

Adoption Advisory Council
June 3, 2016
The Baby Fold, 612 Oglesby Avenue, Normal, IL
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
APPROVED MINUTES

AAC MEMBERS PRESENT	AAC MEMBERS ABSENT	GUESTS	DCFS STAFF
Karla Blake	Clemmie Banks	Cynthia Cherry	Courtney Field
Kathleen Bush	Tiffany Desroches	Fisayo Ojo	Michelle Grove
Kristie Kunstman-Stern	Laura Dillard	Marcia Ryan	Rachel Kerrick
Jeanette Kurth	Karen Faber	Carol Sheley	Kelly King
Ashley Lapse	Heather Feltman	Karen Taylor	Terry McGlothlin
Michelle Price	Kelly Green		Pamela Mills
Elizabeth Richmond	Laura Grimes		Tracy Vinson
Dawn Saphir	Holly Loy		Debra Dyer-Webster
Krista Teckenbrock	Mark Werner		
Danny Tolliver	Julie Yelverton		
Karen Wardlaw			

Welcome and Introductions

Elizabeth opened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Training Update

Cynthia Cherry said the Adoption Conversion Training is complete. The online version will be very colorful and interactive. It will also be transferred into a classroom model. We are waiting for administrative approval. The latest roll out will be January 2017 but if approval comes sooner it could come out sooner.

PRIDE training revision is coming along and is still waiting for administrative approval. We are looking at January 2017 for that too.

Karen is hoping to open up Adoption Core training. It will be a 3-week session to begin in July. There will be one week of training in July, one in August and one in September. It is certification training where workers will have to train and test to be certified adoption coordinators. They are still doing monthly adoption training to make sure they understand the adoption subsidy process and moving the adoptions through the system. The adoption core curriculum will be undergoing a revision as well to streamline it so it does not require as much out of office time.

Pam's staff gets certified to accept adoption surrenders and consents. That will be tagged to the adoption core training. When the training is done in September there will be a one day training on that. Surrenders can be done in court but it can also be accepted by a certified staff person working with Pam.

Subsidy forms were revised and will go to Rule and Procedure. Pam and Karen will be meeting to discuss policy revisions.

Pam said the adoption core certification training will be done at least three times annually. It will be done in different regions to give staff an opportunity to go as close as possible. Debra asked to be invited to one of the Core Adoption Certification trainings. When we get to the point of writing the subsidy there are issues that come to her desk that should have been resolved before getting to that point. Karen said the CORE training is more clinically based, such as supporting families through the process. Debra said a home might not be appropriate for adoption. That is discussed at the CORE training. When adoption staff gets involved with the case the children have been there a long time. Often the placement worker is saying that is where the children need to stay. When the decision is made that it is not an appropriate home, they have no success in going through the process of removing the child. They usually get an appeal and lose that appeal. The field is reluctant to go through that. A lot of these are poor management from the agencies. There are homes that should not have been licensed. We talk about assessing families in the beginning.

Rachel spoke about doing a better job at the front end and about shared parenting. We need more resources.

Karen can talk more about this at the training and the issues that come across Debra's desk that need to be addressed earlier.

Rachel said there needs to be discussion with the Division of Strategic Planning around thinking more innovatively about our practice. Sustainability – there has to be a loop back. It has to be built into QA to see how this is going. Some type of Grand Rounds clinical process that looks at cases that might be going to adoptions.

QIC-AG – Rachel Kerrick

Rachel shared handouts on the Quality Improvement Center for Adoption & Guardianship Support and Preservation (QIC-AG).

Illinois was selected along with seven other jurisdictions to be part of this study. They are working together with Spaulding for Children, looking at adoption from the pre-permanency and post-permanency side to see what is working. IL is studying the post-permanency population using the PICO elements – Population, Intervention, Comparison and Outcomes. They are looking at children private, domestic and international adoptions as well as child welfare adoptions. We provide post adoption services to those populations as well. We no longer approve international adoptions. The population they are looking at is children between the ages of 12 and 14 in Cook County or in specific counties within the Central Region with a finalized adoption or guardianship. They are doing a TARGET evaluation – it is a psycho education course from the University of Nebraska. The comparison to the intervention is kids getting services as usual. The age of 12-14 is an age group where kids have things crop up. IL has one of the strongest post

adoption support systems in the country. In 2010 we had 40,000 subsidies. Now we have about 23,000 subsidies.

