



Clark County Department of Family Services

Support and Retention Workgroup Meeting

Meeting Minutes from June 12, 2014 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

Present

Cindy Degan (Eagle Quest)

DFS Staff Members- Lani Aiken, Denise Parker, Shannon Rooney

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Update on the Caregiver Survey
 - a. Surveys sent to over 852 Email Addresses
 - b. Over 167 Fully Completed Surveys Received
 - c. The Foster Parent Champions (FPCs) started at Visitation Center on Monday, June 9th. We will be there through Sunday, June 22nd
 - i. Great Success at Visitation Center
 - ii. Foster Parents completing surveys & picking up gift cards (over 50 gift cards distributed thus far)
 - iii. Caregivers meeting FPCs and learning about program
 - iv. Caregivers learning about other opportunities & trainings – picking up flyers
 - d. Plan to continue to accept surveys through end of June
 - e. Hope to gather and analyze data and be able to provide information and results late summer
3. Report out from the sub-committee (Karlene, Denise and Shuana Davis met re: grievance procedures)
4. Update on Attrition – changes licensing has made

- 5. Visitation Center
- 6. Other

Minutes

- 1. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. Introductions were conducted.
- 2. Update on the Caregiver Survey
 - a. Surveys were initially sent out on June 2nd at 1PM to 852 email addresses.
 - i. We were able to send out so many surveys due to the work done cleaning up the email addresses. We previously had good email addresses for around 40% of families, and now have them for over 80%.
 - ii. There was a tremendous early response to the survey. About 100 caregivers started the survey over the first night (16 hours).
 - 1. The goal was to have over 125 surveys.
 - a. We were initially concerned that we wouldn't make this number, and were shocked to see that we hit it pretty quickly.
 - b. Management was shocked as well.
 - b. Over 167 fully completed surveys have been received as of this morning.
 - i. Around 240 surveys have been started, and some of these "incomplete" surveys have a good amount of data as well.
 - ii. The group had done a great job of telling people about the survey in the 6 weeks prior to distribution.
 - 1. Denise has been advertising it to foster parents.
 - a. She responds to complaints by encouraging people to do the survey and share their useful feedback.

2. The Foster Parent Champions (FPCs) have also been letting people know about the survey during their initial placement calls and other interactions with caregivers.
 - a. FPCs were the individuals who were going to have to make telephone calls if the response rate warranted them, so they had extra motivation to promote the survey during placement calls.
 - iii. We have not looked at the data yet to see what actual responses are to know what the survey data is telling us, but are excited by the volume of responses and anticipate useful feedback.
- c. FPCs started at the Visitation Center on Monday, June 9th. The Special Projects Unit will be there distributing surveys and gift cards through Sunday, June 22nd.
 - i. Survey distribution at the Visitation Center has been very successful.
 1. We have been able to get a good number of surveys done; for example, 16 people took the survey there yesterday.
 2. We have also had the opportunity to promote the FPC Program to a number of foster parents through this opportunity to engage with them.
 3. We have also been passing out flyers for QPI, different programs, upcoming trainings, etc.
 4. The FPC staff has been overwhelmed by the number of foster parents, and Mark noted that the weekend will likely be more crowded.
 - a. We will have 2 staff members there all weekend in response to this anticipated need.
 5. Foster Parents have also been picking up gift cards at the Visitation Center.

- a. Over 50 gift cards have been distributed thus far.
 - b. Because we did not anticipate such a high response rate, we were not adequately prepared and did not order enough gift cards.
- 6. We started out with 100 and are down to about 25.
 - a. We are trying to get more cards ordered for over the weekend.
 - b. We may need to tell families over the weekend that we ran out of gift cards, but will have more in the following week.
- 7. People love being able to pick up cards at Visitation Center while they are already there.
 - a. We have had a much higher number of people pick up cards at the Visitation Center than at the Central location.
- d. We plan to continue to accept surveys through end of June.
 - i. This timeline gets us through our two (2) weeks at the Visitation Center and gives a small amount of time after to continue to accept them.
 - ii. Surveys were re-sent yesterday through Constant Contact to everyone who did not open the initial email.
 - 1. As of yesterday 80 of 300 people had opened this email.
 - iii. After the completion of data collection at the Visitation Center, we were planning on making telephone calls in an attempt to administer surveys to the remaining caregivers who had not completed them.
 - 1. We are considering foregoing this component and not making calls, due to our high response rate.

