

FOSTER CARE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, June 14th, 2018

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

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Present: Amanda Amabile, Frank Andrade, Michele Bailow, Valesha Bullock, Miriam Curiel, Wendy Curiel, Jorge De La Toba, Isela Hernandez, Kimberly Ayala, Arleth Rubio, Paloma Martinez, Jessica Morales, Sarah Nolan, Jeannie Oestreicher, Belinda Radovich, Veronica Sarabia, Debbie Stolz, Barbara Wojtach, Jennifer Zapata, Mara Chacon, Mary Mackenzie

I. Debbie Stolz called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. All in attendance made introductions.

II. Approval of Agenda/Minutes: The April 2018 minutes were unanimously approved

III. Discussion:

Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA), Child Welfare Services (CWS), Deputy Director – Valesha Bullock

Wendy Curiel – Recently came back from Sacramento meeting and one of the things that came up is a bill that will continue to fund emergency placements after 6/30/18. If the bill passes, the agency is able to fund emergency placements at the foster care rate. The current funding bill ends on 6/30 and if the trailer bill passes the governor is to sign bill on 6/30.

- There was a lot of discussion on how to continue to support our caretakers during the process.
- All counties submitted a plan of action to address their backlog and a plan on how to approve families with emergency placements within 90 days. Many counties are struggling with the 90-day timeframe due to the volumes of families going through the process and the staffing. All counties have until 9/1 to address their backlog.

San Diego Foster Parent Association – Debbie Stolz

- We are not holding meetings for the next two months since we do not have our support group.
- We continue to work on getting fair tickets for families.
- Haircut/Dental event in July. There will be activities, presentations, similar to health fair with arts and crafts.
- Receiving many calls on “how long does RFA take?”

Valesha Bullock – Per written directives, we were mandated to have to prioritize emergency placements. Statewide, we had to look at those families first. The implementation was successful and in transparency, the challenge was for our staff to be able to accommodate the workload. Because of that, we are referring community families to Foster Family Associations (FFAs). We had our first resource fair for families who choose to go through the FFAs. They had an opportunity to talk with different FFAs. Families will need to comply with the requirements and trainings that are specific to the FFA and that piece is what the families need to agree too, but the generic RFA process is all the same.

Child Development Associates, Inc. – Mara Chacon

- Child Development Associates (CDA) is an agency that provides childcare services for families that qualify. Children who are in foster care are priority when we pull for the funding. Currently we have funding and we look into the Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) to find new families needing services. We have exhausted that list and funding.
- As families terminate, we will continue to replace those terminations with new families. We would like to remind social services workers and resource agencies if a family needs childcare services. The family needs to apply at the CEL. They can apply over the phone, just because they can ensure that the family is marking the right markers on application to identify themselves as CWS or that priority. If not, it can

- get lost in the thousands of applications.
- Once they notify the CEL agent to mark application CWS, it will help complete the application. A form will be mailed to the parent and will need to be completed by the worker or the resource agency. The parent can submit the completed form and are placed in the CEL. If funding is available, agencies like CDA or YMCA can pull from the list. We look forward to additional funding once the budget is signed. We just do not know how much.
- The CEL phone number is (800) 521-0560.
- We service all of San Diego County and once the family gets in our program, they can select any provider they want to choose. We just pay for the childcare part and reimburse the provider what they are needed to pay.

Wendy Curriel – For the assessment piece in emergency placement our worker will ask about the applicant’s childcare plan. The information is rolled to the placement teams who then supports the family to ensure childcare plan is in place.

San Diego County Office of Education – Michelle Bailow

- Tutoring for San Pasqual Academy is offered for next semester. If you have any kids at San Pasqual, please reach out to me to make sure all the kids have academic support. Please reach out by email.

HHSA, San Diego County Adoptions – Jorge De La Toba

- The Adoptions program is getting ready to have a mass finalization event this month. The court allows us two dates to finalize adoptions at Meadowlark and North County court. For the month of June, in order to maximize our finalizations and to not have a backlog, we have a third date in June and are hoping to finalize approximately 450 adoptions this fiscal year. We are excited about the numbers, getting those kids to permanency, and having the courts work with us.

