

STATEWIDE FOSTER CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
July 30, 2004
160 N LaSalle, State of Illinois Building, Chicago, IL
Draft Minutes

Members Present	Members Absent	DCFS Staff	Guests
Blakely, Donsetta Boyd, Gladys Darville, Heidi Davis, Claudia Edwards, Faye Flory, Sylvia Jajko, Ruth Jones, James Kazaras, Ellen Lee, Erma McAtee, Judith Miller, Andrea Senz, Uli Stone, Linda Welenc, Adrienne White, Mary Wilson, Geraldine	Chasteen, Ray Kline, Vicky Lane, James	Byrd, Michael Eyer, Gwenn Freagon, Sharon Gates, Ray James, Vanessa Kennedy, Deborah Maher, Jean McGlothlin, Terry Moreno, Cynthia Petrick, Lynda Samuels, Bryan Thompson, Nancy Williams, Velma	Aldrin, Heather Aldrin, June Alvarez, Ann Baker, Jennifer Ball, Mercedes Buckingham, Ann Cole, Mark Collins, Mattie Franklin, Geoff Freeburn, Linda Hellmer, Barbara Johnson, Arrela Johnson, Betty Juarez, Renee LaLuz, Nilda Lee, Phillip Lopez, Ida Lukacek, Carol Meshes, Mary Sue Orange-Long, Gloria Petties, Rhonda Rolland, Delores Sales, Yvonne Schnier, John Short, Eleanor Vasquez, Judith Welenc, Jerry Willemsen, Vivian Worrell, Elise Zeier, Cathy

WELCOME

Donsetta Blakely, Hospitality Chair, welcomed members and guests from Cook South. Adrienne Welenc introduced new members: Erma Lee (Cook South) and Judith McAtee (Northern Region).

Adrienne referenced the by-laws that relate to “significant contribution” members must sustain in order to be considered members in good standing. She also explained new attendance procedures that would record member attendance more accurately and ensure by-laws are enforced in regard to attendance:

- In order for members to be excused from a meeting, members need to call Terry McGlothlin or Nancy Thompson at 217-524-2422. If a member has an emergency the morning of the meeting, they may page Adrienne at 800-612-7394. The expectation is that if a member cannot attend, they will notify Terry or Nancy either by phone or email up to the day before the meeting or Adrienne the morning of the meeting.
- Donsetta Blakely will mark when members are late (AL) or leave early (LE) on the sign-in sheet. A column will also designate when members call or email that they will not be able to attend a meeting (C).

Ray Gates reviewed the reimbursement process for travel to meetings. If a member attends a meeting for only a portion, that member may not be reimbursed for travel and may be subject to paying for their lodging. He reminded members of the critical importance of letting staff know when they are unable to attend a meeting.

MINUTES FROM MAY 21, 2004 MEETING

Donsetta Blakely made a correction on page 2 under Cook North regional report. The address should be corrected to read “1911 S. Indiana”. *Uli Senz moved to accept the minutes as corrected. Andrea Miller seconded the motion. All were in favor,*

SERVICE INTERVENTION – CYNTHIA MORENO (Phone 312-814-6823)

Deputy Moreno told the Council about her newly formed division, Service Intervention. She explained that this is a support division, working with family policy (including health issues, mental health, substance abuse, education and transition, and the Family-to-Family program). Cynthia focused on the scholarship program and benefits available to students transitioning into college. She also talked about closely working in a supportive role with the Integrated Assessment program in the Department.

