



Clark County Department of Family Services

Child Welfare Services Workgroup

September 22, 2015

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Present

Mark Fitzgerald, DFS Co-Lead
Denise Parker, DFS QPI
Diane Brooks, Foster Parent
Anita Stephens, Foster Parent
Jessica Hartwig, Adoption Exchange
Karen Atlantic, DFS Licensing
Regina Wyman, DFS Permanency
Nancy Doyle, DFS Permanency
Kim Forgione, DFS Foster Parent Champion

Agenda

- Information Sharing - update
- Respite - success
- Partnership Plan – updates
- 360 Reviews
- Transition
- Visitation
- Post Adoption Support

Minutes

The QPI Child Welfare Services Workgroup was convened. Introductions were made.

Information Sharing

- Mark and Denise distributed the draft version of the brochure entitled “Information Sharing: What Case Managers CAN Tell Caregivers”
- The brochure has been reviewed by Management and additional recommendations were made

Next Steps:

1. Recommendations will be incorporated and the document moved from “draft” to “final” version
2. The plan is to introduce the brochure and “white paper” in a Supervisor’s meeting
3. Denise will continue to provide updates to the Workgroup

Respite

- Mark and Denise discussed the success this Workgroup generated in bringing the issue of “respite” care to the table for discussion. Discussion around the cooperation of several Workgroups in addressing the issues involved.

Partnership Plan

- Discussed that the Workgroup’s plan is for the DFS Training Team to create a video which will be available on-line for DFS staff and on the QPI Just in Time website for licensed caregivers. Mark and Denise are planning to meet with DFS Training to talk about the content of the video.

Next steps:

1. Denise and Mark will provide regular updates as to the status

360 Reviews

- The current draft versions were provided to new members of the 360 review team (caregiver of caseworker and caseworker of caregiver).
- Mark discussed the recommendations made by Carol Schauffer, Youth Law Center, around reducing it to 4-5 questions of the highest priority, making it available electronically for ease (survey monkey, on an app on cell phone, etc.), requesting the review’s completion, and “immediately after the experience” (placement, working together, etc.). She synopsized it would be best to make the review automated, completed the soonest possible after the caseworker/caregiver have worked together, and the available in the “easiest” (short, automated) possible manner. She even suggested a question “would you hire this person to be a caseworker/caregiver in the system?”
- The workgroup discussed Carole’s recommendations.

- The workgroup discussed at what point in time and how to encourage the completion of the surveys, As the group, all agreed that the information will be critical.
- Karen reiterated the critical role that the Licensing Specialist should play. It was discussed as one option that perhaps Placement could notify the Licensing Specialist when the children are moving as the trigger to get the evaluations completed. Karen's recommendation was then that the Licensing Specialist would reach out to both the caseworker and caregiver to complete the survey including, at least as to the latter, doing so by telephone. It was discussed that this may not capture everything if, for example, the children don't transition out of the foster home.
- It was recommended that foster parents might need to be reminded of the critical, supportive partnership their Licensing Specialist has, particularly as there are "changes" in the household including the transitioning of children in and out of the home. Mark suggested this might be a good Caregiver Courier article.

Next steps:

1. Denise will request Child Trends review the 360 review formats and assist in reducing the surveys to 10 questions
2. The workgroup needs to begin working on a protocol for how the reviews will be completed, where they will be sent upon completion, etc.
3. The workgroup needs to present the proposed documents and protocol to Leadership and then to Labor Management

Post Adoption Support

- Mark introduced the topic of Post Adoption Support to the group.
- The workgroup heard the personal stories of the adoptive parents present, experiences of other adoptive parents with which the workgroup members were familiar, and case manager's experiences with families they are currently working with, or have worked with in the past. This affirmed the lack of support and need for formalized post adoption support.
- The workgroup members agreed it is a critical issue for the child welfare system, both locally and Nationwide. Denise talked about quantifying it as more than anecdotal although conceding that over 50% of the workgroup present had personal experiences with the lack of post adoption support.
- Denise suggested meeting with QA/QI around numbers, e.g. looking at what was going on (if anything) with all of the adoptions finalized in the last five years, failed adoptions, disrupted adoptions and abuse in adoptive homes, as possible data collection.
- Diane stated that in Colorado, a case manager is assigned to a case for up to six months post adoption for support. Families can enlist agency support during this time.
- Nancy recommended that adoptive parents seeking post adoption support needed to have a "contact person" at DFS.

- Denise discussed the possible referral of the families to the new “diversion programs” being developed by DFS.
- Denise suggested the possibility of identifying a DFS Case Manager and District Attorney to respond to and assist adoptive families seeking post adoption support
- Jessica stated that nationwide the Adoption Exchange is attempting to grow its post adoption services.
- Anita talked about her experience in a Hearing around Medicaid denying services. They were told that long-term services were not meant to be covered by Medicaid as maintenance services.
- The workgroup heard of several adoptive parents’ experiences with the “Medicaid” coverage post adoption being different than when the children are in foster care. Four specific cases were cited.

Next Steps:

4. Jessica will research other Adoption Exchange sites regarding post adoption support
5. Mark and Denise will meet with DFS QA/QI about what kind of statistical data can be pulled
6. Denise will connect with Donna Smith about possible legislative issues, particularly as it relates to Medicaid
7. Denise suggested this might become a “subcommittee” of the larger QPI Child Welfare Services Workgroup at a future date
8. Mark will reach out to Carole Schaffer with the Youth Law Center, regarding any information on post adoption support

Transitions

- Mark and Denise talked about the phenomenal success of the first QPI Webcast entitled “Developmental Science and Child Welfare: Moving Towards a More Child-Centered Court Improvement Practice Model” on Thursday, 9/17/15 from 12-1:30 p.m.
- Denise discussed the next scheduled webinar.

Next steps:

1. Gathering information and developing Policies and Procedures around Transition

Visitation

- Dawn Sanchez, Program Manager, will be making a site visit to Reno to look at their ABC Visitation program and discuss how DFS can bring the program to DFS.
- DFS / QPI would work with Carol Schaffer and the Youth Law Center, in providing training if this is adopted.

The next meeting of the QPI Child Welfare Services Workgroup will be on Tuesday, October 27, 2015 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at DFS Central Site, 121 S. Martin Luther King Blvd. in the Lincoln Room.