

1624 Quarterly Statewide Meeting
Monday, October 13, 2008

Meeting in session: 1:30 p.m.

- I. Welcome and introduction
- II. Introductions
 - a. Name, region and representation
 - b. Reminder: Ground Rules
 - One person speaks at a time
 - No side conversations
 - Stay on topic – no side stories
 - Respect for each other
 - Start and end on time
 - Stay solution focused!
 - Remain open to new ideas and opinions
 - c. Meetings once a quarter and phone conversations (once a month)
 - Phone Conference Purpose – develop a clear picture of identified issues and concerns
- III. Agenda changes
 - a. Do we want to have a Braam update as a standing item on the agenda?
 - Majority decided that the Braam updates and information will go out via email for everyone to pass on
 - The quarterly meeting will no longer include 10 minutes to provide updates on Braam
 - Braam information is also updated on the foster parent website
- IV. Orientation Guide
 - This is a guide to inform foster parent representatives and Children Administration staff about the 1624 statewide meeting process, expectations, purpose and background.
 - The 1624 orientation guide: Explains the mission, purpose, inform foster parent representatives and Children Administration staff about the 1624 statewide meeting process, expectations, purpose and background.
 - This will be on the agenda for the next phone conference meeting
- V. Foster Parent Rep Election (Ruth) Foster parent representatives will be hold their position for 2 years:.
 - Region 1 – keep one rep on to train and elect 1 new rep
 - Region 2 – have election process by mail, currently only have one rep as the other rep dropped out, continue with 2 year term with possibility to re-elect
 - Region 3 – elections will be held next year as both reps are new
 - Region 4 – mailed out a letter to all foster parents and election will be held in October and will stay for two year terms

- Region 5 – 2 year terms
- Region 6 – have not yet decided on a new process, but will discuss during their January meeting

VI. Foster Parent Survey (Cheryl Stephanie)

- An email recently went out regarding the foster parent survey
- This is the second survey conducted
- Washington State University pulled all of the data and gathered all of the information
- The survey wasn't identical from last year, however some questions were the same
- There was some progress and improvement, however there weren't any significant shifts
- Issues – returning phone calls and respect from social workers and social workers.
- Targeting these issues – social workers and supervisors.
- Is there a way to see the numbers and compare how long the respondent has been a FP (foster parent)? – This may have a statistical bearing on the way that they answer the questions

VII. Regional meeting updates

a. Region 1

- Election nomination forms are out and due in November
- Discussed sibling visit policy and the ins—outs of what this means to foster parents
- Discussed sibling relationships in regards to the sibling visitation policy.
- Visitation supervisors from out of state and their contracts.
- Discussed monthly visit policy in regards to workers visiting the kids.
- Foster parent mileage reimbursement form—multiple forms being used.

b. Region 2

- Respect issue – losing foster parents due to the department not returning phones, not including foster parents in the case plan, not informing foster parents about court dates or team meetings.
- Notifying foster parents within a timely manner of SW changes and changes to permanent plans
- Improvement in communication within some of the offices
- FP liaison is doing great and creating hubs all over the region

c. Region 3

- Support groups are taking off
- All are working on different projects
- Donating blankets to the CPS cars for when children are being picked up and brought into care
- Distributed 10,000 items of clothing that were donated to kids throughout the Region

- Making up respite and information packets to leave at the reception desk for FPs when they come in
- Communication and respect are still huge issues

d. Region 4

- Have not yet held a regional gathering since the last statewide meeting
- Working on resource guide and placement guide
- Trainings – progressing on topics and working on hours that the trainings are provided
- Regional meetings have three different break out groups communication, training and resources.

e. Region 5

- Working on communication within offices
- Trying to get FP to bring all issues to the table so they can be addressed
- Working hard with associations to talk about issues and trends
- FPs are starting to speak out and CA staff are being open and receptive to the issues being brought to the table

f. Region 6

- Working on placement books to give out to foster parents when they get new kids in care
- Books will travel with children and be filled out along the way
- Baby bags were purchased for bio parents
- Working with CA offices to get together a respite plan
- Working hard on returning phone calls
- Working on breast milk guidelines:
 1. Addressing safety concerns for the child, FPs and bio parents
 2. Trying to obtain more feedback from FPs on this issue
- Encouraging all offices and FPs across the region to participate
- Finding that not all offices are represented at the regional meetings and therefore there is some censorship on issues

VIII. FPAWS Update

- All of the regions are doing wonderful things and really appreciate all of the work that the FP reps are doing

IX. Statewide Issues

Division Licensed Resources:

- Investigations are not consistent
- FPs are not being told about allegations
- Who polices DLR...neutral party?
- S/A allegations from parent in the home or another child
- Homes are being targeted during investigations
- Unfounded and Founded referrals

