

**SWFCAC Meeting
DRAFT MINUTES
September 18, 2015 ~ 9 am – 3:00 pm
Holiday Inn, Effingham**

SWFCAC MEMBERS PRESENT	SWFCAC MEMBERS ABSENT	DCFS STAFF PRESENT	GUESTS PRESENT
Boyd, Gladys	Barlow, Pauline	Dagg, Debbie	Cebulski, Julie
Burris, Charlene	Fargher, Kelly	Eyer, Gwenn	Rightnower, Bev
Cruz, Edith	Holt, Darrin	Field, Courtney	Waters, Bryan
Dixon, Irma	Jones, Stephanie	Franklin, Matt	Keefe, Ken
Dreska, Cheri	Kalas, Kurt	Gray, Lori	Pike, Valerie
Gregory, Donna	Sheley, Carol	Mansfield, Brad	Harvey, Robyn
Hannon, Gordon	Simpson, Michael	Massa, Lisa	
Hart, Laura		McCleary, Cindy	
McCoy, Cathy		McGlothlin, Terry	
McDaniel, Mark		Mills, Pamela	
Norris, Kellye		Rogers, Kari	
Olson, Sarah		Ruppe, Mike	
Webb, Pamela		Turner, Ralph	
		Young, Lisa	

Welcome & Introductions – Sarah Olson, Council Chair

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 submitted and SWFCAC members received an email copy.

Approval of Minutes from July 17, 2015 Meeting

Gladys made the motion to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2015 SWFCAC meeting. Pamela Webb seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

Update from Southern Region – Lori Gray

Lori came in as Regional Administrator on June 16th. She noted that she has an Open Door Policy and invited council members to contact her with any questions. The Southern Region has Courtney Field, Vendetta Dennis and Bob Cain as Area Administrators over Permanency.

Update from Permanency – Pam Mills

- *Procedure 300* has been completed and reviewed, comments have been incorporated, and the new procedure includes many changes. It should be implemented in December. Staff will be trained prior to implementation.

- *Procedure 315* is nearing completion. The period for review and comment will be in November.

- We have the opportunity to be a part of a five year grant study, the Quality Improvement Center and Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation grant. Six states were selected after submitting information they'd gathered for six months. We're looking at post-adoption services to find out what other services could be added to stabilize guardianship and adoptive homes, i.e., where we need to intervene and at what ages. The grant is totally funded through The Children's Bureau in Washington,

D.C. They're working to develop a standard that may be used as a universal plan for every state. Information regarding the availability of respite, therapeutic day care, and how to contact their post-adoption worker will be presented by region and will be included in a stuffer twice a year with subsidy checks/receipts.

- The timeframe for fingerprints is being reduced, with a typical 30-45 day turnaround. If good prints are on file, they can be run again rather than re-printing the caregivers. Fingerprints are now only required for youth 18+ and adults in the home.
- They have prepared a youth flyer that will be distributed to council members.
- Kelly King monitors all preservation and monitors providers statewide. The post adoption phone number is 312-808-5250 and you can link directly to your region through that number.
- Terry noted that the Adoption Advisory Council made a recommendation that has been accepted and the name of the Adoption Preservation program has been changed to Adoption Support and Preservation, ASAP.

