

FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 12, 2020

8911 Balboa Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123, Magnolia Room

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Present: Donna Alexander, Kimberly Ayala, Collette Best, Patty Boles, Valesha Bullock, Sergio Cayetano, Gloria Escamilla-Huidor, Margo Fudge, Natasha Garcia, Natalia Guevara, Elyce Hoene, Brenda Jones, Alex Kahn, Wendy Leeds, Mary Jo Meer, Veronica Miller, Daniela Murphy, Belinda Radovich, Lodia Ruiz, Veronica Sarabia, Dannette Shevlin, Debbie Stolz, Suzanne Thompson, Barbara Wojtach, Gabriela Martinez, Rosa Perez, Rosa Ventura, Natasha Hood, Michael Pelayo, Lorraine Mattox, Leticia Cena, Denise Branes, Carolina Ramos, Maria Norma, Penny Longthorne, Emma Tidmore, Jessica Bruno, Kevin Hauck, Matt Ray, Fernando Montano, Robin Thompson, Tamara Hanks, Valentine Carmelo, Valentina Carmichael, Sara Kelly.

I. Chair: Debbie Stolz called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. All in attendance made introductions.

II. Approval of Agenda/Minutes: Minutes for February 12 were approved.

III. Updates and Discussion:

North County Foster Parent Association- Patty Boles

- We're excited that April 1st Straight from the Heart will have completed 22 years of service
- On April 6th we'll be starting our photo album for foster kids project. We have enough money to do a book for 101 kids and hope to be able to put pictures online too.
- We have some really amazing families that I'm honored to be working with.

Valesha Bullock

- In regards to RFA we're trying to work on and provide feedback for version 7 of the written directive. There was talk of transitioning into Adoptions so there will be more to come on that.
- Followed up on the February convening and it gave the state a good perspective of not only how RFA is impacting the county but also some of the nuances that have to happen between the county and FFAs.
- Leadership changes: RFA managers: Natasha Hood and Rosa Ventura. Adoptions and FARFS managers: Fatimah Abdullah, Diana Macis and Gloria Escamilla-Huidor.

San Diego Foster Parent Association- Mary Jo Meer

- Giveaway, clothing and toys, hopefully at the end of the month but we're still working out the date/time.

Child Welfare Services Policy & Program Support- Veronica Sarabia

- The normalcy protocol was revised February 20th. We will be emphasizing this in all of our meetings to help caregivers and social workers work better together. The 04-25, Caregiver Information Worksheet, is a tool to help guide you.

Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) – Kimberly Ayala

- Stats update: Medical- 95.2% Dental 85.5%

Polinsky Children's Center- Robin Thompson

- Population is currently around 92 with 3-4 more difficult ones coming in today. About 35 under 6 and a large population of high needs kids. A lot of change of placements.
- Robin is retiring and this will be her last meeting.

DSEP

- Fully staffed for the first time. Total of 23 developmental specialists. 4-5 specialist covering each region.
- Services are taking too long; we have to wait for insurance and then there are waitlists for services. CCS

needs to move faster.

- My Chart access for caregivers also needs to be looked at, it continues to be a problem and not move forward.

Foster & Adoptive Resource Family Services (FARFS)/QPI – Diana Macis

- Continuing to solidify QPI Appreciation Banquet, target date is May 8th. As soon as we get confirmation of the date, we will send out details.
- QPI- we just completed the last quarterly training on trauma. Received a lot of good feedback.
- We are working in conjunction with Youth Law Center in terms of co-hosting the national and state conference. More details to come on our participation and events at the conference. There is a cost and the registration is online.

Grossmont College Foster & Adoptive Kinship Care Education Program – Barbara Wojtach

- March/April Pink book is out now.
- Highlight of a few classes:
 - March 23rd for Kinship Caregivers. We Are Family, with Dannette Shevlin as the trainer.
 - Starting March 26th- 6 night Fostering Hope. Foster or Adoptive parents dealing with infertility.
 - March 25- Coming Full Circle. Highlighting a documentary “Closure” about a woman who was adopted and finds her birth family.
 - April 4- Attachment regulation and competency. 8 hour training for CASEY foundation. Attachment and how parents can connect to those they provide for.
 - June 13- Super Saturday, conference style training at the Handlery Hotel. Intergenerational group through the county is considering providing childcare for relatives for this event.
 - June 20 and 27- Core Teen. Created by Spalding for caregivers caring for older children who have higher behavioral needs. Nicole Espinosa and Debbie Stolz are the trainers. Registration opens in April.

Child Welfare Services Placement Specialists-All Regions

Central- Donna Alexander

- Shout out to our PCO and Licensing team. They have been inundated with placements but they have gone above and beyond several times to get a placement to work and divert a placement at PCC.

