



Clark County Dept of Family Services (DFS)
QPI Co-Lead Team Meeting Minutes
Wednesday May 21, 2014
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Present

Larry Bowen (Foster Parent), Shauna Davis (CAA), Jennifer Erbes (Maplestar), Leslie Murdock (Legal Aid Center)

DFS Staff –Denise Parker, Mark Fitzgerald, Shannon Rooney, Andre Wade

Agenda

1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Implementation follow up
3. Committee Reports
 1. Training
 2. Child Welfare Services
 3. Support and Retention
 4. Recruitment
 5. Communication Plan
 6. Community Partnership
4. Statewide workgroup updates
 - a. Normalcy
 - b. Information/confidentiality
 - c. Unity
 - d. Caregiver handbook
5. Action steps
6. Other

Minutes

1. Introductions and welcome were made
2. Denise Parker, Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) Coordinator, expressed her thanks for how the Implementation Team Meeting went and discussed future meetings
 - a. Announced the next Implementation Team Meeting is set for August
 - b. Denise wants to be able to do a more interactive component with the next meeting
 - i. She would like to start working on that part now
 - c. Asked how we get more people to the meeting
 - i. Noted there were more foster families there this time but less agencies
 - ii. We need to challenge our agencies to encourage their families to attend
 - d. Foster families provided lots of insight on the forms we presented at this meeting
 - e. Suggested that we bring in some of our community partners to have them attend so they understand what we are asking them to be a part of
 - i. Community partners might not want to be there for the entire meeting
 - ii. We need to catch their attention and almost entertain them
 - iii. It has to be engaging
 - iv. Possibly put together a separate meeting that is more engaging for businesses
 - v. This will be a next step for the Community Partnership work group
 - f. Suggested including foster parents and foster kids in future meetings
3. When we begin the Foster Friendly Businesses program we will need to approach businesses personally and have the sign up form and window clings ready
 - a. There are two (2) things working here
 - i. We need to get the community and its businesses involved
 - ii. We need to put together a sub-group to put together an event
 1. Suggested getting Zappos involved
4. Community Partnership work group reported on their next steps
 - a. United Methodist Social Ministry (UMSM) is very involved now in the Foster Friends Program
 - i. They have set a date for foster families to meet their volunteers who will provide respite one day a month
 1. It will be on June 22, 2014 from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
 - ii. They are also working with the Mayor's Initiative for Strengthening the Families

- iii. They have a food bank and they do training as well as staff a Visitation Center
 - iv. They see the kids and really want to help the families
 - v. Volunteers are background checked and trained
 - b. The work group wants to set up other opportunities with other organizations like this
 - c. A meeting is already scheduled with the Latter Day Saints (LDS) community and the Department of Family Services (DFS)
 - d. UMSM focuses on how to support birth families during difficult times
 - e. The Community Partnership work group is looking at creating materials to start recruiting for Foster Friendly businesses
 - f. The work group is also looking at the Ambassador Program which will be a smaller group going out into the community to spread the word about the foster care system
 - g. The work group is trying to create connections and ways for people to get involved
 - h. They are also looking at putting together an event to launch the Foster Friends Program
 - i. Care Meridian approached the Community Partnership group about getting involved
 - i. They are interested in working on the marketing component
 - j. Mentioned the Go Blue event coming up on May 31, 2014
 - i. Work group wants to make sure that there is a plan in place to acknowledge people who assist and thank them appropriately
 - k. Defined the Foster Friendly Businesses Program more clearly
 - i. Suggested that we include the possibility of having individual people who get involved and become Foster Friends in sort of a mentoring role
 - ii. These would be two very different programs
 - l. UMSM has created their program with a “friends” thought process in mind and have worked on the background work already for the Visitation Center
 - i. Their Visitation Center is under-utilized
 - ii. There is a disconnect between the workers and the information that they have this service available
 - iii. We have to make sure that internally our workers have all the information available
- 5. The Child Welfare work group gave an update on their progress
 - a. Work group is working on the Child Transition Survey
 - i. There have been some revisions requested
 - ii. Initially it was intended to be a foster parent to foster parent communication tool
 - iii. It is also going to be used to add information in regard to a Ten (10) Day Disruption request

