

ADOPTION ADVISORY COUNCIL
Friday, June 3, 2005, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Hawthorne Suites, 1 Lyon Court, Bloomington, IL
APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present		Members Absent	DCFS Staff
Donsetta Blakely	David Matthews	Felicia Blasingame	Janise Alston
Kathy Casey	Krista McCoy	Patricia Cooper	June Dorn
Sue Cianci	Marilyn Panichi	Diane Dominguez	Bobby Hall
Art Davis	Elizabeth Richmond	Vance Johnson	Debra Kinsey
Ronald Davis	Gretchen Schulert	Marianne Kelm	Terry McGlothlin
Mary Debose	Jackie Sharp	Susanne Loss	Judy Pence
Gwenn Eyer	Terry Solomon	Gina Samuels	
Brian Hall	Bernadine Spitz	Shannabeth Stein	Guests
Jeanne Howard	Kim Wheelock	Cleo Terry	Cindy Backstein
James Jones	Melinda Woods-Lis	Ron Tyler	
Joyce Loy			

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Co-Chairs Elizabeth Richmond & Jim Jones welcomed everyone. Introductions were made.

New Business

Update on Respite Grant - Deb Kinsey

Deb Kinsey gave an update on the Respite Grant. The grant served 2 populations - severe emotional/behavioral population and severe medical population.

The severe behavioral program served former wards that have been adopted or are in subsidized guardianship. Four agencies provided these services - Metropolitan Family Services, BabyFold, Matthews & Associates and CHASI in Granite City. For the period of October through February, over 6,000 hours of respite care were provided by the four agencies that served those populations. Over 155 kids were served, representing 93 families. Fall and winter activities were an issue, especially in rural areas, but all agencies did their best to make a broad range of activities available. Agencies have reported back that the families did find the services beneficial.

Deb said that the severe medical portion is now up and running. Marcus has worked closely with the service provider, Coach Care Center. They reached out to the families that have been previously served by the program and all elected to receive these services again. A total of 14 children have been identified. Six children to date have already begun receiving services, and are eligible to receive a total of 10 days of service. Marcus is working with the Post Adoption Unit to identify three more children that would qualify, based on the funding that is available.

Their next step is to work closely with all components to keep service levels high through September. They will do a focus group in August with some of the families and providers.

The final report is due to the Federal government after the project ends September 29th. The federal government is not making the resources available for new respite care grants or post legal services. Their priorities are directed toward other areas and all of the three-year respite care

grantees are facing the same situation with no new funds available. Jeanne Howard said that the expectation is that the 3-year federal respite program would be picked up by the state at the end of the three years. This is not a requirement but is an expectation. The allocation for the four SED programs, during the period of October 2004 - September 2005, was \$360,000. Deb said the \$360,000 was a combination of most of the 2nd year carryover money as well as the third year grant money.

Terry Solomon said that there has been a paradigm shift in terms of how the administration has moved forward and they are building on some of the issues that the council has advocated for. She suggested that the Illinois Respite Coalition might be interested in taking up this issue.

June Dorn said the Family Centered Services (FCS) LAN based programs will be moving to one standardized respite program plan. The current providers will expand their service areas. They offer different kinds of respite programs and services to adoptive families. Judy Pence said that they would communicate with Debra and Marcus to find out what worked well for the respite grant program.

Bobby Hall said they have another FCS program for older youth with school related problems, and that this program could be beneficial to adoptive youth as well.

Bobby Hall said that adopted children did not previously qualify for services in the wraparound program. ISBE pulled their funding this year, but the Director made a commitment to continue to fund the wraparound program at the same level, and there will not be a restriction on who is served. Any family that needs the supports and services provided by wraparound will be supported. Decisions will be made within the next week as to what the eligible services will be. Comments and concerns should be sent to Arthur Bishop, Deputy Director of Field Operations.

Jeanne Howard said the federal government is moving away from adoption and post adoption services, and are much more concerned with recruitment and waiting children. She said there are other national groups, such as NACAC and Voices for Adoption, that are trying to convince leaders in Washington that we need to have federal funds available to support families after adoption. She suggested the council should think about what they can do to advocate for post adoption services.

