

Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council
March 18, 2016
3800 Homer Adams Parkway, Alton
APPROVED MINUTES
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

SWFCAC Members Present	SWFCAC Members Absent	DCFS Staff Present	Guests Present
Gladys Boyd	Pauline Barlow	Geneva Byrd	Fazio Beverly
Hope Carbonaro	Charlene Burris	Thelma Carter	Claudia Dancy-Davis
Cheri Dreska	Edith Cruz	Dock Conner	Gwenn Eyer
Rachel Hoyt	Irma Dixon	Debra Dyer Webster	Roxanne Knapp
Stephanie Jones	Kelly Fargher	Deborah Goss	Clara Miller
Ken Keefe	Donna Gregory	Lori Gray	Valerie Pike
Mark McDaniel	Gordon Hannon	Lisa Massa	Jenni Schneiderman
Kellye Norris	Darrin Holt	Cindy McCleary	Asmina Shaikh
Sarah Olson	Kurt Kalas	Terry McGlothlin	Margaret Sitts
Carol Sheley	Cathy McCoy	Bev Rightnowar	Billie Thornton
Michael Simpson			
Pamela Webb			

Welcome & Introductions – Sarah Olson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Final SWFCAC Reports to Director – Sarah Olson

There were no final reports to the Director. The monthly report to the Director from the SWFCAC Chair was emailed to SWFCAC members.

Approval of Minutes from January 15, 2015 SWFCAC Meeting

Gladys Boyd made the motion to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2015 SWFCAC meeting. Pam Mills seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

NEW BUSINESS

Update from Southern Region - Lori Gray

The Quality Parenting Initiative kick-off is happening in St. Claire County. Several in the room participated. Lori referenced new developments in Emergency Foster Care, noting that it would be discussed later in the day.

Update from Guardian's Office - Debra Dyer-Webster

Debra reported that the Consent Unit is looking at realigning how consents are done. Under the law, the Guardianship Administrator may train and test people to sign for her. The law requires that the authorized agents must be employed by DCFS. POS staff request consents from authorized agents of the DCFS Guardian. The realignment will hopefully bring all of the consents from the private agencies into the Guardian's office to reduce the workload that is currently managed in the field. The thought is that it will result in a quicker turnaround. There are staffing and budgeting issues, but we're moving in that direction as soon as possible. The change will effect ordinary and routine consents as hospitalization, surgery, psychotropic, travel outside US, DNR, are already centralized in the Guardian's office.

Debra reported the following stats from July 1, 2015 to date:
FY'16 Guardianships - 199
FY'16 Adoptions - 980 completed

Debra shared a paid internship opportunity for youth in Chicago.

*“Looking for a *paid internship* this Summer? [Black on Both Sides](#) is looking for Passionate, Motivated, and Energized youth who are currently or formerly involved in the Foster Care System to join our third leadership cohort! The internship takes place in Chicago, Illinois. **FIND OUT MORE** at one of our upcoming Info Sessions: April 7th and 9th, 6pm to 7:30pm, 602 S. 61st Street, in Chicago. Ready to sign up? Click here to complete this [fast application](#) & we'll contact you about the internship! If you have questions or would like to talk it through with someone, please reach out to us at blackonbothsides2013@gmail.com.*

Emergency Foster Homes - Dock Conner, Deborah Goss, Lisa Massa

The Emergency Foster Homes are scheduled to roll out July 1st. Emergency Foster Homes are homes that will provide a traditional home environment for up to 14 days while we search for relatives and fictive kin. They may request two one-week extensions; beyond 30 days must have RA approval. Parents are paid a salary plus a daily rate of pay. They are reviewing payment at this time. After 30 days, the pay reverts back to basic pay. Each foster home has two spots, with the exception of sibling group placements. The tentative plan is that there will be a total of 100 Emergency Foster Homes, 50 DCFS/ 50 POS. Cases will be in rotation. Foster parents will provide care as with any child, transporting to visits, working with relatives and fictive kin, and enrolling and transporting children to school. The foster home must have one unemployed parent as a stay-at-home parent. These foster homes must be licensed and there will be additional training based on the age group they're being licensed for. There will be a no-decline status, since they're salaried employees. There will be no 14-day notice. We want to move the children to permanency just as soon as possible. Emergency foster homes will have only emergency slots. There will be an application process including references and interviews. We're still in the process of pulling this all together. The main categories include ages 0-6; 6-12; 16+; and Crossover Youth, dually involved youth, arrested, involved in court system, etc.. Placement is similar to placement in a shelter, but you're exhausting all efforts to place in a foster home before contacting an AA to request placement in a shelter. We are trying to reduce the number of children going into shelters by placing them in foster homes. We're going to be concurrently looking for permanency to avoid the emergency placements. If unable to place right away with relatives or fictive kin, they'll look next at Emergency, then finally at shelter. They're currently working on the recruitment plan. If you're licensed and don't have children in placement you may become one of the 100 Emergency Foster Homes. DCFS licensing standards will not change. 402.4B might currently prohibit DCFS homes from being licensed as salaried DCFS employees. Some homes may be established for only siblings, but a lot of our need is for older adolescents. This will be for both intake and disruption.

Approval of Plan Scores - Council

There were 51 plans with Acceptable scores and three with Somewhat Acceptable scores. *Mike Simpson made a motion to approve the plan scores. Kellye Norris seconded. Motion carried.*

Training on Agency Reviews - Gwenn Eyer

Gwenn distributed an information packet to conduct the agency reviews. The agency reviews are in-person reviews at the agencies and regions to determine how well they are implementing the Foster Parent Law, and the familiarity staff has with their plan.