Changes to Rule 402 – Brad Mansfield

Brad is the Acting Administrator of the Office of Child & Family Policy in Springfield. Council members received policy guides in their packet. Those policies will be incorporated in Rule & Procedure. The team has been working since last year looking at revisions to Rule & Procedure. Information is being distributed via Policy Guide, using this guide while Rule & Procedure is being revised. Some complete revisions will probably be sent out in a Policy Review. They encourage comments from the Council because it allows them to go back to the groups that have requested changes. It's much harder to make a change once it's in Rule & Procedure, so the council is encouraged to ask for clarification, etc. Council members are notified of review and comment periods via Email. There's no specific format for comments, people may just send a line or a paragraph reply via Email. Rule and Procedure impacts every region and agency, without distinction between public and private child welfare. Policy Guides come directly from the Director. Policy Guides are issued when a change must be made and there isn't time to go through the regular process, i.e., changes in Title IVE, a federal law that impacts the way the state gets federal money. If the Department doesn't act quickly, they will lose federal funds, so these policies are distributed more quickly. One example is the Foster Children's Bill of Rights, which has to be utilized by mid-September. Council members have the opportunity to comment only when these are examined as Rule and Procedure. Council members are invited to Email policy staff at any time at cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us, and Robyn stated that they are quick to respond. The Purpose and Background section of the Policy Guides typically cite law changes, OIG recommendations, etc. Policy Guides are posted on the DCFS web site. There's a link to Rule & Procedure in the "About Us" menu options.

Lifebook Policy – Tina Franklin

Tina is an attorney and has been with DCFS for 30 years. She started in the Marion Region in 1982 and in 1998 she quit her full-time job with DCFS Legal. She's been working part-time with the Policy Office since that time. She stated that in the past she did 50-60 trainings a year, with staff, judges, lawyers, etc., and noted that public policy changes over time. Lifebooks have also evolved over time. She said that at some level we've always asked workers to collect certain things (photographs and memories) for kids, but they never really sat down to formalize a policy re: how to collect the information and how to utilize the information therapeutically. Today we are really big on connectedness, i.e. sibling connections, extended family connections, and lifetime connections. Tina shared copies of Lifebooks that they're sharing with permanency staff throughout the state. One is designed for younger children and the other for teens. Permanency may be addressed in an ongoing manner. Pages may be added over time. Research was conducted to determine best practice around helping children deal with both their good and bad experiences. These issues have to be addressed because we want children and youth to have correct information. When there is a void of information, they start imagining, sometimes creating an

inaccurate/false story. The focus is on talking with the child as the book is being prepared, letting the child push the development of the book. Caseworkers are strongly encouraged to participate early in the process and in some cases, therapists will be valuable contributors. Caregivers should help children to remember connections to your extended family, neighbors, fictive kin, school friends and their parents, etc. The book belongs to the child and stays with the child during any future moves. The development process lends itself to the development of trust. Caregivers may wish to keep a duplicate copy of key items for themselves. Caseworkers may be asked to make copies of pictures, report cards, certificates, etc. and may wish to keep copies of these items as well. Children may forget some of the good experiences in your home over time. This is a good way to remind them of good feelings and experiences. Tina provided a list of ideas caregivers may use to gather and save information with their children and youth.

Discussion:

- Caseworkers can get a copy of the child's birth certificate for the Lifebook.
- Copies of the sample Lifebooks were distributed to both DCFS and POS permanency workers.
- Materials have been made available to workers.
- These procedures go into permanency procedure 315.105.
- Staff will be trained to conduct this important work.
- They recommend that caregivers take notes or keep a journal for infants, toddlers, etc., who are too young to do this work. Collect photos, etc. to accompany the journal/notes. Caseworkers should also be collecting this information.

Mike Ruppe

- Following up on Tina's Lifebook discussion, Mike stated that the Department is looking at an exciting opportunity using Jump Vaults cloud-based storage where youth can download all of their important documents.
- Administrative Structure: When Director Sheldon arrived, we had 17-19 Deputies that reported to the Director. Now there are four senior deputies who report directly to the Director. Mike is over Operations; Cynthia Tate covers Programmatic; Carolyn Ross is Administrative, Andrew Flach is the new Chief of Staff over Communication, Legislation, etc. We have a new Deputy Legal, Lisa Spacapan. The other existing Deputies report to the Chief Deputies.
- A new unit is being developed around Strategic Planning. That unit will work on BH issues.
- Operations is being restructured slightly. Denise Murray remains Deputy over Licensing and will be under Carolyn Ross. Monitoring has been split off and that office will report directly to the Director.
- The RFP for Therapeutic Foster Care has gone out, with a Bidder's Conference next week.
- The BH Expert Panel recommended that we try to pilot activities before going statewide. In Cook we have Release Upon Request (RUR) youth. Sometimes the court puts restrictions on the type of placement they can be released to. LCFS has been offering Regenerations, a program, which will now be offered to some of these youth. They provide an intensive homebased program through Youth Advocate Program. The whole goal is trying to get youth into a community-based setting, avoiding residential placement. If they do go to residential, we're looking at Regenerations in order to shorten the length of stay, etc. We've partnered with Chapin Hall to evaluate and report outcomes. The University of Chicago is also involved.