- Draft of the brochure and frequently asked questions
- Work has started, it was pushed back a little due to closing some old cases
- The brochure will include the definitions of founded and unfounded
- The list of Area Administrators did not make it to FPAWS
- This will also be taken care of (Jean)
- DEFINITION of UNFOUNDED – available information that suggests that the CA/N did not occur (51% chance that did not occur, 49% chance that it did occur)
- Many FPs are concerned that the definition of founded referrals are now very close to the definition of unfounded
- FPs are being judged and looked at negatively for unfounded referrals
- It is very expensive for FPs to defend themselves against allegations and they are running out of resources
- Staff may put children at risk at some point or another, but there is no accountability for them, however FPs are put out
- Possible solution – provide more training around the new system and how FPs can request copies of the allegations
- Hold a meeting between reps from all Regions and have a discussion with DLR on how FP allegations and investigations can occur in a respectful way
- Will also discuss the results of unfounded allegations
- DLR will contact reps within the next week to set up a meeting (Jean)

CA Issues

Centralizing Rate Assessments:

- Region 1, 3 complete
- Region 5 is moving toward the format
- Region 4 is working on a pilot

Developing a plan for Medically Fragile Children:

- There is currently a group that is working together on this plan
- Getting feedback from FPs with medically fragile kids and their ideas for the FCRA
- Write down all of the issues that these kids may have to create a more uniform language
- The current form does not differentiate between a healthy and developmentally sound infant as compared to a baby that needs more supervision and care
- This will eliminate the need for FPs to fight for Level 2 and 3
- FP Reps please send Amy (region 6 rep) contact information of any FPs in your area that have taken medically fragile children

Communication and respect:

- Address the chain of command in the newsletter and also put it online
- It has also been suggested that although we need to follow the chain of command, anyone should be able to help and point FPs in the right direction
- Possibly make a list available for FPs that give the SWs names, supervisors and numbers – publish the list on the internet (Robert Nelson will be responsible for working on this)
- Region 1 – hands out these lists to FPs that attend the monthly Foster Parent Advisory Board

- What does better look like, what are we expecting in regards to respect and communication?
- Who is the child's current SW?
- Being updated on changes on the child's permanent plan
- Knowing about court dates and ISSPs
- Receiving a blank caretakers report form before every court date
- Who is sending out the notifications and why are the blank forms not being sent out?
- It would also be a great idea to post these blank forms and other blank forms (mileage reimbursement forms)
- One great training is Enhancing Relationships through Teaming– this is a training where a SW and foster parent must attend the training together
- This is a mandated training for SWs within their first two years of hire
- This should be encouraged in each office that SW invite FPs to attend this training
- FPs can also invite a SW
- Cheryl Stephanie has had a conversation with Regional Administrators regarding improvement
- This has been on the agenda for the last two months to go back and talk to their management teams
- At the beginning of this month they said:
- Region 5 – written plan and a message about updated messages, will also obtain FP input when doing employee evaluations
- Region 6 – supervisors were reminded at the last meeting and are also conducting random calls to ensure VM is updated
- Region 1 – reminders and spot checks
- Region 2 – working through the AAs, working on a memo
- Region 4 – working on office phone lists and planning to do a reinforcement of the policy in regards to returning calls
- Region 3 – Talked about hubs and liaisons and communicating phone policy
- DLR – random checks, making this part of performance expectations and evaluations
- Some offices are good on communication and others really struggle

X. Prioritize other issues

Retire liaison training issue

Add respite issues:

- These issues have come up across the state
- Issues: there aren't enough homes, it doesn't pay enough, it is all taxed and FPs with difficult kids have a hard time finding respite
- Better would look like: respite available all the time
- Solution: Respite Meet and Greet – bring all foster parents together so they can meet each other and feel comfortable when their kids leave their care and go to respite
- Solution: Have placement coordinators call around to the foster adopt homes to see if they would also be willing to provide respite
- Solution: Have a retainer for respite
- Solution: For medically fragile or more challenging kids, speak to the aides at school to try and get them on board to provide respite

- Solution: Talk with local churches to provide a once a month respite night so FPs can drop off their children for set hours one night and parents can have a couple of hours for respite
- Solution: Provide less respite hours statewide, but offer respite at a higher rate

Closing

- The meeting should be very similar next time
- Suggestion: list all of the Region's issues on the agenda that the reps are bringing forward
- CA will update reps on this issue by email Medical Dental Providers, Liaison Training

Update on budget from Cheryl:

- There's a 3.2 billion dollar shortfall
- We should have a better idea of the budget at the next statewide meeting
- CA will provide more information as new projections come out and new data is available

Thank you and meeting adjourned 3:34