

APPROVED MINUTES
Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council
Northfield Center, 3800 Northfield Drive, Springfield
Friday, May 6, 2016
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
and 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

SWFCAC MEMBERS PRESENT	SWFCAC MEMBERS ABSENT	STAFF
Boyd, Gladys	Barlow, Pauline	Byrd, Geneva
Cruz, Edith	Burris, Charlene	Dyer-Webster, Debra
Dreska, Cheryl	Carbonaro, Hope	Grove, Michelle
Hannon, Gordon	Dixon, Irma	Jones, Linda K.
Holt, Darrin	Gregory, Donna	Lautemann, Jill
Jones, Stephanie	Hoyt, Rachel	McGlothlin, Terry
Kalas, Kurt	Olson, Sarah	Richmond, Elizabeth
Keefe, Ken	Webb, Pamela	
McCoy, Cathy		
McDaniel, Mark		
Norris, Kellye		
Olson, Sarah		
Simpson, Michael		

Cathy McCoy, serving as Chair in Sarah’s absence, welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes from April 22nd Conference Call

Kellye Norris made a motion to approve the minutes. Kurt Kalas seconded. Minutes were approved as written.

Final Reports to Director

There were no final reports submitted to the Director. The monthly report to the Director was submitted on the first of the month.

Preparation for Summit

Terry reviewed the agenda for the day of the Summit.

Agency Reviews

Terry reported that all of the agency reviews were completed by the end of April. There are still some that need to be submitted to Gwenn. Gwenn will transcribe them and have them ready for final signoff by council members at the June meeting.

Council members gave feedback on how the foster parent survey calls went this year. (This was the first year where council members did the surveys rather than APT.)

- The first question is “How many children do you have in your home”. That was sometimes a red flag to the foster parent being called.
- Foster parents were not expecting the call so some did not want to participate because they thought it was a scam. It made calling uncomfortable.
- When training is done on the agency review process we need to include clear instructions on making the calls to foster parents.
- Many didn’t know what the implementation plan is.
- Many had questions and wanted someone to hear their concerns.

Follow Up:

- Review this with the Policy Committee
- Clarify/accentuate in the letter that goes to agencies that they should notify their foster parents that they might receive a call.
- Put in the newsletter so that foster parents know to expect a call.
- Do the surveys ahead of time so that the results are available to council members conducting the agency reviews.
- If they have concerns give them a person to call – supervisor at the agency or advocacy.
- Some speak Spanish – can the list indicate if they only speak Spanish?
- It was requested that Gwenn/Terry do a summary of foster parent surveys for council members.
- Partner with a Spanish speaking person from APT or another source or do the DCFS language line or Office of Latino Services – Jose Lopez or Lourdes Rodriguez. DCFS also has an interpreter service.
- Put another article in the newsletter about the FP Law.

Training – TCAFS – Sharva Hampton-Campbell

TCAFs are being kicked back looking for more specific details about the content of the training. This information is not always easily accessed by foster parents. Sharva is reviewing them all. Training needs to be evidence-based. We don’t want to cause delays, so we are asking the FTLs and RTMs to go to agencies and work with them more to clarify what we need and why we need it. Foster parents need the information that we need, but with more specificity. We can’t always get that. If we are audited, auditors want to know what the content is and what information was given to the foster parent. They need to give an overview of what was covered. Sharva has started drafting a letter to go to agencies. The TCAF needs to be changed. The concern is that the process is becoming more difficult and restrictive. There is not a lot of training provided by DCFS, so foster parents have to go to community resources. Sharva said we still have classroom trainings but foster parents are not coming to the classes. She said they will also add trainings if necessary. There are a large number of foster parents taking advantage of the online options. QPI is also coming out with digital training options. They are working on a portal on the VTC so foster parents can go in and access training available that meets OIG standards. We still need to figure out how to make it available to foster parents who do not have computer access. Ken said it is reasonable to expect a summary of training content. Some titles are very vague.

Information on how the TCAF is to be completed and what has to be attached should be included in the newsletter.

The FTLs are calling to get more information on TCAFs to avoid delays. Lori Horgan is working on updating the VTC and it should be done by July 1.