STATEWIDE COMMITTEES AND PARTICIPANTS

The Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Committee list was reviewed and updated. Following are the recommendations made for each committee:

COMMITTEE	CHAIR	MEMBERS
Policy Standing Committee	Jerry, Heidi, Uli	Joyce Loy, Adrienne Welenc, James Lane, Elizabeth Richmond Action Recommended: A co-chair will contact Elizabeth Richmond to ask if she will remain on the committee.
Best Practice		Pat Cooper, Joyce Loy, Jerri Thurman-Green, Elizabeth Richmond Action Recommended: <i>Mary White moved to disband this committee; Ellen Kazaras seconded the motion. All members were in agreement, and this committee will be disbanded.</i>

Team Building	Uli Senz	Ray Chasteen, Vicky Kline, Ellen Kazaras, Jerry Welenc Action Recommended: <i>Uli Senz moved to disband this committee, although he stressed the Council should still maintain focus on the issue of team building. Ruth Jajko seconded the motion. All members were in agreement, and this committee will be disbanded.</i>
Specialized Care	Faye Edwards	Elizabeth Richmond, Uli Senz, Pat Cooper Action Recommended: <i>Donsetta Blakely moved to disband this committee; Mary White seconded the motion. All members were in agreement, and this committee will be disbanded.</i>
System of Care	Donsetta Blakely	Elizabeth Richmond, Uli Senz Action Recommended: <i>Donsetta Blakely recommended that the name of the committee be changed to System of Care/SASS.</i>
FPSS	Vicky Kline	Joyce Loy, Vicky Kline, Andrea Miller, Adrienne Welenc Action Recommended: <i>Adrienne Welenc said this committee is on hold because of budget issues. Andrea resigned from this committee.</i>
Adolescent Issues Standing Committee	Andrea Miller	Joyce Loy, James Lane, Uli Senz Action Recommended: <i>Andrea Miller will continue to chair this committee as a “think tank” committee. Uli Senz will contact Joyce and James to determine if they are still interested in being members. Cynthia Moreno stressed that this committee might need to be expanded to serve as a communication avenue for her division.</i>
Sibling Groups		Pat Cooper, Ellen Kazaras, Faye Edwards Action Recommended: <i>Ellen Kazaras motioned to disband this committee; Andrea Miller seconded this motion. All members were in agreement, and this committee will be disbanded.</i>
Training		Faye Edwards, Jerri Thurman-Green, Elizabeth Richmond Action Recommended: <i>Mary White made a motion to disband this committee; Claudia Davis seconded the motion. All members were in agreement, and this committee will be disbanded.</i>
Respite	Ellen Kazaras	Vicky Kline, Mary White Action Recommended: <i>Linda Stone made a motion to disband this committee; Mary White seconded the motion. All members were in agreement, and this committee will be disbanded. Ellen Kazaras will continue to apprise the Council of updates.</i>

Archives Standing Committee	Pat Cooper	Jerry Welenc, Ray Chasteen Action Recommended: <i>Michael Byrd will be added to the committee. Adrienne recommended that this committee continue to record the history of the Council. Ray Chasteen will become Chair.</i>
Communication		Jerry Welenc, Uli Senz, Pat Cooper, Adrienne Welenc, Faye Edwards, Jim Jones, Elizabeth Richmond Action Recommended: <i>Uli Senz recommended that this committee be disbanded; Jim Jones seconded the motion. All members were in agreement, and this committee will be disbanded.</i>
PA92-205 Records to Schools	Ray Chasteen	Mary White, Linda Stone Action Recommended: This committee will report on its work regarding HB92-0295 at the next meeting.
Youth Council Standing Committee	Andrea Miller	Gladys Boyd, Linda Stone Action Recommended: <i>Andrea Miller made a motion to change the name to Youth Advisory Board Liaisons; Donsetta Blakely seconded the motion. All members were in agreement, and the motion passed.</i>

ASSIGNMENTS/REPORTS

None.

FINAL REPORTS TO THE DIRECTOR

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cook Central

Adrienne said Cook Central started work on their implementation plan. In August, the Education Liaison will be conducting training for foster parents. The May/June reports are in the packets.

Cook North

Ellen Kazaras reported that Foster Parent Appreciation month was well attended. She also focused on a hat fashion show and awards to foster parents based on letters sent in by workers.

Cook South

Donsetta Blakely reported that at the July 13 support meeting, Erma Lee and her husband were presented with a plaque recognizing their supportive work as foster parents.

Cook County Advisory

Geraldine Wilson reported that going-back-to-school picnics are being planned.

