

SWFCAC Meeting
APPROVED MINUTES
October 16, 2015 ~ 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Northfield Inn & Suites, 3800 Northfield Drive, Springfield, IL

SWFCAC MEMBERS PRESENT	SWFCAC MEMBERS ABSENT	DCFS STAFF PRESENT	GUESTS PRESENT
Barlow, Pauline	Burris, Charlene	Blickhan, Kevin	Bakunas, Kem
Boyd, Gladys	Dreska, Cheryl	Byrd, Geneva	Goulet, Betsy
Cruz, Edith	Fargher, Kelly	Danvers, Daryl Lynn	Harvey, Robyn
Dixon, Irma	Perreault, Shawna	Dyer-Webster, Debra	Richmond, Elizabeth
Gregory, Donna	Webb, Pamela	Eyer, Gwenn	
Hannon, Gordon		McGlothlin, Terry	
Holt, Darrin		Smith, Catherine	
Jones, Stephanie			
Kalas, Kurt			
McCoy, Cathy			
McDaniel, Mark			
Norris, Kellye			
Olson, Sarah			
Sheley, Carol			
Simpson, Mike			

Welcome & Introductions – Sarah Olson, Council Chair welcomed council members and guests to the meeting at 9:00 a.m. Everyone was asked to introduce themselves.

Final SWFCAC Reports to Director – Sarah Olson

There were no final reports to the Director. The SWFCAC Chairperson’s monthly report to the Director was submitted and SWFCAC members received an email copy.

Approval of Minutes from September 18, 2015 Meeting

Gladys Boyd made the motion to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2015 SWFCAC meeting. Kellye Norris seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

Implementation Plan Scoring Training – Gwenn Eyer

Gwenn discussed the Council’s responsibility and authority to score implementation plans. She stated that council members must focus on transparency and accountability. Each member is required to complete a form noting conflicts of interest, real or perceived. Gwenn said that members should view plan scoring in the following order: Annual Report, Plan narratives for Rights 1-15, followed by narratives for Responsibilities 1-17 and Attachments. Council members should consider awards criteria throughout the scoring process. This year plans will be scored in their entirety. Gwenn led a discussion encouraging council members to examine the Foster Parent Law alongside Rule and Procedure to guide them in scoring plans.

Update from Central Region – Catherine Smith

Cathy welcomed the Council to Springfield. She stated that they have lots going on and limited resources. The Director has just announced the Division of Strategic Planning. One of the new advisors is this

division is a former ward. Cathy reported that they held some Rapid Response focus groups in Springfield. They discussed foster parent rights and responsibilities and will incorporate them into the Rapid Response protocol. For the past six or seven years, administrators have had joint responsibilities with both permanency and the investigative teams and they now have separated functions with Area Administrators who oversee child protection teams and Area Administrator's who oversee permanency. This improves oversight capability and improves relationships, impacting casework in positive ways. The region is actively working on their FP Law implementation plan.

Update from Permanency – Daryl Lyn Danvers

The Permanency Achievement Specialists are charged with numerous tasks. One new task they will be doing is to review adoption subsidy packets before they are sent to the adoption reviewer. This is to prevent them being returned with numerous questions or errors which causes more delays. They will also be doing adoption reviews to see why they are not moving, and reviewing return home barriers quarterly. If a case is stalled there will be a Child & Family Team Meeting with the bio parents and individually problem solve.

Irma expressed concern about the difference in the way things are done with DCFS and the private agencies. Daryl Lyn said that private agencies have been invited to partner with the Permanency Achievement Specialists. They have to reach out to us.

Gladys said foster parents have been trying for years to have them all on one level. She said POS is not being monitored right and they do not provide the same services.

Cathy McCoy said that there are some great private agencies and we don't want to generalize. Daryl Lyn said the subsidy reviews are to support private agencies and the goals reflect private agencies.

It was suggested that the council invite someone from the Division of Monitoring to talk about private agencies so they can hear the concerns and tell us what they are doing in regards to adoptions and overall monitoring. Deb Kennedy is involved in the adoption/permanency piece. Michelle Jackson is the Deputy Director.

Darrin said all agencies are monitored very closely. There is a data dashboard and they are at a level 1, 2 or 3. If we are at a level 3 DCFS is there twice a month meeting with supervisors. They are some times calling 2-3 days a week. Foster parents may not know how intense it is. If an agency does not perform action is taken and the agency can be put on intake hold or be shut down. DCFS does take it seriously. Debra said that is why we are at 59 agencies now.

