



Clark County Department of Family Services

Name of Workgroup

Meeting Minutes from Date April 22, 2014

Present

Mark Fitzgerald, DFS Co-Lead
Ali Caliendo, Foster Parent Co-Lead
Denise Parker, DFS, QPI Coordinator
Mike Pochowski, Foster Parent
Lauren Soskin, DFS
Randal McClintock, Community Partner
Lani Aitken, DFS
Cheryl Shuberda, DFS
Heather Heuke, DFS
Sarah Drenner, DFS
Dianne P. Brooks, Foster Parent

Agenda

- Review Exit Survey
- Discussion around 10 Day Notices and “drop offs”
- Review of “White Papers” as to Information Sharing with Caregivers
- Normalcy
- Review of the proposed Clark County Partnership Plan for Children in Out-of-Home Care
- 360 Degree Accountability Reviews of Caseworkers and Caregivers

Minutes

The workgroup discussed the Caregiver Survey (now known as “Child Transition Survey”)

- Discussion around consideration of reconfiguring the sections in the form to mirror the PRD for ease of entry of the information
- The group decided to include brackets to cross reference on the “Child Transition Survey” where the information would be entered into the PRD
- Heather Kendall and Cheryl Shuberda, Emergency Placement (Receiving Team) will continue to pilot the use of the “Child Transition Survey” pending a meeting with their Assistant Manager and/or Manager. Heather Heuke will pilot the

survey for permanency. Lani Aitken will discuss the survey with her supervisor for incorporation into her PS MAPP class as a pilot. Denise Parker will forward the survey to Lauren Wagner, Training Team, for introduction to newly hired staff in the Academy.

- Lauren Soskin will forward the “Child Transition Survey” to the Interpreter’s Office for translation into Spanish.
- Recommendation to include current school and IEP information and to separate it out to make it easily distinguished
- The group discussed concerns about children potentially being “labeled” by a caregiver who no longer wants them in the home. Diane gave an example of a 2 year old child moved from another foster home to hers who had been labeled as having “sexually acting out” behaviors. The group felt that this would be addressed through ongoing documentation of the child’s behavior which contradicts what could constitute only one person’s experiences/evaluation. The group also discussed that the form really requires more description around what is meant by certain behaviors a child is labeled with, e.g. what does the child do that is a “sexually acting out” behavior.

Next steps:

1. Review and discussion around any recommendations made as to the “Child Transition Survey”
2. Report back on the “pilots”
3. Discussion around implementation of the “Child Transition Survey”
4. Discussion around broad education around and subsequent dissemination of the “Child Transition”

The workgroup discussed “10 day notices” and “not notice drop offs”

- Jane Green, Placement Team, is forwarding the 10 day notice policy to Denise Parker for discussion at a later group
- Discussion around 10 day notice information in the Nevada Administrative Code and how CPS responds
- Discussion around the importance of providing detailed information to caregivers if “labels” are used such as in the PRD, e.g. what does “aggressive” mean with this child?
- Denise Parker and Lauren Soskin will work on gathering and analyzing the existing policies and procedures around 10 day notices and reporting back to the workgroup
- The workgroup agreed that there are two separate purposes of Child and Family Team meetings in response to 10 day notices which may occur together or separately. One purpose is, on behalf of the child, to attempt to preserve the child’s placement. The other purpose is to gather information from the Team,

including the caregiver submitting the 10 day notice, around the child's needs to help identify a profile of what knowledge, skills, and abilities a caregiver will need in order to help prevent future disruptions for the child(ren). This is also an opportunity to help in establishing a licensing profile for the caregiver submitting the 10 day notice to help prevent future disruptions from their home.

- Discussion around reasons/justification caregivers have provided for 10 day notices. There was considerable discussion around needing to evaluate each caregiver individually who has submitted a 10 day notice or done a "no notice" drop off in order to determine the best course of action as relates to their license. Ali suggested the reasons/justification might be "excused" vs "unexcused" which will help guide DFS in how to respond to "no notice" drop offs and 10 day notices with individual caregivers.

Next Steps:

1. Review and discussion around existing policies (both NAC and DFS) around 10 day notices and expectations of both the caregiver and DFS
2. Discussion around the workgroup's vision as to what should be done to make the process more child focused and friendly and how DFS should approach individual caregivers (e.g. mandating attendance at CFTs, mandating education around specific issues which contributed to the 10 day notice, etc.)

The workgroup discussed DFS respite policy

- Lauren Soskin advised that respite policy is also embedded in state policy (Nevada Administrative Code)
- The workgroup discussed that caregivers should be treating foster children as members of the family. Discussion around the negative implications for children when caregivers request respite for particular children while the rest of the family goes on vacation or during the holidays. Discussion around DFS possibly not allowing respite during the holidays any longer.
- Mike Pochowski and Dianne Brooks stated that they utilize their "non-primaries" or have created a network of foster families they exchange childcare/respite with so it is less impactful to the children.
- Denise Parker is working on respite policy

Next Steps.

1. Denise Parker will report back to the workgroup as to any draft related to respite policy

The Workgroup Discussed the Normalcy (Prudent Parent) Policy

- Denise Parker stated that there was a federal Hearing on the Ways and Means Committee in May 2012 directing each state to implement policies which are neither too restrictive for caregivers or for teens
- Denise is continuing to work with a subgroup of the Workgroup with varied membership and will report back to this Workgroup

Next steps:

1. Denise Parker will continue to report back to the Child Welfare Workgroup as to the Normalcy Workgroup and receive input from this Workgroup to report back to the Normalcy Workgroup.

The Workgroup Discussed the “White Paper” on Information Sharing with Caregivers

- Denise provided a draft version which incorporates recommendations from DA Brigid Duffy
- Denise is continuing to accept and incorporate recommendations to the document which will help provide clarification and guidance to DFS staff and caregivers

Next steps:

1. Denise will continue to provide edited versions of the “White Paper” on Information Sharing with Caregivers to the Workgroup
2. Denise will submit a version agreed upon as “final” to DFS Executive Management
3. Denise and Mark will participate in statewide telephone conferences with Child Welfare agencies across the State to discuss and promote consistency
4. Brigid Duffy will participate in dialogue with attorneys (Attorney General, District Attorney, etc.) across the State of Nevada to discuss and promote consistency

The Workgroup Discussed the Partnership Plan

- The workgroup has been reviewing the Partnership Plan ongoing
- The Partnership Plan was sent to Manager Christina Vela. Executive Management wants a Plan for Implementation
- Denise Parker suggested an event (meet and greet, etc.) to introduce the Partnership Plan to caregivers
- The workgroup discussed a training curriculum for DFS staff to introduce the Partnership Plan

Next steps:

1. Denise Parker will report back any recommendations emanating from the Implementation Team Meeting both as to the document and implementation
2. Denise Parker will provide any updates as to input from DFS Executive Management and discussion around promoting a consistent message statewide
3. The workgroup will review and discuss any recommended changes to the document
4. The workgroup will discuss any plans for implementation

The Workgroup discussed 360 Accountability Evaluations

- The workgroup discussed the utility/usefulness of the Evaluations and outcome measures

Next steps:

1. Denise will provide any draft versions
2. The workgroup will discuss any recommended changes
3. The workgroup will discuss implementation of the 360 Accountability Evaluations
4. The workgroup discussed introduction of the concept and format of the 360 Accountability Evaluations with DFS staff and caregivers

Next meeting of the QPI Child Welfare Services Workgroup is Tuesday, 5/27/14, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Lincoln Room at DFS Central Office, 121 S. Martin Luther King Blvd.