Northern

Judith McAtee reported they met in June. Focus this year will be on increasing foster parent membership. Judith also said work is being done on the Northern Region website.

Central

Andrea Miller reported that committee meetings for implementation plan reviews are set for August 5 and 19 in the Peoria Regional Office. At the meeting on the 12th, Deb thanked everyone for participating in the Foster Parent Appreciation program. Andrea talked about Babyfold's presentation on lifebooks and the icebreaker program which brings foster parents and birth parents together and encourages a strong focus on the child in placement. On August 16, a presentation will be made to the foster parent essay winner from Camelot. On September 14 there will be a sub-regional meeting. The next Central meeting will be September 23 in Peoria.

TASK CHART UPDATE

Task #19 -- Filling Vacancy for Joint CWAC Member

Michael Byrd said CWAC has put this topic on their agenda. Their agency is looking for someone from the Cook Central region to sit on CWAC and this Council. This is a joint appointment slot.

Task #20 -- List of Schools that Receive Reports

Task is changed to Accomplished. The list of schools is in the member packet.

Task #21 -- Child Abuse Reports to Schools (PA92-0295)

Terry McGlothlin reported that this task is pending. She has sent a note to Ray Chasteen to see when this committee will want to put this back on the agenda.

Task #23 -- Training on Implementation Review Process

A review was presented to Council members at the 7-30-04 meeting. The task was changed to Ongoing.

Task #2 -- Clothing Vouchers

Ray said the Deputy responded to him and Elizabeth that she is aware of the issue. She wants her division to work on the issue of clothing vouchers in the near future. We hope to have an update in September. (Elizabeth sent her regrets for missing this meeting. She is out of state, on vacation.)

Task #3 -- History of the Council

Michael Byrd said he and Jerry Welenc had gone through past Fostering Illinois newsletters. They have a stack of articles and old photos on SWFCAC topics that they will use to create an archive report. They plan to meet with Geraldine Wilson for additional information.

Task #7 -- Host Family Program

Diane DeLeonardo will be attending the September meeting and will provide a comprehensive report at that meeting. The pilot for the Host Family program is moving forward with college students at NIU. Ray Gates discussed the Youth Care Package program and asked Council members to consider being a part of the program by completing the forms in their packets and giving them to Terry.

Task #22 – Status of Policy and Training on Children with Sexual Behavior Problems

Ray Gates said work is continuing on this task, e.g., the training curriculum is being reviewed and fine-tuned.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT CENTER – NINA ALIPRANDI

Nina reported on the Academic Enrichment Center at Maryville in Des Plaines, Illinois. She explained that the Center is a partnership of Maryville, School District 214 and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. This volunteer program is designed for youth aged 17 through 19. While attending classes in District 214, the youth will live on the Maryville campus in a dorm-like atmosphere. The goal of the program is to see DCFS youth graduate from high school and be better prepared for life. Nina explained that the Center is a stepping stone to a better life – a life that includes an education, a high school diploma, life skills, internships, apprenticeships, job training, job placements, and even the opportunity to further education at a trade school, a community college or a university. Nina responded to members' questions.

AAC/YAB/CWAC REPORT – MICHAEL BYRD

AAC - Michael reported that the Adoption Advisory Council is working on outreach efforts to find placements for the longest waiting children, using Wednesday's Child video tapes.

YAB – The Youth Advisory Board is preparing for the September 10 annual joint meeting with this Council. Agenda topics might include youth getting a driver's license, issues related to foster parenting and youth becoming young adults.

CWAC – On July 14, the Child Welfare Advisory Council established by-laws to address issues around membership reduction and membership inclusion. Michael said the budget and title IV-E issues were discussed. He also said the PIP was accepted, and they are waiting for a response from the federal government before they can give a final draft of the PIP. The PIP will then become public.