Sharva said she would like to get away from books because we don't have the clinical staff to analyze the content.

Cheri said the Foster Parent Library is great. There is a small fee to use it. Adoption Learning Partners is another option and it is free to foster parents.

Training Update – Sharva Hampton-Campbell

They have been working on developing training curriculum for the Emergency Foster Care Program. The EFC is scheduled to be piloted in June and start in July.

PRIDE training – The curriculum was sent for administrative approval and they made more changes. QPI is also going on and some of that information will be incorporated.

The Council dismissed from 10am-1pm to attend the Partnering With Parents Summit.

Afternoon

Foster Parent Law Awards - Terry

Awards will be presented at the June meeting to the three agencies selected by Council members for exemplary work on their Foster Parent Law Implementation Plans. The award recipients are: Arden Shore & LSSI in Foster Parent Involvement and Children's Place Association in Dignity and Respect.

Super Advocate – Robyn Harvey

Robyn Harvey has been chosen as a "Super Advocate" through a grant through the National Foster Parent Association, Generations United and NACAC. She applied along with eleven others from Illinois. She will attend meetings in June in Washington, DC in this role. They will have meetings at Capitol Hill and testify in front of congress. She will bring information back to support groups, councils and to the administration. It is a year-long appointment. They are seeking funding and think they have found it through the Dave Thomas Foundation. There might be additional advocates added and next year they are hoping to add another 25. She will share the information on that as it moves forward.

Robyn has been involved with the QPI and is chairing a couple of those committees. In QPI the court staff, administration, court workers, licensing workers, caseworkers, etc. were all in the same room talking about foster parents being partners. We are not there, yet, and need to continue to put our voice out there in any meeting. When one of us speaks to a legislator they listen. When more speak they will take notice. There is potential in these groups.

Quality Parent Initiative (QPI)

Cathy asked if anyone had an update from QPI. Robyn went to the QPI conference at Ft. Worth Texas. QPI is a philosophy. They look at the policy and procedures that need to change to support what they want to see. Most of the places utilizing it are county based child welfare

systems where the work load is smaller and more manageable. Illinois is one of three states that are state-based child welfare systems trying to utilize it. There were ten states represented in Texas. They shared what other states are doing. They are doing models of One Church One Child in Florida for recruitment.

There are three sites currently working on developing the QPI initiative - CHASI in Cook County, Rockford (Winnebago County) and E. St. Louis. Carol Schaffer is the point person in QPI. Each site has a liaison.

Robyn said in Rockford the judges are coming regularly and giving their feedback. One of the foster parents said they are afraid at court. Judges say, "We need to hear from you." They are going to offer the system to videotape a welcome from the bench talking directly to foster parents about his court room. He will give them a virtual tour, talk about court etiquette, what he wants to hear from foster parents, etc. It could be put on-line and offered as DCFS training. The other thing judges are going to do is have a quarterly open house where foster parents can go in and meet the judges. Every QPI site will look different because regionally we have different things going on. It will be interesting to see how it works with policy and procedure. The group has now broken down into committees. Robyn is leading a committee on recruitment and retention. Their next meeting in Rockford is June 14th.

Kurt is chairing the committee on training at CHASI in Cook. It is a bit strange since it is just their agency. People are excited about it. The key is that we have gotten people together who are used to sitting on opposite sides of the table. Public guardians, training and staff are working so we are not stepping on each other's toes but figuring out how we can do it together. We need to look at the results and what we want the result to be. They just had meetings to come up with action plans. They have identified things that could be done. The next step for us is to figure out who is going to do them. Cook is two months ahead of the Rockford group.

Trend in Kane County – Cathy is working with a group that is starting a juvenile court remediation group. It will be up and running by end of year and it will bring everyone together when cases seem to get stuck. They will use independent mediators to break down those barriers, and will bring foster parents in to provide input as part of the professional team.

Committee Reports

Adolescent Issues – No report

Policy & Legislation – Darrin mentioned two pending pieces of legislation:

HB 6233 talks about criminal convictions that bar licensure. It will remove the list of convictions that bar licensure and says any felony conviction in the past year, etc. It was referred back to the rules committee on 4/22.