Illinois is in the implementation phase. In August we will be in full swing. Elizabeth is on all three committees. She is the liaison from this council and for the Foster Parent Support Specialists. Stakeholders, legal, parents, etc. are involved. Short term and long term outcomes are listed on the handout.

The Target model will be used with families in the control group. It helps the kids pay attention to body signals, clearing their mind and focusing on one thought. They will teach parents about trauma, brain, and ways to regulate when they are starting to snap. There will be 8-12 sessions depending on the child's ability to absorb it all. Agencies involved are The Baby Fold, Family Care, Metropolitan, Catholic, Jewish Child & Family Services (Chicago).

Elizabeth said half the kids will be in an intervention group and half will not get Target. It can be time sensitive – there are 8-12 hours in 8 sessions and we come to your home.

A survey will be done 6 months after services begin.

Update from Statewide Adoption Administrator – Pam Mills

Mental Health Competency Initiative - IL has been accepted for this five-year project. It is at the very beginning stages. THE MOA is with the legal dept. for review before it goes to the Director for sign off. It will be a web-based training for foster parents on triggers of mental health, how to diagnose mental health, and training them on strategies to parent that child. We will work with service providers and caseworkers. This will be targeted for strictly DCFS. The training will educate the parents on the child's triggers so when they get to adoption they have a foundation of how to work with the child. After the 5-year pilot we will have this training on line and it will be available for foster parents.

Permanency Achievement Staff – These staff were reporting to the Adoption Unit but will now be reporting to program managers in the regions. One of their main duties is to do family finding. If we find people who are important to the child's life at the beginning of the case we often have better outcomes. We have a contract with AICI. This started with a grant for ICAP. They were working in juvenile court. When a child came into court they went in to do family finding. They will start the family finding process July 1st. We have already trained the PAS statewide on the process. We will have another webinar for the supervisors. This is a requirement in 315. It will be the agencies responsibility to do this task so we will be training managers and supervisors at the agencies. These trainings are being scheduled now.

Is there going to be some kind of mechanism to make sure the workers are actually doing the checking? That is why they are with the regions. There are case notes to be done and paperwork to be filled out. Some of the forms that were used by ICAP will be converted to DCFS forms. It will be monitored. For private agencies it will be their management

monitoring and APT to make sure they are in compliance. A form doesn't have to be submitted to ACR but that is a good suggestion.

Post Adoption and Guardianship books have been updated. Elizabeth noted that the name of Adoption Preservation was not updated as had been previously approved. It should be Adoption Preservation & Support. Ashley suggested this would be great to provide to perspective foster parents. They have questions about what services are available. Elizabeth suggested posting it on the VTC.

Post adoption and guardianship support flyer that was going to go out as a check stuffer had an error on it. The flyer should have gone through DCFS legal so she had to backtrack to get clearance before it goes out. She did add information about the DCFS scholarships.

DCFS Adoption Celebration – Pam said they are going to start forming committees. Northern region does the same one each year. The one in Cook will be at the Children's Museum. We want to make it a huge event. Jeanette Kurth will be involved. Send Pam an email if you want to be on the committee. She will send emails out next week. Date has not yet been determined. Jenny and Vanessa are working on a framework that can be used in other areas. Central and Southern also need something. It is all done through donations. Let It Be Us is a group of adoptive parents in Barrington, IL who believe that every child is adoptable and they work with anyone to ensure that forever homes are found. The Forgotten Initiative is another resource.

Adoption Staff – They have two new supervisors in Central Region and are again fully staffed.

Adoption Preservation & Support - Kelly said that JCFS is covering Kankakee now. She met with LSSI and they have sent staff to TBRI training and are working on improving service delivery. They are available to take referrals and they are really putting forth an effort to make sure the clinicians are trained.

Elizabeth asked for a year-end utilization of what they have done in the last year by the next meeting.

Update from Guardian's Office

Draft Strategic Plan - Debra said they are meeting Monday in Joliet to review the Draft Strategic Plan and do additional work on it. The Director wants input from everyone on the draft. There is a group of staff being pulled together to see who else needs to be involved in sub groups.