Michael distributed a request from NACAC to SWFCAC and AAC regarding the proposed Freddie Mac project. The goal of the Urban Parent Program is to ensure that adoptive parent groups are able to provide free, effective, peer support to families who adopt children from foster care. NACAC's services will create new parent groups where they are necessary and enable existing parent groups to become better able to support adoptive families. Michael spoke about Diane Martin-Hushman, Parent Group Coordinator at NACAC, who would like to present this proposal to foster parent groups in the Chicago area. NACAC staff would partner with local adoptive parents and parent groups already in the network, private and public agencies, and other community leaders in each target city, including Chicago, to assess the existing support to parents, determine the specific needs for parent groups, and identify adoptive parents who can serve as potential group leaders.

FOSTER PRIDE/ADOPT PRIDE PARENT TRAINING PROGRAM – JEAN MAHER

Jean provided information on the Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE Parent training program funding in FY04. She talked about the PRIDE budget for eight schools in FY04. Jean said they are anticipating a 33% cut this year for FY05. The elements included in the contractual agreements for training services include Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE pre-service training, Educational

Advocacy, Adoption Certification, Foster PRIDE in-service modules, Transcultural Parenting, Non-PRIDE Inservice, Foster/Adoptive Parent Lending Library, Implementation Training Program/ITP, Trainer Assessment, Training of Trainers, and Adopt Only. Jean also listed the number of people who completed foster/adoptive parent trainings from July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004. The total number of parents trained in PRIDE for FY04 was 11, 911.

AWARD PRESENTATION TO FOSTER CARE AGENCIES WITH TOP-SCORING 2004 FOSTER PARENT LAW IMPLEMENTATION PLANS – DIRECTOR SAMUELS AND DEPUTY WILLIAMS

The Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council sponsored its annual awards and recognition ceremony for the five foster care agencies having the top-scoring 2004 Foster Parent Law implementation plans. Deputy Velma Williams introduced this event and thanked guests and Council members for their hard work. Director Samuels presented the award plaques. Ray Gates made comments about the strengths and unique aspects of each agency and its implementation plan. Director Samuels, Deputy Williams, and Chair Adrienne Welenc posed for photos with the representatives from each agency.

The Director spoke about family foster care as an essential service for children and their families who have been separated due to child abuse, neglect, or dependency. He focused on foster parents being an essential part of and fulfilling an integral role on the child welfare team. He also noted that the Department has a \$1 billion plus budget for FY05, and despite some cuts, he is confident that essential services will be funded.

The top five agencies, including a brief description of some of their strengths, are:

FIFTH PLACE - Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, Des Plaines

103.18 points

Executive Director: **John Schnier**

Foster Parent: **Rhonda Petties**, Secretary, Metro Chicago LSSI Foster Parent Advisory Council

Direct Service Staff: **Ruth Jajko**, Associate Executive Director of Children's Community Services, Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Member

This year's plan includes improved timeframes for reimbursing foster parents and an updated Foster Parent Law Grievance Policy. It also demonstrates that Lutheran Social Services of Illinois has a well-organized training plan for foster parents.

FOURTH PLACE - Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago

103.40 points

Executive Director's Designee: **Sylvia Flory**, Division Manager, Non-Residential Services for Children & Youth, SWFCAC Member

Direct Service Staff: **Heidi Darville**, Department Director Foster Parent Development, SWFCAC Member Foster Parent, and **Mary Sue Meshes**, Training Supervisor, Foster Parent Law Liaison

The agency's utilization of the Implementation Plan Reaction Survey demonstrates a commitment to maintaining the integrity of their plan. The plan also offers specialized training for families fostering adolescents.

THIRD PLACE - Evangelical Child and Family Agency, Wheaton

103.61 points

Executive Director's Designee: **Barbara Hellmer**, Director of Foster Care

Foster Parent: **June Aldrin**

Also in attendance: June's 21 year old daughter, Heather Aldrin, who has supported and assisted her parents since they became foster parents when she was around 10 years old.

This plan demonstrates a strong use of Rule 340, last year's rating instrument, and the Deputy Director's letter in strengthening the plan. This agency provides nice "extras" for foster parents. i.e. bicycles, etc.