2. We can look at the survey distribution data (i.e. the number of emails that haven't been opened, the number of caregivers that don't have emails) and see if it makes sense to still do the calls.
 - a. As noted earlier, over 80% of our homes do have valid email addresses, and most licensed caregivers do stop by the Visitation Center during the week.
 - b. Agency reps have had the opportunity to let their caregivers know about the survey and have updated their emails to send out as well.
 - i. The 852 emails that have been sent include Agency homes.
 - c. Ultimately, we have probably already done our due diligence for contacting everyone about the survey and will end up deciding to not make phone calls.
 - d. It was noted that some families may not read as well as others, and these families can be served by phone calls.
 - i. Phone surveys might allow us to access a population that it is important to serve.
 - ii. Is there a way to find out which families would need these calls?
 - iii. A lot of new foster parents are the ones that are likely to close their licenses; if RDU workers called these people, this could be very useful information.

- iv. Shannon can send over a list of those who have taken survey so that calls aren't made to these people.
- e. We are probably looking at September before we have something responsible to release analyzing survey results and letting caregivers know how we will be moving forward.
 - i. Child Trends will assist us with taking the raw data and analyzing it in order to look at with Management and send out to caregivers.
 - 1. The grant has money to pay Child Trends to really help us dig into the data and produce a quality analysis.
 - 2. Child Trends works with a number of other Child Welfare agencies across the country; this will enable us to compare our results to their data collected on a number of other agencies and see what we are doing better or worse.
 - a. Ex: if we are unable to find Respite 50% of the time, we can compare this to what is happening at other Agencies/Jurisdictions that have the same size population nationally.
 - ii. Once Child Trends gives us information, it would be good to do some type of public forum to distribute the survey results and let caregivers know what directions the agency is going to take in response to the survey.
 - 1. Michael had brought up wanting to roll out some of the things we're doing in QPI in different public forums (i.e. town hall meetings, public community centers) for foster parents to attend.

- a. This would be a great way of letting foster parents know what we found out and what we have done and will do with it.
 - i. Ex: if we analyze the data and find that foster parents feel like they aren't being heard when transitions are happening:
 - 1. "One of the things we're doing to address this is ____" or "The workgroup that will address this is ____."
- b. We can videotape at least one of these foster parent meetings and post it on the QPI website.
- c. If families know they were heard, they will feel like completing the survey was a good use of their time.
- d. Can we have child care for these events?
 - i. We need to be respectful of the fact that we should offer childcare at events, and this event might be a good kickoff event to start this.
 - 1. We consistently hear that a huge barrier to attending Department of Family Services (DFS) events is the availability of child care.
 - 2. Note that we are asking foster parents to have jobs & be self-sufficient, but sometimes only offer events during DFS' business hours.

- ii. We can also offer these public forums at different times to be flexible to caregivers' needs.
- 2. It is important to communicate to caregivers to not expect results in July.
 - a. Expecting results this soon would be unrealistic.
 - b. Data collection will be completed in June (we will stop collecting surveys), but we will then need to analyze data and decide how we will extract information.
 - c. It probably won't be beneficial to publish the survey results in the Caregiver Courier prior to the information being covered in the town hall meetings.
- 3. At Denise's prior agency, a national analysis group conducted the analysis, and when it was presented to the community at large the presentation consisted of a nice PowerPoint that clearly laid out responses and future directions.
 - a. There will be some results that need to be in PowerPoint charts.
 - b. Some other data will probably be better presented as anecdotal data.
 - i. Ex: we might receive 10 stories that have the same bottom line, and the response may be that "Management has looked at the stories and decided ____."
 - ii. If a large number of people bring up a similar issue, we can use one line from one

story to illustrate the point and note “We heard this from “X” number of surveys”