Procedures:

- We're working hard to update procedures. A work group has been working on Investigation Procedure 300, incorporating comments into the final. The update is complete and now the goal is to review training curriculum and begin training staff in October. Staff will be trained within each region by Area Administrators.
- Procedure 315, Permanency, has been worked on for about two years and it is nearing completion. They anticipate training after the first of the year.

- There has been a change in the way Area Administrators function. It seemed that there was a lack of focus on permanency as attention was focused on timely investigation. They've reverted to the previous structure where AA's will be over either Permanency *or* Child Protection.
- They've updated procedures regarding missing youth, making procedures very time-oriented.
- They've updated SACWIS with regard to data collection and input and they are getting ready to respond to an OIG report on the same issue. About half of the number reported in the daily report is under 18; the remainder are legal adults. Some have moved out. Some have left for a day and returned.
- Human Trafficking – Stacy Sloan is managing this unit, building it up. It's combined with Permanency right now, working under Interstate Compact.
- ICPC - Interstate Compact Placement of Children – We are looking at a way to have this managed electronically. We've been working with the Feds on a pilot program where we send everything electronically, involving six states initially. Illinois will be included in Round 2. One problem is that our rule indicates that information has to be encrypted, and our encryption system may be unique to our state.
- RA Changes: Lori Gray is the new RA in Southern and the new Cook RA is Jacqui Colyer, formerly a regional director for Miami Dade County in Florida.
- Data System – We need to improve our capability around data. We're looking at using predictive analytics. We're looking at getting dashboards that we can pull information from “real time.” We're working to be proactive rather than dealing with issues after the fact.
- The State Central Registry/ Child Abuse Hotline always has been located in downtown Springfield. The building space layout has not been conducive for operations and their hope is that they'll move to an actual call center currently utilized by another state agency.

OLD BUSINESS

Membership Update - Terry McGlothlin

Gordon and Cheri have filled open positions. A Central Region representative has been appointed. Laura resigned from the council due to new work responsibilities. Allison has stepped down from her position at Hoyleton and also from the council. Central and Southern region will have at least one opening each for a foster parent representative.

Committee Reports

There's a committee list in each packet, a grid showing each committee. It was updated to reflect the changes in council membership. Each member is asked to participate in at least one committee. We need a chair for the Training and Development Committee. Carol Sheley was appointed. Cathy asked to be removed from that committee since she's involved with the Policy/Legislation Committee. Donna Gregory and Cheri Dreska will join the Policy/Legislation Committee. The Adolescent Issues and Respite Subcommittees are fine.

Adolescent Issues – Mike Simpson - No Report

Policy and Legislation– Darrin Holt/Cathy McCoy

Cathy reported that the Policy Committee held their regularly-scheduled monthly conference call, noting that since this is the 20th year, the committee is reviewing the procedures used for the implementation plan scoring process. The committee recommends that the deadline remain January 31. We will conduct a scoring session the night before the November meeting for those who wish to get a head start on plan scoring and again during the afternoon of the January meeting for those who have not yet submitted their competed plans.

Darrin is not here today, but he sent information included in your packet.

SB 13 was signed into law, changing the membership and focus of the Children and Family Services Advisory Council. Their primary focus is on children in residential and institutional care.

HB2542 is the Fictive Kin legislation which makes all efforts to contact all relatives, including grandparents, when a child comes into care.

HB 3684 creates the Foster Children's Bill of Rights Act.