- iv. The form has been expanded to possibly be used as a tool for the monthly meetings with the case worker and foster parent to prepare ahead of time
- v. It will allow the case workers to have a heads up when there are problems brewing
- vi. Suggested that the Placement Request and Disclosure (PRD) form needs to be updated to mirror this form
- vii. A concern was expressed about how the form will impact how the visits with the caseworkers go as it might cause less interaction
- viii. It will be a good tool for the Community Resource Team (CRT) meetings as well
- ix. It really was intended to be an informative source for transitioning a child not a way to shorten the visit with the case worker
- x. There was a lot of feedback on the survey at the Implementation Team Meeting which will be added in to it
- xi. Suggested it only be used at the time a child leaves a placement
- xii. It has also been used when a child is dropped off at Child Haven without any notice
- xiii. The foster parents have a responsibility to the child to make every effort to not disrupt a placement
- xiv. This form will help to give DFS an idea of what the next home should look like for a child who's placement is being disrupted
- xv. It will identify what is a good fit and what didn't match up during the placement
- xvi. Identified the CFTs need to happen with every Ten (10) Day notice
- xvii. DFS doesn't currently match well
 - 1. This form will assist us with creating a matching system that works
 - 2. Suggested creating a source book for the foster parents outlining what they are comfortable with in terms of their strengths in parenting
 - 3. It should revolve around strength-based communications
 - 4. Foster parents need to be encouraged to spend time with the kids before agreeing to take a child home
 - 5. Foster parents shouldn't feel afraid to say no to a child placement if it isn't a good fit
 - 6. We have to be sensitive to the child's feelings so as not to get their hopes up for going home with potential foster families
 - 7. Kids want to have some choice in who they might be going home with
 - 8. Suggested tasking the work group with looking at the matching process
- b. The Partnership Agreement is in process of being revised
 - i. It has now been sent to the State level
 - ii. Washoe is currently using it and it has been going well

1. They will share information with Clark County
- c. DFS is looking at adjusting UNITY to be able to print out a report that would be more detailed as to what the foster parents are good at
- d. Disruption and respite policies and the ABC Visitation system are all being looked at by the work group now
6. Training work group gave an update on their progress
 - a. The work group has submitted the proposal to include the increase in required training hours
 - i. They have removed Crisis Management as a required topic
 - ii. Topics for required trainings are Car Seat training, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Trauma Informed Care ages and stages
 - iii. As the State is looking at adjusting the laws, we are hoping to get these requirements included in these changes
 - b. There was a large meeting held with the executive management and Carol Shauffer, from the national QPI group, to discuss what issues are creating roadblocks for people who are trying to get licensed
 - c. There is not a consistent implementation of policies state-wide at this time
 - d. DFS currently has a net loss of twenty-three (23) families so far this year
 - e. There is a challenge around the disconnect between the fact that we need foster parents not adoptive parents
 - i. Asked what message we are giving to people attending the information session
 - ii. We need to make sure we identify the profile of our youths in the system at the Information Session
 - f. We need to look critically at why we do what we do and if it is working
 - g. We need to look at whether or not the foster parents are being sufficiently trained to serve our kids
 - h. We will be looking at other states and counties to see what they are using for training
 - i. We need to look at why we are licensing parents
 - i. Asked is it because they passed the training or is it because they are a quality parent
 - ii. The “on the ground” staff needs to be empowered to be able to make the call on whether or not a family is licensed
 - iii. Suggested that a second person be pulled in to help with the decision to license
 - j. Discussed the Safety Intervention Permanency System (SIPS) training and whether or not it will help the workers to be able to make the shift in how we do business
 - i. Mentioned that since they are being evaluated on their participation, it may not be landing with the staff
 - ii. This change in the way we are going to be doing business going forward needs to be communicated to the public
 - iii. There needs to be a training created for the Just In Time website to explain the shift in the DFS culture