South- Belinda Radovich

- QPI steering committee today and they discussed transition and placements.
- Would also like to thank Licensing, PCO, RFA, and ESCU who are all working together to place children.

N. Central- Jessica Bruno

- Quarterly QPI with about 24 attendees at the beginning of the month went well. Getting ready for next one.
- We have children including sibling sets that need a placement.
 - Is everyone using the Straight from the Heart Placement Alerts? Some homes are assuming that we know they have openings, but PCC might not know.

East-Collette Best

- We just had our QPI training and it went well with more resource parents. Looking at teaming up with N. Central and having a training at Mission Trails.

North- Matt Ray

- We up North use the Alert system quite a bit and we had a 13 year run where we didn't have an infant go into PCC, but that streak ended a few weeks ago. The alert system helped us find someone that wasn't on the vacancy list and heard what we were doing so they system is very helpful.

YMCA Kinship Support Services- Melissa Brooks

- Small waitlist

YMCA Emergency Child Care Bridge Program –Lodia Ruiz

- Valesha asked if Lodia connects with placement in regions. Resource Parents tell Bridge that they haven't heard of them. Valesha asked placement teams if they're letting resource parents know about bridge. PCC makes a lot of Bridge referrals themselves. We need to figure out where the disconnect is.
- Families who have difficulties coming down to San Diego have alternative ways to submit documents.
- Question: Can a child be expedited if the family is already in the Bridge program? If the child is a sibling, we can just add the child to the case. If not a sibling we can just do a phone intake.
- MaryJo- Once they refer from Bridge to YMCA and they reassess they're counting the Foster Care money. They're not looking at my own income. For Bridge the foster care monies is not counted. For long term subsidies it is counted.
- Debbie- Keep in mind that Bridge is just a bridge between no childcare and getting emergency childcare. They help transition you to long term childcare.

If you are hearing things or have questions regarding Coronavirus, let us know. We'll forward items up the chain so they can disseminate information county wide. Check the county website for information.

Adoptions- Gloria Escamilla-Huidor

- We are interviewing for supervisors, and 7 new workers just started, so you'll be seeing some new faces. The new Adoptions manager will be present at the next meeting as well.

Maxim Respite Care - Sergio Cayetano

- This will be our last meeting with you all. Respite services will be handled by the county. It has been a pleasure working with everyone here. Respite does have other programs that you can still utilize so don't forget about that.
- Paloma would like to thank for Child Welfare Services trusting us to help your families and children. The Social workers have been great advocates for the children. We will miss working with the social workers and respite providers. It's been a great 12 years!
- Debbie Stolz- I have never seen a program work so hard to get a square peg in a round hole! You've been amazing and we're going to miss you and we really appreciate you sticking in there and making it work as well as you did with what you were given. Thank you!
- MaryAnn Paschal: Are you closing out employee records? What if we still want to do Respite? Paloma: We still have Tricare Echo and our regional center. You still qualify for other programs.

Respite- County program- Margo Fudge, Alex Kahn, Natasha Garcia, Kevin Hauck

- Margo- The website will be the central hub for information, FAQs, how to be a provider and more. Nothing is changing about eligibility for respite. 100 hours/quarter remains the same as well. Right now we're doing things in phases. If you're an existing RFA provider or are a licensed foster parent you can provide respite. If you want to continue with Maxim, you can. If you want to provide respite through the county contact Natasha and we'll put you on the list to do so. You must apply, do live scan, and go through our process.
- If you're not already a foster parent or RFA approved, contact us right away to start the process.
- Natasha Garcia- 858-614-9142 CWSRESPITE.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov
- Valesha- The Kidsline is also prepped to defer questions to the Respite line as well.
- Margo- If you need to submit an invoice for providing respite, you can get the claim form online. Payments will take about a month, but we will have direct payment options.
- Alex- Once we have names and info, we'll have a release to share your info, we'll be able to give your information out. We'll have the W-9 you'll need to fill out because at the end of the year you'll get a 1099. We did clarify with County Counsel and we're not impacted by AB5- Independent contractor requirements. Claim form will be submitted, reviewed, and will be processed with fiscal. Will take about a month.
- Can you provide respite through the county and Maxim? Yes.
- MaryJo- Daycare was getting paid through Maxim, how will this work? Treat like a 3rd party.
- What if a provider does not have a computer? The forms can be mailed in.
- What if you are an Options respite provider? Contact us to start the process and go through our requirements.