SECOND PLACE - Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rockford

103.82 points

Executive Director's Designee: **Cathy Zeier**, East Regional Foster Care Supervisor and **Geoff Franklin**, Associate Regional Director

Direct Service Staff: **Vivian Willemsen**, oversees the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan

This agency utilizes foster parent forums as one way to gather input for the plan. By including foster parents and staff in developing, reviewing and implementing their plan, Catholic Charities foster parents and staff appear to have achieved an effective way to make sure the plan serves those it is intended to serve as well as those charged with implementing it.

FIRST PLACE - Casa Central Social Services, Chicago

103.91 points

Executive Director: **Ann Alvarez**

Foster Parent: **Judith Vasquez**

Direct Service Staff: **Nilda LaLuz**, Foster Care Staff

This plan utilizes an implementation plan checklist for caseworkers, ensuring that they understand the critical aspects of the plan as they assist in implementing it. This plan also demonstrates a commitment to following the guidelines established in Rule 340, describing in detail how the agency implements each of the 14 foster parent rights, and how it helps foster parents achieve each of the 17 foster parent responsibilities.

UPDATE ON ADOPTION SUBSIDIES – ANN STUDZINSKI

Ann provided an update on the changes being made on the adoption and subsidized guardianship subsidy forms and said they are working on finalizing the forms. She said the Director met with representatives from five groups involved with adoption and subsidized guardianship issues.

The result of that meeting was that they would send the forms out for one last set of comments.

Further changes would be made if necessary. As a result of a phone call including

Representative Barbara Flynn Currie and Tom Berkshire, more revisions are being made around therapeutic day care issues. The Director will meet again with the representatives from five groups and hopes that will result in final forms. Ann anticipates training on the new forms to begin in mid-September. She took questions from council members and will provide answers soon.

IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW TRAINING – HEIDI DARVILLE AND ULI SENZ

Heidi and Uli reviewed the steps for conducting foster parent law implementation reviews. The steps were again distributed to all Council members. The training guide for conducting reviews

was given to members who have not been trained to date. Ray Gates and Adrienne Welenc explained that follow-up calls would be made by Gwenn to ensure reviews are completed and that members are complying with the “significant contribution” section of the by-laws.

REPORT FROM OFFICE OF FOSTER PARENT SUPPORT SERVICES – RAY GATES

- FY05 Conference Planning – On hold until we can determine how much/whether money will be available in the FY05 budget.
- Host Family Program – Ray gave an update, noting that over 70 staff have volunteered to send care packages to students. He emphasized the financial support given by the Service Intervention Division and support from Operations and External Affairs.
- CWEL Committee – Donsetta, Uli, Jim Lane and Pat Cooper have been forwarded as candidates to sit on this Committee, Child Welfare Employee Licensure. The mission for this committee is to make decisions about policy regarding employee licensure. Martha Menninger will be calling each of these four members in the next few weeks to discuss the requirements of this committee, then make a recommendations to the Director.
- State Fair update -- Ray discussed increased costs for ride tickets and parking/admission for foster and adoptive families. He also gave information about the petting zoo, family photos, and popcorn at the DCFS tent. Charles Bowden is planning a bus for Cook South. The Department had discussed the option of folks calling in to the Chicago Communications Office if they need bus transportation, but Ray was unaware of the status. Members can contact Jenny Florent in Communication for more information on the fair at 217-785-1700.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Host Family Program Status Report
- Dupuy Law Suit
- Ray Chasteen follow-up on schools
- By-laws issues
- Meet with Statewide Youth Advisory Board

ADJOURN

At 2:45 pm, Uli Senz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mary White seconded the motion. All members were in agreement, and the meeting was adjourned.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT NEXT MEETING

- 1. NEW START/FINISH TIME
BEGIN 3:00 PM END 11:00 PM**
- 2. LOCATION
PEORIA, ILLINOIS
HOLIDAY INN CITY CENTRE
500 HAMILTON BOULEVARD -- DOWNTOWN**