4. We don't want to seem negligent before we start, and don't want to lead people to anticipate results in July.
 - a. Management and DFS staff will need time to look at the data, get results and decide how we want to propose to move forward and what changes need to be addressed/made.
 - i. Before any results are released, it is important to ask “based on the results we received, where do we want to go from here?”
 - b. It is important to get this message out *before* the results are released.
 - i. We could put an article in the Caregiver Courier to thank caregivers for doing the survey and give them an update as to what we are doing and when we will be moving forward on the results.
 - ii. We don't want people to feel like the survey was a waste and that the results won't be used.
 - iii. The next Courier will be coming out June 20th.
 1. In order to have an announcement in this issue, we would need to have it put together by tomorrow (Friday 6/13).

- a. The article could thank caregivers for the response to the survey and let them know what steps will be taken.
- b. The article could also let them know the cutoff date for survey.
- c. It will also let them know that data collection has gone extremely well.
- d. Lani offered to put something together by tomorrow.
 - i. Shannon will send Lani a copy of the email that has gone out with survey.

3. Report from the subcommittee (Karlene, Denise and Shauna Davis met re: grievance procedures)

- a. The subcommittee was tasked with finding out what the grievance policy was.
 - i. They were unable to find one publicized anywhere.
 - ii. Many people don't know what the process is.
 - iii. We do have an ombudsman (Tisa Evans).
 - 1. Tisa handles case-specific items (i.e. a caregiver has an issue with a specific child).

- a. She will also address person issues (i.e. if a family's license is being investigated and the caregiver feels that the case wasn't being treated fairly).
2. The Children's Alliance group has a survey that people can have the opportunity to fill out.
3. For more general complaints, caregivers don't really have a place to go.
 - a. Sometimes people want to complain about their case worker, and there is not a clear and accessible method to do this.
4. Denise noted that Karlene (not present) had said that in New Mexico there was actually a procedure that was sent out from the department saying what to do if there were concerns, and that this process was listed where caregivers could access it.
 - a. Additionally, if caregivers were unhappy with the results in this process, they could go to an independent (not funded by the department) board to have the case reviewed. This board would make recommendations to the department.
5. Karlene is pulling that information from New Mexico, and Denise will pull policies/procedures from other states (CA, FL, NY) and examine what they are already doing.
6. We can also try to do some communication around what exists already and add to it if we want.
7. One thing that might come up in the survey is that foster parents don't know what to do when they have complaints.

8. Hopefully the subcommittee can bring this information back to the group and see what we can do in relation to this issue.
 9. The goal is to have a known process for everybody.
 10. The subcommittee will get back to everyone once the information is gathered, and the group can decide what to do from there.
 11. One idea would be to bring Tisa in to talk to the group and address potential options.
4. Update on Attrition – changes that Licensing has made
- a. Renewal Licensing has taken over this part.
 - b. They are currently looking at last year's closure data.
 - i. Only six (6) surveys regarding last year's closures were returned; data was likely collected too far after license closure to get good information.
 - ii. Moving forward, as each closure occurs, Licensing will send out a four (4) question survey (like an exit interview) to gather information about what is going on and what can be done about this issue.
 - iii. Information will be collected via Survey Monkey.
 - c. Shannon asked whether this survey will be sent via email.
 - i. The Licensing worker will ask the family that is closing whether they will be willing to take the survey, and let them know that it can either be done on the phone or via email through a Survey Monkey link.
 - ii. The supervisor that will officially close the case in UNITY is going through training with Tara on the categorization of reasons for closures.