Kevin Blickhan, a Resource and Recruitment Supervisor, stated that staff is working with permanency achievement, supporting the placement teams. They gather information researching and filing information on fictive kin, placement for individuals or sibling groups, etc. He noted that we're down to only six kids in shelter in the Central Region. He said that from a recruitment/resource standpoint, there's a lot of work to do. There is now a DCFS web site open for anyone who's interested in becoming a foster parent. Each month they receive several hundred potential referrals. Kevin's team is also concurrently doing outreach through churches, etc. Work is data driven and Kevin said that we are calculating data all the time. There is a new statewide faith-based recruitment initiative for 2015/16. They're putting together a webinar and flyer to invite staff to attend the webinar. They will discuss needs and resources. They'll do two sessions per day in each region, beginning in Northern Region November 19th. Chuck Dorothy from the Aurora Office is the Northern Region contact; Cook Region contact Ron Wynn will host a webinar on November 20th; the Central Region presentation will be held December 10th and Mo Jallow is the worker; Lisa Massa

will coordinate the Southern Region. John Schwider, Royal Family Kids Camp, RoyalFamilyKids.org, will be on every webinar. Deborah Goff is focusing on autism and Denise Cox is doing a military family presentation. Miriam Mojica is working on identifying the families for LGBTQ kids. Kevin will send Terry the flyer for distribution to the Council.

Foster Parent Rights during a Concurrent Investigation – Catherine Smith

There are very specific procedures that guide investigations. Procedures 300 guides investigations and 383 covers licensing investigations; both address concurrent investigations between child protection and licensing. When the hotline receives a call, they may take a stand-alone for a licensing investigation or concurrent for both a licensing violation and abuse investigation if they determine it also meets the criteria for an abuse/neglect report.

If a report of abuse/neglect was taken by State Central Register (SCR), the investigation specialist has 14 days to determine if the report is a good faith allegation of abuse/neglect. A good faith determination requires there to be an eligible perpetrator, an eligible victim, and a set of circumstances which caused harm or may cause harm to a child. At the point they determine they have a good faith investigation, or if they determine a child is unsafe, they must develop a protective plan concurrently with the licensing division. The protective plans are detailed in appendix of procedure 383 and decisions are made depending on the role of the perpetrator within the home. Generally speaking, they may: 1) remove children from the home, 2) remove the alleged perpetrator from the home, 3) add another non-involved adult to supervise interactions within the home. They also have the ability to waive the safety plan or make a different plan with consent of the licensing administrator. It was noted that if a child is 906'd out of the home it is very difficult to get them back into the home while the child abuse/neglect investigation is still pending, as placement clearance will not be issued. Cathy also stated that workers should not bring information from an unfounded allegation into future investigations and that POS Agencies can write a letter of exception as to why they want to use the home in spite of a founded allegation. She said that Directors always have the ability to make exceptions to Rule/Procedure 402. The Department has 60 days to complete the investigation. Investigations involving a child death may last six to eight months.

Changes to Rule 402 – Debra Dyer-Webster

There's a huge push to recruit foster homes because we need to have children placed in an appropriate placement, especially in order to step children down from residential placements. We've started gathering information on how we can do the licensing process for foster homes online. There will be no need to mail applications, risking loss. We're looking at keeping children out of shelters. We are going to develop emergency foster homes. We recognize that moves are hard on a child, but believe that moving to and from an emergency placement is better than placing children in a shelter. There was a recent OIG report making recommendations to review the program plan for all agencies to ensure that foster parents will transport children to their home school when they come into care from protective custody. The hope is that the child will return to the home from which they came into care. The Department will need to address mileage reimbursement, utilizing local district transportation, etc. They need to ensure that it's in every FY'17 program plan. Requests for Proposals are out for therapeutic homes in three regions. These are different from specialized homes and will be targeted for children stepping down from residential. These homes will have additional services tailored to the needs of the specific child, developed during transition planning. Residential procedures are out for comment. They have been developed using the Building Bridges Principles, trying to keep the child connected to past relationships throughout the life of their stay in residential placement. Foster parents and birth parents that are involved in staffing with the child, including visits, etc. How to reimburse foster parents and provide board payment for visits will be addressed. No child should stay in residential longer than is therapeutically required. Residential should

not be used in place of a foster home. Therapeutic homes could be used for children discharged from a hospital setting.

Debra reminded the council that Fresh Start provides cosmetic surgeries the medical card won't cover, i.e. remove disfigurement or deformity. Referrals should be sent to the Guardian's Office.

Joint Meeting with the Adoption Advisory Council – Sarah Olson

The meeting will be held on November 13th from 9am-3pm at the Sheraton, 3000 Warrenville Road, Lisle. The Director is scheduled to attend. The agenda will focus on items suggested by council members at the last meetings of the two councils.

Elizabeth Richmond said there will be a focus group with adoptive parents at an eatery near the hotel from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Information will be sent to adoptive parents on the council.