Foster Parent Support Specialists - Edith Cruz

No Report.

Respite - Gladys Boyd – Edith reported that the practice for securing respite has become less cumbersome in her region. Robyn asked that they share their form. DCFS Supervisors and Area Administrators may now sign for payment for items under \$1000. They can approve special service fees and exceptions. They'd have to have placement clearance to approve it. Discussion centered on the reduction in board payment to pay respite providers in POS placements. We need to find out if there's a distinction between Spec and Traditional Foster Care respite payments/ requirements. One of the holdbacks is that there is no uniform practice statewide. To address the issue, the council should identify agencies that are not in compliance and send the information to Deb Kennedy.

Reports from Other Councils/Committees/Workgroups:

CWAC – Cathy McCoy

There was a call yesterday to discuss DCFS restructure. Mike Ruppe covered this information for the Council.

IFAPA - Gladys Boyd – IFAPA will meet the day after our SWFCAC meeting next month (October 17). IFAPA is a grassroots organization that advocates for foster and adoptive parents. They have support groups throughout the state of Illinois to get to know one another, do respite for one another, etc. They meet and talk with different groups around the state, helping to find trainings for foster parents, develop activities for foster children, etc. Foster parents could call Kelly Hobbs to identify IFAPA support groups throughout the state. Her contact information is on the IFAPA web page.

Regional Reports

Northern Region – Donna Gregory, Cheryl Dreska – They elected their new board. Donna is a co-chair and the other co-chair is from a private agency. They are focusing on sharing issues within the region and moving things up the line as needed. Meetings are held at the regional office on the first Thursday of the month. The Northern Region conducts activities for foster parents nearly every week, forcing the meeting date change. They shared an issue from their council: Foster parents often have to drive to other counties for ACR meetings. Their local council recommends that administration provides speaker phones in each office specifically for foster parents to use in ACR's. Tina addressed the issue, noting that, in an effort to cut costs, offices have restricted phone lines in offices. **Motion:** Donna Gregory moved that the council will take the issue to Marilyn Arnold, Diane Cottrell and the Regional Administrator Desiree Sylva. Cathy McCoy seconded and this will move forward.

Central Region – Carol Sheley, Stephanie Jones

No report.

Cook North - Edith Cruz, Irma Dixon

Their foster parent advisory council met but there was a mix up in speakers. Instead, they hosted a Question and Answer session with their foster parents. One recurrent issue is last minute placement with

children coming from the shelter. In some cases they arrive with no medical card, no 906, etc. Typically the person who drops off the children has foster parents sign a blank piece of paper.

Cook South - Kellye Norris, Pamela Webb

No Report. They have not held any meetings.

Cook Central - Charlene Burris, Gordon Hannon

No Report. The meeting is the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Maywood Office.

Southern Region – Mark McDaniel, Mike Simpson – No meetings have been held recently. Mark reported that foster families were recognized with an event at the DuQuoin State Fair. It was very well attended. Director Sheldon was there and mingled with the families. Families were honored with activities, gifts and items for children and their families. Mark commended the Southern Region for their work.

Ethics Training

Terry distributed materials via Email and requested that members submit their completed forms. She brought additional copies for those who had not yet completed the training.

Agenda Items/Presenters

Darrin – Regenerations

Stacy Sloan, Human Trafficking - foster parent training curriculum

Deputy Director POS Monitoring – Deb Kennedy or Michelle Jackson

PRIDE Training update/Spanish PRIDE Training update

Update Services for 18-21 Debra Dyer

Update from the SYAB

Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan Training

Procedure 300

Foster Parent Rights during Concurrent Investigations – Nora Harms

Therapeutic Daycare Denice Murray - timely review of day care applications for a foster child

Rights and roles in the courtroom – DCFS Legal

November Combined Meeting:

Pamela Mills

Adjourn

Gladys Boyd made a motion to adjourn. Charlene Burris seconded and the meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: October 16, 2015 – Northfield Suites, Springfield