Immersion Sites are not a place but are a way of doing business. It involves the entire community in a specific region - DCFS, POS, court personnel, states attorney, GAL, public defenders, foster parents, adoptive parents, birth parents, youth, and other agencies that provide services. It is something we agreed to do in the BH Consent Decree order. It will start as a pilot but will be statewide eventually. It is a major change in the way we

do business and will take some training and sharing of information with others. We have to start small and roll it out slowly. We need the cooperation of the community. We will start in Waukegan, Rock Island, St. Clair and Mt. Vernon. They will work with the Regional Administrator and bring in the court system, foster parents, service providers, POS, to try to work together to determine what we need to do to provide permanency – return home or a forever family. We will start with 10% of the children and then spread out as we get up and running in those areas. The Immersion Site Directors have not yet been identified. The job description is with the labor board. When they are in place they will work with the community, the agency, the court system, and other stakeholders to identify barriers. As they identify issues they may have to change some of the procedures we use for CAYIT, ACR, etc. to achieve permanency, always keeping the safety of the child at the forefront. They can tweak formalities and the ability to get waivers from certain rules and procedures. It's more of a concept. There will be an Immersion Site kick-off in September or October of this year. Stakeholders from those sites and others will be invited. Everyone will come together to do the planning for their specific regions on a statewide level and to get the information necessary to do the planning. They will have complete authority to change things immediately.

Approval of Minutes

Danny Tolliver made a motion to approve the April 1st minutes as written. Michelle Price seconded. Motion carried.

Membership – Mark is at a mandatory DCFS meeting today. He sent a membership update. In July we will have openings for 2 adoptive parents from Cook Central, 1 adoptive parent from northern region, and an adult adoptee to replace Dawn. Current members will continue until we find a replacement.

Adoption Month – Jeanette spoke to Vanessa. They are trying to create a framework so that volunteers can go to their communities and work to establish adoption day events to make sure it is happening across the entire state. They have steps to make it happen to expand what is happening in Cook. A date for the Cook event has not yet been set.

Chaddock Intensive Services In-Home Program – Marcia Ryan

Marcia provided a handout on this program and gave an overview. Their goal is to deflect residential placements. Residential might be too much but the child is struggling in the home and parents don't know what to do. This is an in-between step that focuses on the entire family.

They are in the home from 9am to 9pm for consecutive days.

They are serving the adoption population and private subsidized guardianship for the entire state of IL. Kristie Herman has been working with Chaddock on funding. They begin with five days of intense services in the home. After that we connect with the home town therapist. Many don't know much on attachment trauma so we include them in part of the process. They also go to the child's school for observation. They provide training for the teachers and help them understand the child's behavior.

Questions/Answers:

Q: How long does it take to respond to a family?

A: They respond right away. How soon we can get in the home depends on the caseload. She is booked until September.

Q: Are there cases where the child is better off in residential?

A: She has had 2 situations where they were too severe and needed residential services.

Q: Do you work with children with autism?

A: Mild autism. They have to have some cognitive ability to work with them.

Pam Mills and Kelly King requested that Marcia send them more information on outcomes, success rates, and their financial person's contact information.

Ideas for next meeting:

- Do review of Adoption Preservation & Support
- Rachael – report on QIC-AG
- Adopted kids being represented again by educational advocates – The Center for Law and Social Work are legally representing but our social workers are working with the families and schools if there is an issue on the IEP, if enrollment, behavior, disciplinary issues. Formal hearing is where our services end. The Center for Law & Social Work can be called instead of the educational advocates. They are in Cook but cover a lot of other areas as well. Kristie can give a presentation to talk about the Center for Law and Social Work.
- Kelly will invite someone from the MAC programs and from Healthy Families.
- An overview of the adoption training
- Adoption Month – Jeanette will arrange a conference call prior to the next meeting.
- New not-for profit called Foster Progress - Kate Danielson – helping youth access college through mentoring – might be a good agenda item for the joint meeting with the SWFCAC.

Adjourn

Jeanette made a motion to adjourn at 2:00 p.m. Michelle seconded. Motion carried.