

Washington State Children's Administration and Foster Parent Quarterly Regional Consultation Forum (HB 1624)

October 21, 2008; 1 – 3 PM

Colville, Washington

Agenda

Attendance:

Foster Parents: Dru Powers – Spokane; Ginger Schutt – Spokane; Amber Sherman – Spokane; Meegan Ware & James Ware – Spokane; Cindy Gardner – Spokane Valley; Patty Olson – Colville; Charlene Thiesfeld - Moses Lake; Cheryl Nelson – Colville; Sandy Kirk – Colville Tribe; Nancy & Kerry Bryant – Deer Park; Dennis & Lorrie Baunach – Colville; Pam Clifner- Loon Lake

Colville Staff: Wendi Hunt – Social Worker; John Sjolund – Intake & Homefinders; Theresa Brooks – CPS Supervisor

Other Staff: Jeff Kincaid – DLR Supervisor; Michelle Cutlip – FP Trainer; Laurie Palmquist – Regional/DLR; Kris Randall – Area Administrator (AA); Connie Lambert-Eckel – Deputy Regional Administrator; Launi Burdge AA; Sandy Turner – AA Spokane; Connie Morlin – AA – DLR; Lisa Johnson – Supervisor – Spokane Homefinders

Welcome – Jeff Kincaid & Dru Powers

Jeff and Dru welcomed all and asked everyone to introduce themselves. Evaluations and mileage forms were distributed. Dru explained that there will be four meetings each year in our region and statewide. Statewide each region elects two people to go to the meetings. Dru will hand out the ballots. Each foster parent can vote for 1 person. Ginger Schutt still has one year to serve. The ballots are due in by November 13, 2008 to Dru.

Training Update – Michelle Cutlip

Michelle reviewed the trainings for Region 1 and handed out a list of all upcoming trainings. The Parenting Plus program is off the ground. There are 30 hours of training. You can attend one class or all classes in three hour segments.

Another option is to request a written article that equals one hour of training. You can call or email Michelle for more information. She has a resource library that should be up and running by mid-November with videos available to watch.

Continuing credit hours now combine the husband and wife so if both attend the same trainings then they only need 6 hours each a year to have their combined 12.

Recruitment Update – Amber

Amber Sherman, a Families for Kids recruiter, reported on the regional contract. She reported that Linda Rogers is the regional coordinator, Karen Arnold is the recruiter for Wenatchee, Kelly Brown is the new recruiter for Omak, Kim McNaughton is the new recruiter for Newport, Pam Clifner is the new recruiter for Colville and Carey Brown is the recruiter for Clarkston. The goal is to also hire stipend recruiters for Moses Lake and Colfax. Amber reported they are always open for ideas on how to get information out to families. She talked

about putting flyers in church bulletins. The Sunday's child – picture of child & description – is available by a joint effort with Northwest Adoption Exchange. Pam Clifner would like to work with a social worker on Sunday's child. She has all of the bulletin inserts. If you have a legally free child please contact her. Sunday's child is older children, you have to get their permission to feature them and they need to be signed up with NW Adoption Exchange.

Many coffee stands throughout the region are using coffee sleeves.

Charlene Thiesfeld reported that a church in Moses Lake has foster parents and adopt parents that meet once a month to pray and are working on recruitment for respite. They're having a fair for national adopt month in November.

Retention / Support – Dru Powers

Dru updated everyone on the changes on the support groups and distributed a copy of the contact information. Oroville is the latest new support group with Beth Sutton as the facilitator. There is also a new facilitator in Omak – Jacque Lott. Dru also mentioned the resources available through the Donation Station, Julianne's Prom Closet and the Teen Closet.

Agenda items identified by support groups:

1. **Visitation Office update** – the need for volunteer drivers. Lisa Johnson, reported that the majority of transports are getting children to therapy. Even if you could give one hour a day. You can always stay with one child throughout their case.
2. **Respite Care – how can we meet the needs? Ideas and comments:**
 - Recruitment doesn't always have to be a foster parent
 - Maybe target parent & teacher groups at the schools to get licensed and offer care during summer or spring break.
 - Suitable others – this is for placement, not respite. If its for one day or night check you must check with the social worker.
 - Foster parents should develop their own respite care providers. Someone from school or church. From state meeting – when foster parents come in to training ask them to bring along a respite provider. Do it all at once. Maybe they can watch other children when not watching yours.
 - Go to community college and see if you can recruit a college student.
 - Licensors need to get more involved. Not make people feel that they are the people that got their children taken away. Shouldn't have to make you feel like you have to defend yourself.
 - Foster parent need to get hooked up with and stay active with different support groups. Foster parent needs to call if there is an issue.
 - At orientation respite should be fully explained.
 - Children need to have a say in who is the respite worker.
 - Respite travel (picking up or dropping off) is not paid for and this is a barrier. Why is this? Ginger taking mileage issue to statewide conf.
 - Social workers need to ask foster parent if they're in a support group, especially if they are frustrated.
3. **Returned Phone Calls – this continues to be an issue; suggestions offered:**
 - It has gotten better but it is still happening. If email works better then the social worker needs to tell the foster parent to communicate this way and vice versa. Communication is essential for retention and recruitment.
 - Let people know what type of communication works best for you and specifically what you need.

- Set up a date and time for once a week meeting (phone call, email).
 - Visitations – not being notified of cancelled visits.
 - Parents call in and leave message on social worker phone and the social worker is not there so the foster parent doesn't know the visit is cancelled.
 - Social worker needs to set up email to say when they're not in the office or on vacation.
- 4. New Visitation Policy with Siblings**
- Need to do visits 2 times a month; CA can reimburse you (up to twice per month) up to \$7.50 (per child per visit) for a child's activities that take place during visits with siblings. (sports activities, parks, movies, meals,); Mileage is reimbursed. New form on web site.
 - 72 hrs after child placed you need to do a visit with parent(s); Social worker needs to facilitate.
 - Telephone visit can be considered a visit depending on the circumstance.
 - Skype, email can be used in extenuating circumstances.
 - If they see each other at parent visit it counts.
 - If sib visit is overnight does it count as respite to the foster parent? – Does the foster parent get paid and how? We will be confirming this.
- 5. Medical Coupons** – is there a way to avoid listing the foster parent's address on the coupons; and can we help educate doctor office staff that we need to keep the foster parent's address confidential (primarily an issue when the bio parent meets at the doctor visit); this will be explored more.
- No way to take the name off permanently. Provider one is starting next year, so they will have a new identifier. Card will be swiped at doctor's office, pharmacy,
 - Foster Parents need to tell the nurse that she can't talk about that right now. Need to shut the receptionist down, inform the doctor's office of the circumstance so bio parent doesn't get the foster parent's address.

Statewide Consultation Meetings – Dru Powers

Report from the statewide meeting on Oct. 13; minutes are available online.

- Agreed that want BRAAM to be agenda item each month. Website has entire lawsuit.
- foster parent survey – looked like progress
- Sib visits
- Review of issues going forward to statewide meetings.
 - Transportation for reimbursement.
 - Communication & respect between social worker and foster parent.
 - Respite - Tax issue

Next Regional Meeting – Tuesday, December 9 from 1 - 3 in Moses Lake

Next Statewide Meeting – January 13, 2009 in Tacoma

Evaluations & Wrap Up