HHSA, CWS Policy & Program Support Division – Veronica Sarabia

- We have the Emergency Childcare program, currently implementing and went live. Funding came from the State and distributed among different counties and San Diego opted in. Now the Emergency Childcare Bridge Program is emergency funding for childcare. Childcare can be a barrier for our caregivers, and if there is a need for childcare, those families can be referred via the social worker to the ECBP. The Bridge program consists of navigators who will be assigned families to help them establish long-term subsidized childcare. The emergency period is for six months and can be extended up to 12 if childcare has not been established within those initial six months.
- Before a referral can be made, we need to make sure that all other resources are exhausted. The worry is the CEL is limited on funding and without funds, how can families be picked up for childcare? At least, in the beginning, we will have that childcare being paid for through ECBP, which is managed by YMCA. We have contracted with YMCA and they will be running the navigation services. In addition, trauma informed training would be provided for the childcare providers. As many as our children have been exposed to trauma, so this will be a benefit. This is open to our RFA families, current licensed foster families, FFAs, parenting youth, non-minor independents. The target age is 0-5 years old, however, for special needs children and sibling group, ages from 6-12, we can consider enrollment. Past the six months is by approval only. This is a brand new program not offered before.
- Currently updating the ECBP form number to 04137.

HHSA, Foster Care Eligibility – Veronica Sarabia for Maria Martinez

- Emergency interim funding, this is funding for caregivers who are pending RFA approval and have kids placed in their home. Currently this is running from 4/1 to 6/30, however, the State is looking on long term funding pending on approval. Current pending RFA payments for April have all been issued, except a handful that are evaluated to determine if those cases qualify for funding. Payments are being issued for the month of May and are expected to be all mailed by next week.

HHSA, Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) – Arleth Rubio for Diana Macis

- San Diego County is currently participating in the 2018 Partnership for Well-Being Institute event. Nicole Kelsay and Diana Macis are attending the two-day training.

- The current QPI trainings are with Birth Parents along with foster parents. We had our first one yesterday in North County with 20 people in attendance. The feedback from the evaluations were positive in having birth parents and foster parents working together and having a partnership to team up for the process.
- State conference coming up in Sacramento, save the dates for 9/13-14. The emphasis is Birth Parents and Resource Parents partnership, working together. We will be having a QPI State representative come to observe one of our trainings in Central Region.

HHSA, Public Health Care Nurse – Kimberly Ayala

- We have filled our vacant PHN position for North Central region and she has been with us for about a month. We are working toward filling the vacant position in East region.

Developmental Screening and Enhancement Program (DSEP) – Sarah Nolan

- DSEP Visit stats for the month May:
 - 563 visits with families that we screened for Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings, health enrichment, infant massage, and behavioral consults.
 - 149 visits of the 563, are screening appointments to determine if children need additional services.
- We have four vacant positions; three are for Developmental Specialist and one for Bilingual Behavioral Specialist.
- If the child has an open child welfare case, they receive priority in services. If they are under six years old, they will be with DSEP. If they do not have an open DSEP case, reach out so we can advocate for them to receive services with other agencies.

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

- We are having on 6/28 a Parents Night Out, Practicing Self-Care. This event is held at the Handlery Hotel, accommodating 150 people. We have trainers from the Office of Education coming to talk about self-care with a QPI Parent Ambassadors panel. Dinner and dessert will be provided.
- On 7/12, held at this Balboa office, we will be showing the film Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope. This comes from the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) community and the Urban Collaborative Project will be showing the film, followed by a discussion. Refreshments will be provided. I encourage signing up and seeing this film.
- New pink book for July-August is in production. We have a variety of classes coming up. A special training for people with infertility called Fostering Hope. This is a six-week class where people who have infertility can work through their issues. We have for the Spanish community, Isaac Gomez and Monica Nunez, mother and son pair, and they will have a five-hour training on LGBTQ.