7. Support and Retention work group gave an update on their progress
 - a. The work group is working on getting the survey out to licensed caregivers
 - b. We have about seventy to eighty percent (70-80%) of the email addresses corrected in UNITY
 - c. We will be sending the survey out on June 2, 2014 via email
 - d. Foster Parent Champions (FPCs) will be staffing the Visitation Center for fourteen (14) days
 - i. They will have lap tops that foster parents can use and will have printed copies of the survey as well
 - ii. We are creating post cards that will outline the many ways that they can take the survey
 - e. The entire survey has been translated to Spanish
 - f. After we have completed staffing at the Visitation Center we will assess the number of surveys completed and then start making phone calls
 - g. We have mailed out an announcement about the survey and it is mentioned in the Caregiver Currier
 - h. We have reached out to the agencies as well letting them know the survey is coming
 - i. We are having gift cards available once they complete the survey
 - i. A signed receipt is necessary at the time they pick up the gift card
 - j. Hoping to have all the input we need by July 15, 2014
 - k. The work group is also looking at the attrition component within DFS
8. Communications work group gave an update on their progress
 - a. Internal and external communications are being investigated
 - i. A third draft of the Communication Plan is being worked on
 - ii. The plan is being based on the goals of QPI
 - iii. Strategies and tactics were pulled from prior QPI documents
 - b. The state is holding a work shop in regard to marketing which work group members will be involved in
 - c. The work group is expecting approval to send the Caregiver Currier out shortly
 - d. A member of the work group will be approaching all work groups to discuss the Caregiver Currier and get their input as to what content will be included in future editions
 - i. This will be an opportunity for each group to get information out to the public about initiatives they are working on
 - e. The distribution lists for the work groups have been updated
 - i. New members need to be communicated to the communication team
 - ii. Communication mapping needs to be done to minimize the number of emails being sent
 - f. They are fine tuning their process
 - g. Mentioned if you want something put into the currier, it would be best to submit it in more of a completed manner
 - i. Clarification was given as to specifics for submissions

- ii. Work group is looking at streamlining the training section of the currier
- h. Suggested removing the training portion and just including a link to Just In Time as the training information is there
- 9. Recruitment work group gave an update on their progress
 - a. Work group has lots on its plate
 - b. They are working on the five (5) year plan for the State
 - i. They have to leave room in it for the Market Segmentation project
 - c. They are focusing on three (3) things
 - i. Market Segmentation Project
 - ii. Participation in events
 - iii. Outreach and a constant presence in locations in the community
 - d. There has been some miscommunications about our materials
 - i. Rack cards discuss adoption options
 - ii. This is getting out to the public and they are coming in with the expectation of being able to adopt infants
 - e. DFS Licensing is meeting with Denise today to discuss the information session and to identify what materials we need to recruit foster families
 - f. Asked do we know the numbers for “Adopt Only” families
 - i. We have six hundred and sixteen (616) families currently
 - ii. Forty-four (44) Adopt Only
 - iii. One hundred forty-four (144) fostering but would like to adopt
 - iv. Five hundred and fifty-eight (558) open beds
 - 1. Why aren’t they taking kids
 - g. DFS Licensing is not currently tracking where the families are being recruited from
 - h. Last year there were fourteen hundred (1400) people interested in information and only eleven percent (11%) are actually making it through licensing
 - i. Families wishing to adopt only have been an on-going issue
 - j. People don’t know that they have to foster before they adopt
 - k. Asked why are we not keeping our families and why aren’t licensed homes taking our kids
 - l. The messaging on reunification needs to be shared
 - m. Currently only one hundred and twenty-three (123) kids are available to be adopted
 - i. Their profiles, as a population, needs to be shared at the information session so that people know what kids are available
 - ii. The process that DFS goes through with each case needs to be communicated
 - iii. Seventy-three percent (73%) of the kids in our system end up back home
 - iv. Only twenty-seven percent (27%) become available for adoption
 - n. Foster Parent Champions are finding that foster parents are having lots of struggles around reunification

- o. Involving the foster families with visitations with the birth family needs to start happening
 - i. A connection needs to be made
 - p. There may be a whole other set of families out there that don't want to adopt
 - q. The messaging and training needs to be consistent
 - r. The birth families and foster parents need to be de-mystified
 - s. The data shows we don't have enough families
 - t. There are currently twenty-seven (27) kids sleeping in high chairs at Child Haven over this past weekend
 - u. We need to communicate who we are trying to find homes for
 - v. Asked how are families walking out of our trainings and still believing they can adopt an infant
 - w. If people understand they are going into the system with the knowledge of what reunification means and what supports are we providing for the foster families after reunification happen, perhaps we would have less closed licenses
 - x. Perhaps we need to look at the way that DFS is structured as currently no one really supports the foster parents through the whole process
10. Asked if someone is reaching out to the homes not taking kids
- a. Yes
11. Members requested a bullet point list of all the initiatives from the QPI groups
- a. Denise will provide the list