There are often many miles between council members and the agencies being reviewed so some council members will have to travel to conduct the reviews.

March 28th is the launch date and we would like to have them done by April 15th. In the past we have worked with the APT staff but this year we are not. We eliminated that step and Gwenn is working directly with the agencies to set up the reviews. She has collected the possible dates and times from the agencies. Gwenn will work with council members to set up the reviews. After the review is done the handwritten notes should be sent to Terry. They will then be typed up and council members can sign the final documents at the May or June meeting.

Only one person will be assigned to conduct each review unless they are new members. If a member would like someone to go with them they can ask another council member. Gwenn and/or Terry will also be available to be on the phone to type the responses on the forms if requested. They would then email the typed forms to someone at the agency so that they can print, sign, and send with the council member at the end of the review.

If a council member gives someone a rating that is anything other than “acceptable”, a comment needs to be written next to that rating to justify why.

To conduct the foster parent surveys – we will provide a list of foster parents and you call down the list until you get someone to survey. Gwenn suggested that if you get a voice mail just leave a message telling them what you are doing and they don’t need to call you back. Otherwise you will get a lot of call backs.

WORKING LUNCH – During lunch council members were asked to complete their ballots for awards that will be given to three agencies/regions for exemplary work on their Foster Parent Law Implementation Plans.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports

Nomination Committee - Mike Simpson

Acceptance of Nomination forms were sent out to all council members who were eligible to serve as chair or vice-chair for the next fiscal year. They were to be returned today. Terry will then finalize the Nominations Ballot to be mailed out to all council members. The final vote will be at the June meeting.

Adolescent Issues - Mike Simpson - No report

Policy & Legislative - Darrin Holt / Cathy McCoy

A lengthy discussion was led by Ken Keefe representing the Policy & Legislative Committee regarding the proposed revisions to Rule 402. The committee had put together their recommended comments and revisions which he read to the council one at a time. The council gave their feedback. Terry took notes and will send the revised recommendation back to the Policy Committee before going to the Office of Child & Family Policy and other key people.

FPSS - Edith Cruz - No report

Respite - Gladys Boyd

The council resubmitted the 2015 Respite memo to the Director and Jody Grutza.

Training & Development - Carol Sheley

They had a productive conference call regarding their interest in this committee being active with training projects. There were some ideas offered regarding children attending training along with parents. They discussed the possibility of looking into Casey Foundation Funds to see if anything could be put together to meet this need. PRIDE training is not really appropriate for children, but licensing workers should be working with families directly to address the needs of children in the home. Carol mentioned that Educational Advocacy will now be required within the first year of licensure rather than prior to re-licensure in four years. Debra is waiting for ISBE to notify her re: their statewide liaison to work with our regions and agencies. The Guardian is able to hire lawyers, as needed, for educational representation.

Reports from Other Councils/Committees/Workgroups:

CWAC / CWAC Training - Cathy, Pauline, Darrin, Hope

They reviewed 402 and made agency recommendations during the comment period. It includes information re: inactive/ involuntary hold. They are working on permanency barriers for children in Illinois and steps we can take to deal with them. They are also paying real attention to specialized foster care and the need for more resources for kids stepping down from residential. They also discussed staff training. CWAC System of Care looked at the Choices Project area, Champaign, Iroquois, Vermillion, and one other county presently. This project is looking at a kind of managed care type of approach using third-party Child and Family Team Meetings for treatment planning, including flex spending beyond a child's contract. They are looking at the potential of managed care in Illinois coming in the next 3-5 years. They're working with Florida, where the transition was hard, but the belief is that overall, services to children and families have improved. CWAC will meet May 12, August 11, and November 12th.

IFAPA - Gladys Boyd

The next IFAPA meeting will be held April 18 in Pontiac. The Director has spoken with Gladys about a conference, but they haven't officially met for approval to move forward. Gladys will send IFAPA meeting information to Terry for distribution.

Regional Reports:

Northern - Donna Gregory, Cheri Dreska

The Aurora meeting was cancelled, but they spent hours going over proposed changes to 402 in a meeting in DeKalb County.

Southern - Michael Simpson, Mark McDaniel

January teleconference participants from throughout the region met in advance to discuss local issues prior to the general call. The next meeting will be held April 26th.

Central - Carol Sheley, Stephanie Jones, Ken Keefe

Stephanie reported that they've been doing a lot of trauma-focused training. Foster parents are very vocal and are up in the air about 402 changes. Foster parents are not being reimbursed for bed hold payments. The Department is 906'ing kids out of the home into the hospital, with the medical card paying the bill. It was noted that 906 is a payment/placement form, so it tracks multiple hospitalizations, placements, etc. to alert to the need for additional services. However, if there's a bed hold, it shouldn't be a hold up for foster parents. Carol reported that they're also doing a similar

thing in her area and that their parents share similar concerns. It's possible that state budget reimbursement to POS agencies could be the hold up. Debra will follow up.

Cook North - Edith Cruz, Irma Dixon - No report

Cook South - Pamela Webb, Kellye Norris - No report

Cook Central - Charlene Burris, Gordon Hannon - No report

Next Meeting – April 22, 2016 – Conference Call

Adjourn

Kellye Norris made a motion to adjourn. Gladys Boyd seconded and the meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.