HHSA, Foster Home Licensing/ Resource Family Approval (FHL/RFA) – Wendy Curiel

- RFA is piloting the vertical model. This means the emergency workers are taking the emergency RFA from beginning to approval. Jose Padilla's unit went live on 5/1 and the Rosa Ventura's unit went live on 6/1. This will be better for families to just have one worker through the approval process and not be confused who their worker is. We have vertical meetings every week to talk about barriers with the family and how to provide them with support through this process
- We are working on converting foster families who have met the requirement to convert to RFA.

HHSA, Foster and Adoptive Resource Family Services (FARFS) – Valesha Bullock

- Nicole Kelsay has moved to the Polinsky Children Center as program manager.
- Options Foster Family Picnic is coming up on 7/11.
- Resource Family Picnic will be scheduled this year in October.
- We continue to work with Adopt 8 segments in recruiting events.
- QPI Caregiver Appreciation event was a success.

HHSA, Independent Living Skills (ILS) – Amanda Amabile

- Graduation is Tuesday 6/19, starting at 4:30-7:00 pm, at the waterfront. If anyone has current or former foster youth that would like his or her checks that day, we will need graduation verification by tomorrow.

Maxim Respite Care – Paloma Martinez

- We have been selected as the Respite provider for CWS for the next four years and our contract has been extended.
- The pay rate for respite providers has increased.
- Breanna will be returning to office on 7/17.

Comprehensive Assessment and Stabilization Services (CASS) – Jennifer Zapata

- We continue to see kids and will continue to receive referrals until the end of school year.
- We had our first Family Fun Day of the year. We teamed up with TBS and had a big carnival at Allied Gardens Park, with 254 attendees.
- Current waitlist is a week.

HHSA, CWS Placement Support – Miriam Curiel

- Special Care Rate (SCR) is now approved from the State. The same rate structure was approved, with minor changes for eligibility. A PowerPoint presentation will be coming soon that will be provided during support groups with updated information on SCR.

HHSA, Child Welfare Services Placement Specialists – All Regions

South Region – Belinda Radovich

- QPI Steering Committee meeting was held last month with an attendance of 12. Our Education Liaison has started to attend those meetings to troubleshoot any issues that come up.
- Kudos to Mary Jo Meer & Emma Martinez-Tidmore for assisting our Placement unit in getting teens placed in foster homes.
- QPI training is coming up on 6/19 and we are currently filling up seats.

Central Region – Isela Hernandez

- Last month we had a QPI meeting on Self-Esteem and Hair Care, presented by one of our social workers.
- We were present at the QPI Caregiver Appreciation event we enjoyed the event very much.
- Next QPI training held on 6/20.
- Senior Protective Services Worker (SPSW), Donna Alexander is back with the Placement unit.
- 2 kids in PCC

North Region – Martha MacKenzie

- We had our QPI event yesterday and it was well attended.
- We are having trouble finding homes that are able to take in sibling groups.

San Diego County Juvenile Probation – Frank Andrade

- Our continued efforts to get the messaging out that we have a population of youth that need resource and foster families; we continue to participate in community events. We will be participating at the San Diego Blog Safety Day on 3/25. We are collaborating with Children's Initiative to help us advertise, they have a broad understanding of our counterparts with the inter-agencies. We will be present at San Diego Pride and the Live Well San Diego 5k.
- We will be having our first Resource Family Dinner event on 6/22 at Marina Village.
- Approved 15 RFA homes and processed 90 referrals.

Roundtable

Barbara Wojtach – Revision of the Trauma Informed Pre-service (TIPS) training will be rolled out on 7/1 and in Spanish on 8/1.

IV. NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, July 12, 2018

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

8911 Balboa Avenue San Diego CA 92123

(Magnolia Room, 1st floor)

V. ADJOURNMENT: 1:40 p.m.