

FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 13th, 2015

6950 Levant St, San Diego

12:00 – 2:00

Present: Robyn Allen, Bernice Briggs, Sandra Boelter, Wendy Curiel, Claire Dwight, Gloria Escamilla-Huidor, Margo Fudge, Lucia Garcia, -Brenda Jones, Nicole Kelsay, Alice Kennedy, Marta Leyva, Mary Jo Meer, Susan Moreno, Anya Nevarez, Katie Olson, Mike Palomino, Danica Perez, Twila Perucci, , Jacquie Pusateri, , Veronica Sarabia, Dolores Scruggs, Anita Secor, Marilyn Sproat, Barbara Wojtach, Danielle Zuniga

- I. **Twila Perucci called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.** All in attendance made introductions.
- II. **Approval of Agenda/Minutes:** July 9, 2015 minutes were amended then unanimously approved.
- III. **Discussion:**

iFoster Organization – Kristine Schneller

- iFoster delivers resources online to foster children and their families by going to www.ifoster.org.
- There are approximately 807 youth using iFoster. It benefits both youth and families: foster, kinship, legal guardians, and adoptive families.
- The purpose of iFoster is to bring resources for recreation and education to foster children.
- iFoster optimizes, sorts, vets and sources resources and services within communities they serve and nation wide.
- An example of the resources offered are free one on one online tutoring (the child needs to have a library card) 3:00 pm through 10:00 pm Monday through Friday or phone tutoring. They also offer a reading program that helps bring youth up to grade level.
- They offer health and wellness resources, including eye exams, glasses, and dental services, as well as fun activities that help youth thrive and be a part of their community.
- Foster provides access to free career and college planning. They arrange interviews for different careers and incorporate SAT and ACT preparation services for free.
- They can obtain refurbished lap top computers and computer programs for free , provide free tech support and a free wireless internet resource., , and
- There is a cell phone program through Lifeline to get free cell phones, unlimited text, talk and messaging.
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- foster has a partnership with the national program, Smiles Change Lives, which offer braces at a discount,
- Daily life resources are offered, such as free haircuts at the Paul Mitchell school (downtown) and \$18 color for members.
- They offer free mental health services for as long as the individual requires and has many options all over the San Diego area.
- Discounts are available for groceries, Legoland, and Disneyland, and can be obtained 24/7 through iFoster login portal.
- Southern California offers a 30% discount off utilities if there is an individual on Medi-Cal or a foster child in the home.
- Free furniture, kitchen utensils & linens, etc. can be obtained through this program.
- Resources and services are personalized for each iFoster member; which can be the foster parent and/or the foster child/ren. Information can be uploaded and will remain on file as long as they

have an account (such as Social Security card, Birth Certificates, school documents) and youth ages 16 through 24 can sign up on iFoster by themselves.

- Membership is free, but the individual must be working with an agency.
- Directors Reed and Serita Cox (former Silicon Valley executives). Kristine can be contacted at: Kristine@ifoster.org

San Diego Foster Parent Association – Mary Jo Meer

- The SD Foster Parent Association will pick up Sleep Train supplies of school supplies, clothes, and shoes for foster youth on August 24th, to give away to families on Thursday and Friday (August 27th & 28th) from noon to 6:00pm. Caregivers must show their placement paperwork to obtain school supplies. Clothes and shoes will be distributed to foster families; child must be present to receive shoes.
- Sleep train is still providing scholarships in the amount of \$100, two times a year, per child not family.
- There is a need for child care resources to support foster families. The cost of child care can cost as much or greater than the caregiver receives in foster care funding for the month.
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HHSA & Child Welfare Services – Alice Kennedy

- Reminded Foster Care Services Committee that San Diego is in a broader statewide emergency due to the wildfires in Northern California area, in addition to the rainstorms and the drought we are having. We, as the Child Welfare Agency are currently working on identifying a process of reporting on where our kids are in care and if they have been impacted by these disasters.
- Internally we are working on improving communications between caregivers and staff during a state of emergency
- Placement will be involved in getting information out to caregivers during disasters. In July, the Foster Parent survey was sent out county-wide to all of our foster parents so that we can begin getting information as to how we can improve or enhance our services and support to our foster parents. The survey has been extended for another month. We have also released a Spanish version. We should have some feedback by October.

YMCA Kinship Support Program – Danielle Zuniga

- Planning for support groups and family events coming up.
- North County Grandparents Raising Grandchildren event at San Marcos Senior Center is coming up on the 20th everyone will be receiving a flyer.
- Anticipating new funding for the emergency fund through Aging and Independent Service Respite contract. Expecting to receive \$30,000.00 that can be used towards informal kinship caregivers that are 55 years or older, which will follow the same guidelines as the respite care contract.
- YMCA Kinship Support Services is anticipating a physical move of offices in late October or early November and will be moving from Hillcrest to North Park.
- 4 USC MSW students will be providing 16 hours of services a week starting this fall.