HB 4966 foster home quality of care – If a foster home is revoked, expired, etc., they can't apply to renew or reapply for five years. There was a House floor amendment that on request the GAL can request a copy of the file. Robyn said we need to watch that. Not all licensing workers do their work in a timely manner. This could be a problem if they failed to take you off hold, get renewal paperwork submitted, etc.

There is also a move to take voluntary holds away. Agencies have to report all homes on hold. This stems from the huge number of homes on hold. This moved on to senate committee with an amendment for GALs to request a copy of the licensing file. Cook County GALs do this much more than anywhere else.

Anyone can see a synopsis or full language of any legislation at ILGA.gov.

The Policy & Legislation Committee will have a quick meeting following this meeting to set some agenda items for the rest of the year.

FPSS Committee – Edith Cruz

A meeting is being planned for all FPSS on June 8-9 in Chicago.

Respite – Gladys - No report.

Nominations Committee – Mike tallied the nomination ballots. Of those nominated, Mark McDaniel is the only council member who accepted nomination as Chair. Donna Gregory and Gladys Boyd accepted nomination as Vice Chair. Ballots will be mailed to all council members and officers will be announced at the June meeting.

CWAC

Hope was unable to attend but sent the following report:

- CWAC Co-Chairs participated with DCFS Leadership this month, providing input on the Child Welfare Strategic Plan. The first draft should come to the full CWAC meeting next week. More feedback opportunities will be available prior to finalization.
- CWAC Foster Care – Continue work with DCFS on details related to the Emergency Foster Care Program. A finalized plan should be coming soon as DCFS would like to roll this out as soon as possible. Private Agencies will be interviewing and selecting foster parents and DCFS will select their foster parents.
- Permanency barriers - The group is working on issues that create barriers to permanency for children and will prioritize to take to full CWAC.
- A new CWAC group on recruitment and retention has been initiated and has had one meeting so far. Some primary goals will be related to recruitment efforts and also retaining current quality foster parents.
- CWAC SOC – This group is providing input re: the State’s move toward a managed care environment. We are looking at other state models and gathering information at this point.
- A new Committee on Workforce Development will include hiring, developing and keeping staff. Bev Jones from LCFS and Pete Digre are co-chairing.
- The next CWAC meeting is scheduled for May 12th.

IFAPA – Gladys

She met with Deputy Director Larry Small and the Director. She will be on a committee that is doing a summit. The attendance will be about 700 people. She said 50 foster/adoptive/birth parents would be invited for each judge that is coming. She said the Director also said he would consider a foster parent conference for August 2017.

Michelle said that the Strategic Planning & Clinical Divisions are working with AK Consulting from Florida on the summit. Judges, attorneys, and other stakeholders will come together for a kick-off for the new immersion sites around the state. We will start with three or four. The goal is getting the stakeholders involved and making sure we are using the trauma informed lens. They plan to add three or four sites at a time until it is statewide. The immersion sites are: Rock Island, Waukegan, St. Clair/Belleville area. They will be meeting weekly.

Northern Region

They met last week to plan a full year's schedule. This month's meeting was moved from the first week to the second for logistical reasons. They are having early intervention come for a presentation. The regional council is involved in QPI and they are hoping they will also be involved in the immersion site. They will not meet in the summer. Robyn said Cheri represents the Northern Region well with the Rule 402 issues.

Southern Region – Nothing new to report

Central Region – Stephanie's group meets in Decatur. She said she spoke to Cynthia Cherry at lunch and she said she would pre-approve their training and then Stephanie would just need to send her the sign in sheet of all who attended. They are doing a lot of TBRI foster parent cafes, and will start incorporating working with bio parents. They are taking summer off.

Cook North – They had a presentation on Domestic Violence from 10-noon on May 10th. They have a foster parent appreciation event scheduled for May 24th from 6-9pm. Dinner will be held at the Crystal Light banquet hall in Burbank, IL.

Cook South – No report

Cook Central – No report

Gladys Boyd made a motion to adjourn. Kellye Norris seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:50.

Next Meeting:

June 17, 2016

Sheraton Lisle, 3000 Warrenville Road, Lisle.