Response has been good in the few weeks this has been in place. The Placement Unit preprinted the Partnership Agreements for the worker to take with them at the time of placement. Placement workers also inform foster parents to meet with social worker to review plan together.

#### **Placement Coordinator's Office - Bernice Briggs**

- Futures Foundation Computer giveaway will be held on December 8, 9, and 10; It is a 3-day event and FARFS is currently taking RSVPs through the KIDSline.
- 300 refurbished desktop computers for foster families with foster child in the home will be distributed.
- The invitation may be extended to relative caregivers and Non-Relative Extended Family Member (NREFM) depending on foster parents' responses.

#### **Policy and Program Support – Veronica Sarabia**

- QPI special notice went out (provided copies for committee).
- Social worker expectation is to meet with the foster parent to discuss the Placement Needs and Services Plan.

- Revision on Holds policy (provided copies for committee) to address determined time frames in which to revisit holds. CWS and foster parents are working together to address holds and follow-up.

*Alice Kennedy* – Kudos to staff, Lucia and all foster parents who have been patient throughout the process. Hold reviews started two years ago since a large number of foster families were placed on hold. Since this review began, the number of families on hold have gone from 500+, to less than 300.

Approximately 90 of 300 are compliant holds. The remainder are Voluntary or training holds.

*Twila Perucci* – Shared that for Training Holds, foster parents can:

1. Call or email for transcripts and Grossmont can send certificates to your social worker.
2. Approve for school to deliver transcripts.

*Bernice Briggs* – Please submit transcripts to PCO office, attention: Jennifer Lucht at fax number 858-694-5284

### **Polinsky Children’s Center (PCC) – not present**

*Bernice Briggs* – Reporting that the intake numbers are low, the population at PCC today is only at 17; great efforts made in placing and/or releasing children.

*Alice Kennedy* – In transition with new reforms beginning next year, PCC is now a 10 day assessment facility. Staff have been directed to begin practicing to decrease number of children coming into PCC in preparation for CCR changes. Great efforts from foster parents and staff have made an impact on PCC’s population.

### **YMCA Kinship Support Program – Gino Montessi**

- 48 referrals in October.
- Respite hours available in January – as of now, no respite hours available.
- Street Master event to have car show and toy drive: Torrey Pines High School 3710 Del Mar Heights Road on December 13, 8 AM -2 PM.
- Support groups will meet weekly starting January 2016.
- Hiring new staff to start at end of month and trained by January.
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren event to take place in Spring in East County. The date is TBD.

### **Roundtable**

*Brenda Jones* – Free Thanksgiving Dinner at the Malcolm X Library on Sunday, November 22, from 1:00-4:00 PM. Contact person is Alice Lloyd 619-293-5960 or Kim Foster 619-847-5478

*Mirtha Valadez* – Received email regarding Foster Family Holiday Party on Thursday, December 10, 5-7:30 PM at Greenoaks Ranch; RSVP with Myrna Nieto 760-598-2803; Sponsored by Straight from the Heart and North County Assessment Center.

## **IV. NEXT MEETING:**

**Thursday, January 14, 2016**

**12:00 pm – 2:00 pm**

**5469 Kearny Villa Road**

**San Diego CA 92123 (Seville Plaza, Bldg 5469, Ste 3700)**

## **V. ADJOURNMENT: 1:08 pm**