San Diego County Adoptions – Margo Fudge

- Adoptions finished the fiscal year with 433 finalizations, which is a 30% increase from the previous year.
- They also increased home studies completed by 25%.
- The iadoptu.org website update is almost complete and should be done hopefully by next month.

Quality Parenting Initiative – Margo Fudge (for Diana Macis)

- QPI is meeting next week. A draft special notice will coming to the committee outlining the regional model, as well as the partnership agreement. The goal is that each time a child goes into a new placement the needs and services, as well as a partnership agreement, are provided to the caregiver so they feel supported and everyone can be on the same page in terms of expectations.
- Regions will be rolling out new subcommittees and then the information will roll up to the centralized steering committee. Training will be done quarterly for staff and caregivers so that they are able to identify their QPI ambassadors.
- A vote was taken and 10 out of 10 voting members agreed to propose to the RFA steering committee that training for foster parents be increased by 8 hours each year and those training hours will be through support group participation.

Comprehensive Assessment/Stabilization Services (CASS) – Jacquie Pusateri

- Wait list is down to one to two weeks.

Child Health Disability Prevention – Anita Secor

- Reminder for caregivers to get children in to their medical, dental and any follow up appointments.
- Contact a nurse in the region for help and send information obtained at those appointments to the PHN in the child's region.

Developmental Screening & Enhancement Program – Katie Olson

- The program is growing, so they are hiring and training new people. Trying to get three or four specialist in each region.
- October 1st is the day that they will start serving families in Voluntary cases, and increasing bio-parent involvement for re-screenings.

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

- The fall pink flyer has been finished and should be out to foster parents and formal kinship caregivers by the end of the month. PDF version will be sent to social workers via email.
- New classes and support groups are being offered. There will be a support group on Pathways and SET (Safety Enhanced Together), the Agency's practice framework.
- A new class was offered last month for cultural competence and caring for hair, and skin care. The condensed version will be done by Dionne Puckett and Julie McClure at the support groups.
- The pink flyer also has the QPI partnership plan, which will be held quarterly.
- Collaborating with SDYS, training in October by Allison Davis-Maxim (expert in attachment). The class is for adoption professionals, as well as, adoptive parents and other foster parents are welcomed to attend. Flyers were passed out at this meeting.

HHSA CWS Central Region Placement – Lucia Garcia

- Continuing to work to improve relationships and communication with the community, collaboration with the regions, and education.
- Hired a new Supervisor and are now fully staffed.

HHSA Independent Living Skills – Anya Nevarez

- Classes being offered for individuals 16 – 21 years of age in each region.
- October 20th internal convening with EFC and ILS .

Maxim Respite Care –Mike Palomino

- Keila has left; Michelle will be starting in two weeks.
- Respite care or hiring questions, please contact Mike.
- All foster families receive 25 hours of care every calendar quarter.

NorthCentral- Danica Perez

- The region has appointed a QPI ambassador.

East –Robyn Allen

- East is piloting Caring for Babies, impacting children 0-1. It involves intense training and 3-4 visits per week with both biological parents High risk behavior youth at Polinsky, requiring more FFA homes which is a challenge.

Policy and Program Support - Wendy Curiel for Veronica Sarabia

- Starting September, the hold policy is being changed and will be reviewed at the next FCSC meeting. 7/30/15 First steering committee meeting for RFA was held. More information to follow in regards to subcommittees. RFA will be rolled out by 1/2017.
- Veronica Serabia is currently transitioning into Wendy's old position.

Polinsky Children's Center – Marilyn Sproat

- Working on a soft handoff from intake to cottages.

Marta V. Leyva

- **Introduced herself**
- Over 20 years she has worked as a Special Education advocate She provides academic planning for a child's future and support to children and families.
- She can help ensure that children get an appropriate education.

Placement Coordinator's Office - Bernice Briggs:

- If an evacuation occurs, contact Kidsline to provide stats and info during an emergency.
- TCB is on the 3rd Saturday of September.

Foster Care Education Services – Twila Perucci

- Twila will not be at the September meeting.

Foster and Adoptive Resources Family Services Operations – Nikki Kelsay

Discussed the by-laws, duties and responsibilities for this meeting.
Nikki presented, and Sandy seconded the training.

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IV. NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, September 10th, 2015
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
6950 Levant Street, Room 1 A/B
San Diego, CA 92111

V. ADJOURNMENT: 1:25 pm