1. It was found that these categories were formerly subjective, and this training will help lay out what each category means and when to use it.
 - a. This will facilitate consistent categorization of reasons for closure.
2. In the future, the data will be pulled more consistently to examine reasons for closures.
- iii. Our current numbers indicate that our total loss for the year is 15 closures.
 1. We were previously at 23, so this is an improvement.
- iv. The goal for the end of year to have net gain.
- v. The closure attrition surveys will help us gain greater understanding of the reasons families have for closing their licenses, and hopefully lead to a lower number of closures.
- vi. It was found that 32 of the closures (out of approximately 90) were Adoption closures.
 1. Last year only 17% of closures were due to adoption.
 2. Acceptable closure reasons are way higher this year; almost 50% of closures are due to acceptable reasons (i.e. moved, medical reasons, adoption).
- vii. Closures for unacceptable reasons
 1. It was found that 44 of these unacceptable closure cases were open less than 2 years.
 2. Are families not getting the right support or the right matches? Something is happening in the first few years that is leading to families closing their licenses.
- viii. What are the questions on exit survey? (These are rough recollections of questions)
 1. What was good about your experiences?

2. What were the unmet needs of your experiences?
 3. What is your reason for closure?
- ix. Would it be beneficial to have these surveys given by someone other than the family's Licensing worker?
1. Families sometimes feel more comfortable talking to their Licensing worker than anyone else.
 2. It was also brought up that Licensing workers have a different relationship with their families than other workers.
 3. Sometimes the reason may be related to the Licensing worker and families may not want to give that information to the Licensing worker.
 - a. The survey could be offered through the Licensing worker, online AND by speaking to a FPC.
 4. After 30 days Denise will pull the numbers for these exit surveys and see how many have been completed. If the response rate is low and this system does not seem to be working, it may need to be reevaluated and done differently.
- x. It is especially important to understand a family's reasons for leaving if they are closing in under two (2) years.
- xi. These survey calls could potentially be made from current foster parent, as this may make the families more willing to open up.
1. This could be done under the QPI brand.
 2. Using this method, we might get people who are more "on the fence"/undecided to change their minds and end up not closing their license.

3. Using this method, families may get the opportunity to open up and get the support and information that encourages them to stay.
4. These surveys will not be done in instances where licenses are revoked.

5. Visitation Center

- a. Someone said that the Visitation Center is not very inviting for families, and foster parents spent a lot of time there.
 - i. The Visitation Center does not have Wi-Fi, and there are not a lot of things for either kids or adults to do.
 - ii. Maybe a community partner or Foster Parent Association would be willing to do a makeover of the Visitation Center.
- b. In the past, when improvements have been made and things have been added to Visitation Center, it has been found that caregivers do not take care of the Visitation Center.
 - i. Ex: Problems with food (ants) and crayons (color on the walls), etc.
 - ii. In the past there was a group of foster parents that were working to spruce up the Visitation Center, and they were not successful and found that some of their peers were still not good to the space.
 - iii. The Visitation Center does not have staff to watch the space, so it is the job of caregivers to monitor and maintain the space.
 - iv. Denise will bring this up to the associations so that they are aware of the issues and barriers to fixing up the area.

6. Bulletin boards

- a. The bulletin boards will be purchased after July 1st, under the new budget.

- b. These boards will be posted at neighborhood centers and the Visitation Center.
- c. They will have flyers for upcoming events and anything else newsworthy for caregivers.
- d. Denise finds that she consistently has to inform foster parents about events everywhere she goes.
- e. These boards will be similar to the Training bulletin boards at central.
- f. They will all look the same and contain the same information, and be updated every month.
- g. Denise is doing a good job posting links on the QPI site and making them accessible to foster parents.
- h. These boards will enable us to put information for all of our events in one place so that everyone knows about them.

7. Conference

- a. Audrey and Ali have reported back from the conference that they attended.
 - i. There were more takeaways from meeting with department representatives than from the conference presentations.
 - ii. They really enjoyed the conference, and found that the biggest takeaway was that any community that was a QPI site was doing better than those who were not QPI sites.