- My Sister does Respite for me through Maxim but she's not a foster parent, can she still do Respite? She needs to contact us ASAP to get the process started.
- Tamara Palmer: Is the county setting up someone who's going to be doing this? Margo: We have dedicated Respite staff. We're hoping this will be as streamlined as possible. We'll look at staffing down the road if its needed.
- Sara Kelly- Does the board of supervisors know and have they authorized the transfer of funding that was designated for Maxim to go directly back into the county pool to pay for this program? Alex: There is no transfer of funding. The funds are expended for the contract. We have ongoing funding for the contract. Everything was done through our agency contract support and our department of purchasing and contracting. When we go through this we follow the termination of contract clause. If the funds aren't expended they go back into the department.
- Penny Longthorne- Is there a template that we're using? Is there a different county that's had the kind of Respite program that you're looking to do? Margo: We did look at other counties, there are several. They don't offer a lot of hours and they're not utilized. Some counties don't even use respite. So we do have that background and we are incorporating what we found into some of our policies and processes.
- Sergio- what do we tell families that wan the care in their home, will you send providers to their home or is it just going to be in the RFA home?- Margo: The caregivers can work that out themselves. Kevin: Remember, just because you're an RFA home does not mean that you have to have the kids that you're providing care for in your home.
- Sara- Why was the decision made to terminate the contract with Maxim? Alex: We had to look at the overall sustainability and capability of the program. There were things brought up over the last few years, like not being able to provide medication. These things and others Maxim was just not able to do. So we had to look at what was in the best interest long term for the program.
- Mary Jo- Want to clarify because I was telling people its similar to Options. We need to call Natasha and make sure your name is on a list before you can start. I was also telling foster homes that when you're providing to make sure the other home has hours. Alex: We're looking at that internally to see how we want to do the hours, restart the clock or keep going. We'll be updating the website to put our more information and contacting mentors with updates. If you have further questions please use email, because sometimes messages are inaudible.
- Sara- I have serious concerns about cancelling the contract in the middle of a global pandemic. Maxim has thousands of healthcare aides that are trained appropriately. If we kept the contract going through this issue, the Maxim worker could respond properly. This is a badly timed change and the county should take a serious look at terminating it right now and possibly extend the contract to ensure that we have enough caregivers in the community. Valesha: I will take back that concern so it can be given to the chain of command and hopefully they will make the right decision.
- Tina Carmichael- I've never used Maxim and have barely used Options and I understand the concerns. But as far as daycare, we can still use prudent parent. So if I want someone to babysit, I just have to pay her. I hear on Facebook that Maxim has all these providers, but Maxim hasn't gotten back to me. Debbie: We didn't always have respite and no program is perfect, but we're trying to make sure families have an option.
- MaryJo- San Diego is way ahead of the game, especially with Respite. Other families complain, but at least we have it. Also, how much with the caregivers be paid. Valesha: We will be sending information out in regards to this kind of information.
- Monique Russo- Is there going to be a respite committee to help shape some of the policies? Alex: As you see things and have concerns, please share them with your mentor. Debbie added that this meeting is a place where we can bring concerns too.
- Nicole-Being in an RFA home, will FFAs have access to us for Respite? Valesha: They currently don't have access now, so maybe this be brought up in discussions. What we're trying to do now is maintain and not change things.
- Nicole-Would be nice to do something for the holidays and allow kids to come out into the community and get to know future placements. Valesha: We already have Home for the Holidays where we bring kids together. If you're interested in helping please reach out. We have to get pre-approval for things like this.
- Nicole- Will this be 24 hours like Maxim? For emergencies. Margo: We've talked to our Hotline and ESCU team so that they're aware and people are able to respond.
- Sara: If Maxim was already short on caregivers, and the county doesn't even have a list started, how is it possible that you'll be able to meet the promise of 100 hours per family per quarter, 6,600 hours each week? I haven't

heard anything about this program that says that you'll be able to do that in 3 weeks in the middle of a pandemic. How is this going to happen? Alex: Getting providers is one of our top priorities. We also got a sense of how many hours were being used by using data from October-December. We have 3-4 families that used a significant number of hours, well over 100. 5-6 families that used between 100-200 hours. The rest of the families didn't even use 100 hours. We unfortunately cannot predict when a pandemic will come but as an organization we act and prepare and do what can to support our community. As Margo said, there will be bumps and challenges but we will address them as we go along.

- Would one care provider be able to watch children from 3 different caregivers. Margo: We will look into this and confirm.
- Kevin: Seems like the perception is that this was a decision that was made a 3 weeks ago. This was a discussion that happened before the current contract was even in place. If you remember, 6 months ago we only had 50 hours a quarter. We heard from you that this wasn't sufficient, and now you have 100 hours. You want to get paid 24 hours, all these things are causing change. This has been a long process and it's the same for every contract and every service we provide. A massive change like this is going to take time and patience.

IV. NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, April 9, 2020

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

8911 Balboa Avenue San Diego CA 92123

WebEx- Info to join is in meeting reminder

V. ADJOURNMENT: 2:00 p.m.