



Clark County Department of Family Services

Name of Workgroup

October 28, 2014

Present

Mark Fitzgerald, DFS Co-Lead
Denise Parker, DFS, QPI Coordinator
Dianne Brooks, Foster Parent
Cindy DeGan, Eagle Quest Foster Care Agency
Dr. Aja Staniszewski, Foster Parent
Barbara Straight, DFS
Sandi Sinicrope, Community Partner, Catholic Community Services

Agenda

- Respite Care Policy
- Normalcy/Prudent Parenting
- Partnership Plan
- 10 Day Notices
- Child Transition Survey
- Information Sharing (White Paper)
- 360 Degree Evaluations

Minutes

- 1 Introduction of new members
- 2 Discussion of Child Transition Survey/ Respite Care Policy Status**
 - Discussed that this QPI Workgroup generated the dialogue with DFS to enact positive change
 - Denise announced there have been no children placed in Child Haven campus as a result of unfulfilled respite care requests
 - EMG (Executive Management Group) approved the Child Transition Survey which subsequently went out as a Policies and Procedure to all DFS staff

- EMG is in the final stages of reviewing the “Respite Care Policies/Travel Policy” proposals. Denise anticipates the policy being disseminated to DFS staff in mid-December.
- Discussion around notification of the positive changes to foster parents via the Caregiver Courier, possible mass mailing, inclusion on the QPI website, and other media.

Next Steps:

1. Mark will contact Andre Wade and Lauren Wagner, DFS Training, regarding plans for the dissemination of both the Child Transition Survey and Respite Care Policies to caregivers . Suggestions include the Caregiver Courier, mass e-mail/regular mail (for caregivers who don’t have e-mail access) to caregivers, and inclusion on the QPI website.
2. Mark will reach out to DFS Placement Team Supervisors regarding any additional support needed around utilization of the Child Transition Survey

3 Information Sharing

- There has been discussion around this in the DFS Policies and Procedures workgroup
- There is discussion about rewriting the “confidentiality” policy to include “information sharing” with caregivers
- Discussion around this being shared via an Instructional Memorandum with DFS staff
- There was considerable discussion around concerns from foster parents that they are still not receiving sufficient information to support them in providing care to the children they have accepted into their homes.
- Discussion around needing to “train” to this IM for DFS staff and foster parents, perhaps within the context of the Meet and Greets/Town Hall Meetings scheduled for January 2015

Next steps:

1. Mark will reinforce the need for thorough and thoughtful attention to completion of the Initial Child-Wellbeing form with CPS
2. Reinforce the need for thorough and thoughtful attention to completion of the PRD by Permanency
3. Continued vigilance reinforcing “partnership”and, as a critical component of same, emphasizing the need to share critical information to maintain the children safely in out of home care

4. Partnership Plan

- The Partnership Plan has been approved by EMG.
- The Meet and Greet/Town Hall Meetings are being scheduled for January 13, 2015 and January 14, 2015 at various sites around Las Vegas. The plan is for them to be at 6:00 p.m. to encourage foster parent involvement, to invite DFS staff (including CPS, Permanency, Placement and Licensing) and to provide babysitting. Denise discussed creating opportunities for discussion of components of the Partnership Plan among the small breakout groups.
- Discussed need to have the Partnership Plan finalized prior to the Meet and Greet/Town Hall Meeting. This will be the first broad introduction of the Partnership Plan.
- Discussed for implementation of the Partnership Plan and the spirit behind it (to encourage accountability to one another in the partnership but not create a “contract” to lay over one another’s heads) : (1) Signature by the initial permanency specialist assigned to a child(ren), (2) That if a new permanency specialist is assigned it will be in the file and included on a “checklist” of things the new permanency specialist will review with the foster parent
- The Workgroup agreed that there should be a live “training,” with some access to on-line training on the QPI website particularly for DFS staff, foster parents, and community partners who cannot attend the Meet and Greet/Town Hall meetings scheduled. Mark mentioned there is a rudimentary Power Point presentation on the QPI website that we might be able to build off of as a foundation.

Next Steps:

1. Denise will provide Mark a copy of the final version of the Partnership Plan
2. Mark will invite DFS Training Team representative to the next QPI Child Welfare Services Workgroup meeting to begin to develop a training program for the DFS staff, foster parents, and community partners who cannot make it to the Meet and Greet/Town Hall meetings
3. Mark will check with DFS Permanency regarding the Partnership Plan when a child(ren) is transferred to a new permanency specialist

5. National QPI Meeting in San Diego

- The National QPI Meeting in San Diego will be on 1/20 and 1/21

6. Normalcy

- Dr. Staniszewski stated that she worked with the Childrens Advocacy Alliance on Normalcy

- Denise stated that the EMG is providing feedback to the Childrens Advocacy Alliance and everyone is working together collaboratively
- Denise stated that legislator Heidi Swank is sponsoring the bill
- Discussion around “liability,” e.g. as it relates to signing for the foster youth to get a driver’s permit or license. Whose insurance would the foster youth be covered by for example?
- Mark brought up the issue of the birth parents’ rights to participate in decision-making as it relates to their children and that we should be ever mindful of same

Next steps:

1. Denise and Dr. Staniszewski will continue to provide the QPI Child Welfare Services Workgroup with updates as to the status of any proposed “Normalcy” legislation, policies, and procedures,
2. The QPI Child Welfare Services Workgroup will continue to offer guidance and recommendations as it relates to policies, procedures, and legislation related to “Normalcy.”

7. Visitation

- Discussion about availability at the Visitation Center.
- Discussion about concerns for safety of the children and caregivers
- Discussion around conditions of the Visitation Center
- Mark reminded the Workgroup that the DFS Visitation Center is only one location for visitations to occur. Mark cited foster parents who have accommodated visitation in their own home, in the birth family’s home, at other community locations, involving birth parents in appointments for the children (therapy, medical), inviting birth families to programs their children are participating in (e.g. sporting events, school concerts, etc.), and utilizing other community locations (parks, etc.) Diane mentioned that there is a flyer about a church in the Visitation Center which can accommodate visitaitons.
- Mark discussed that the caregiver, in partnership with the permanency specialist and birth family, may elect to have visitation elsewhere and again reinforced the importance of sharing critical knowledge with caregivers to make informed, safe decisions for everyone involved.
- Dr. Staniszewski stressed the paramount importance of ensuring safety for the children and caregiver.

Next Steps:

1. It was determined that at the next meeting the workgroup will discuss the DFS Visitation Center.

2. Workgroup members are encouraged to invite caregivers to the November QPI Child Welfare Services Workgroup meeting to discuss any recommendations for the DFS Visitation Center

The next meeting of the QPI Child Welfare Services Workgroup will be on 11/25/14 from 10:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Lincoln Room, 121 S. Martin Luther King Blvd.