Residential Simulation Lab – Betsy Goulet

Betsy is a professor at UIS. She distributed a handout that described the program. Her involvement started about a year ago when there was interest on the college level regarding preparing future child welfare workers for the world. She is a former DCFS child protection investigator who returned to school to educate future workers. About 22% of our investigators leave within the first year. They're overwhelmed and traumatized by what they're discovering in the field. According to research, it is estimated that as little as 10-15% of training content is actually transferred back to the workplace. A partnership between DCFS and UIS was established to address transfer of learning issues. They plan to develop an experiential learning component for Child Protection Foundation training, aligned with the goals defined in the OIG's "Error Reduction Training." The experiential learning environment is the ability to construct environments that are as realistic as one would find in the field. Supported by Senate Bill 653, the Residential Simulation Lab will allow frontline child protection professionals to be immersed in simulations that incorporate aspects of cases that were reviewed and recommended by OIG, building on skills and information discussed by the trainer in a classroom setting. Cameras have been mounted throughout the house. Information will be directed to classrooms so students may follow the scenario. Debriefing will immediately follow the simulation, with trainers and colleagues providing feedback and direction. The Child Protection Training Academy will offer the first experiential training for child protection investigators in early 2016. The program began with the emphasis on child protection, but cross training will be possible in the future. Denise Cain, the Inspector General, toured the house and has many ideas regarding how it may be used to improve service delivery. Every student in the class will have the opportunity to experience the simulation. Cal State has been doing this for about a year. We are the first state to be able to do this for all child protection training, with the expectation of expanding to other training. Betsy's email address is Bgoul2@uis.edu. They are giving tours and she invited council members to take a tour.

OLD BUSINESS

Membership Update - Terry McGlothlin

All positions on the Council have been filled and new members plan to attend the November meeting.

Committee Reports

Adolescent Issues – Mike Simpson -

No Report

Policy and Legislation– Darrin Holt/Cathy McCoy

Legislation - Darrin

Two meetings ago he shared that the Foster Child Bill of Rights had been enacted. The CFS496-1 - ILLINOIS FOSTER CHILD AND YOUTH BILL OF RIGHTS form was established and will be given to a child over age 5 within the first 30 days, or within 30 days of the bill passing.

Policy – Cathy

Rapid Response Focus Groups – The foster parent portion was done quickly with short notice. Five council members participated in addition to others. We look forward to seeing the results in November.

The Policy Committee discussed revisions to the agency review process. The Policy Committee is recommending:

- That the APT liaison no longer be required to be at the review. Their role has only been to introduce us. It will make it much easier to schedule the reviews and lighten the load of the APT. Agencies can invite their APT to be there if they want them there.
- Agencies that are reviewed are randomly selected. Some council members will not have to do a review. Gwenn will assign those who are not doing a review to do the foster parent surveys. They go along with the reviews to gauge how well agencies/regions are putting the plan into practice.

Kurt made a motion that the council approves the recommendations of the Policy Committee. Gladys seconded. Motion carried.

Gladys suggested that the Policy Committee needs to look at membership. Members who serve only partial terms due to replacing another person's appointment should be allowed to then serve two full terms.

Foster Parent Support Specialists - Edith Cruz

No report

Respite - Gladys Boyd – Gladys

No report

Reports from Other Councils/Committees/Workgroups:

CWAC – Cathy McCoy, Pauline Barlow, Darrin Holt

Their next meeting is November 12th at 11am. Darrin said they met Sept. 17th. Darrin attended in person and it is much better than calling in. Debra or Catherine already reported most of what was said. There is a new CWAC Subcommittee, part of the Finance and Administration Committee to work on race and equity practice. Darrin will be co-chair, along with Bob Blackwell from DCFS.

IFAPA - Gladys Boyd

Their quarterly meeting is scheduled for 10am-3pm tomorrow at the First United Methodist Church in Pontiac.

Regional Reports

Northern Region – Donna Gregory, Cheryl Dreska

No report. They just changed their meetings to the first Thursday of each month.

Central Region – Carol Sheley, Stephanie Jones

They had a conference call Tuesday to discuss their Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan. Elizabeth Richmond said every area office has their own council that must meet quarterly. A staff person, FPSS

and foster parent from each area are then on a quarterly call like they had Tuesday. They have shuffled a lot of supervisors around so some are still meeting strongly, others not so much. They will all have met by January. It was a good call and the next one will be in January.

Southern Region – Mark McDaniel, Mike Simpson

No report. The Regional Administrator is working on setting up the next meeting.

Cook North - Edith Cruz, Irma Dixon

They had a meeting and Be Strong Families and the educational advisors were there. Edith has a list of who the advisors are.

Cook South - Kellye Norris, Pamela Webb

No report

Cook Central - Charlene Burris, Gordon Hannon

No report. Charlene was absent. Gordon does have the dates and location and will attend the next meeting.

Adjourn

Gladys made a motion to adjourn. Irma seconded. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2pm.

Next Meeting: November 13, 2015 – Sheraton Lisle, 3000 Warrenville Road, Lisle