

Regional RDS meeting 10/13/08
9 to 12
Compass Health

ATTENDANCE

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| Greg Dootson | Debra Ellsworth |
| Bob Jones | Lynn Davis |
| Betty Lensky | Meg Shugarts |
| Laurie Alexander | Leah Dunn |
| Jill Kinney | Bernice Morehead |
| Julian Dunham | Bob King |
| Michael Tyers | Mary McGauhey |
| Gigi Calvo | Irene Pritchett |
| Tracey Squiers | Cheryl Stephanie |
| Diana Beal | Tracy Fosty |
| Shala Crow | Steven Bolton |
| Becky Morrell | |

UPDATES

Tracey Squires announced that Community and Family Services Foundation is planning to open a visitation center in Skagit County.

Michael Tyers reported the licensing project has licensed 35 homes since March. Two of the staff have been reassigned and are now doing adoption home studies.

Lynn Davis

- Reported that the local RDS group is working on establishing “coffee house” groups where foster families in local neighborhoods or whose children attend a neighborhood school would meet informally on a regular basis.
- Ice breaker meetings are being conducted in Everett and have been well received by both foster parents and birth families.

Mockingbird Hub Home has opened. Families have been identified. The model is being researched by Partners for Our Children.

- A second hub home is being planned for east Snohomish County. This home will open more quickly because it is not part of the research project.
- A third home is in the talking stage for a hub home specifically for medically fragile children.

Mary McGauhey reported:

- The state foster parent conference was thought by many to be the best ever and a very positive experience for foster parents. The one suggestion was to have more time for interactive activities.
- Mary expressed foster parent concerns about the negative impression of both foster parents and foster children that is projected in news reports. There is a need for more positive press.

Steve Bolton talked about the project with Boeing. A foster parent club is being established at the Boeing plant. By the rules at Boeing they need to be a 501c3 organization to operate in Boeing. The paperwork is almost completed and will start soon. The club will be supportive to foster parents and will be able to promote foster care at the Boeing plant.

DISCUSSION OF HB 1624 Statewide meeting

The statewide HB 1624 meeting followed the regional RDS meeting. The purpose of the statewide meeting was discussed as was the role of the Region 3 representatives. The representatives were to be voted on or selected by foster parents in the region. Shala Crow and Debra Ellsworth are the regional representatives. They were selected at the statewide caregiver conference.

The statewide 1624 meeting discusses two issues from each region, which cannot be dealt with at the region, in order to improve support and conditions for foster families. The issues addressed have been; respect for foster parents, rates, concerns about retaliation, the DLR CPS investigations and others. For this region the identified needs have been respect for foster parents and respite care.

Information about 1624 is sent out in the newsletter that goes to all foster parents.

REVIEW OF PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The Regional RDS planning in the past had developed a long list of tasks to be worked on in the region. The revised document has been ordered in “chapters” with the first chapter organized by items. We will continue to break into small groups to work on these issues.

Groups were established for Training/Retention, Communication, and licensing/recruitment. Each group generated a list of items and prioritized them. The groups and the priorities are listed below.

Licensing/recruitment

- 1 Develop plan for guiding prospective foster parents through licensing process.
- 2 Improving call-back timeliness and politeness for DLR/recruitment social workers.

- 3 Utilize existing relationship with community leaders.

Other issues not identified in the top 3 priorities.

- Work with consultant through CA
- Work with recruitment and retention tools
- Hold monthly meetings with staff
- Develop recruitment kit
- Hold training for all of us regarding collaboration
- Develop methods for using our current capacity
- Develop methods of assessing our utilization
- Making sure all calls go to contractor
- Paint siding on big truck

TRAINING/RETENTION

1. Plan outline and education of social workers on challenges caregivers face.
2. Increase awareness of varied perceptions on information provided to care givers; on retaliation
3. One page for social workers on important issues to discuss with care givers

Other issues not identified in the top 3 priorities.

- Rewards and recognition
- Strategy groups for ongoing education
- Call back timeliness/politeness
- Family to Family recruitment and retention tools
- Monthly meetings
- Welcome letter
- Support plan for caregivers
- Training re: collaboration
- Plan for social worker education on challenger caregivers face
- More trust by reducing fear of retaliation
- Updated information to care givers
- Provide social worker email addresses
- Increase awareness of varied perceptions: on information given to caregivers about children; retaliation
- Geographic assignment of social workers
- One pager for social workers on important issues to discuss with caregivers

COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

1. Timeliness of returning calls/politeness and education of staff re: understanding the challenges of caregivers

2. Updated website with information
3. Current contact information with email addresses for staff

NEXT MEETING

There was a discussion about the frequency of the meetings. The options of meeting every other month or meeting every other month with the committees meeting in between were discussed. It was decided to continue meeting monthly to maintain the continuity in order to deal with the list that had been generated. Next meeting will be:

November 10

9:00 – 12:00

NEW LOCATION

Hawthorn Suites
Snohomish Room