Gretchen suggested looking at respite as part of the recruitment package, possibly having a demonstration group that is given respite as part of their package, as opposed to a group that would not receive respite.

Terry Solomon suggested shifting respite under faith-based organizations to see if that would be supported at the federal level.

Deb agreed to report back to the Council after the final report is completed.

Adoption Grants/Possible Funding Sources - Bobby Hall

Bobby said he works for DCFS in the Division of Planning & Performance Management, under Deputy Director Ray Knight. Part of their job is to file the Child & Family Services plans and any other strategic plans that DCFS is required to file. His office also does grant watching -

looking at the federal register and other web sites to keep track of what grant opportunities the federal government has announced.

Bobby said that the Children's Bureau would make several funding announcements individually later in the year. One announcement they already made was funding for community based child abuse prevention for tribes and tribal migrant programs. Bobby said they are waiting to hear what is going to happen next. There have not been many announcements recently. He suggested checking the Children's Bureau website at www.grants.gov. On this website, you can register to receive notices regarding a particular area of interest, such as adoption. Beginning in Federal Fiscal Year 2006, on October 1st, ACF is no longer going to publish grant announcements in the Federal Register.

Bobby said that his staff does assist in putting together grant applications but they currently have a very limited staff. To assist with an application they require:

- That there be an advisory body for the particular grant and that they have representation on that advisory body.
- That there is a relationship between the grant and the DCFS mission.
- That they have involvement with the Local Area Network so that the LAN knows what type of applications are being submitted and have a chance to be a partner if possible.

Bobby said he sometimes learns of grant opportunities through conversations with the federal liaison, Constance Miller. She is trying to schedule a site visit in Springfield. He made some calls to see if there were any adoption related grants at this time. He was told there would possibly be some additional grants coming regarding child abuse prevention.

Jim asked if Nancie Brown would circulate some of the grant announcement information that comes out. Terry M. sent a list around to council members to find out who wanted to be on Nancie's list. Once she hears back from everyone she will send it to Nancie and ask that she send announcements that pertain to adoption only.

Bobby said the federal government is not the only source of funding. There are sometimes opportunities with foundations. Another website to look at is www.tgci.com/funding/states.asp. There is a map of the U.S., you click on your state, and it will give you the Illinois based corporate giving programs and the top 40 Illinois foundations that give grants. You can click on Illinois and you will be given a description of what they are interested in. Bobby said they might use a different term than adoption, such as child welfare or family services.

Bobby said that the Director announced increases for three areas yesterday. They were:

- Issues included in the Child & Family Services Review and Program Improvement Plan
- Funds to add Quality Assurance staff
- Meet the obligations with mandatory bargaining unit increases.

There was a reduction in training funds. Most other services were flat funded.

Update from Director & Cynthia Moreno - June Dorn

*June referred to HB0502 and distributed copies. The legislature is asking that we submit to them by March 2006 a very comprehensive report about post adoption services in our state compared to other states in the nation. She was not sure if the report would be done internally or by a university or other research center. Jeanne Howard said she brought copies of the studies

that the Center for Child Welfare Services previously did. *Melinda made a motion for a committee to shape or edit the report. Terry Solomon seconded.* Melinda L, Kathy C., Terry S., Dave M., Elizabeth R., Gretchen S., and Mary D volunteered to serve on the committee.

*June announced that AICI was the successful bidder for the contract to continue the adoption-listing program.

*June will provide a budget update and discuss any restructuring issues at the next meeting.

*June spoke with Natalie Lyons of the Child Welfare Center for Adoption recently, and she said they are happy to work with us. They will provide ten days of technical assistance or training. We can discuss this more at the next meeting also.

Wisconsin RFP Information - June Dorn

June said that Wisconsin has had post adoption resource centers around since 1999. There are six of them regionally based. Last year they were converted to annual grants funded through federal IVB funds. They have a 24-hour 800# for information, referrals for services, training institutes for kids, an annual picnic for all adoptive families, and resource libraries. June distributed information on Wisconsin.

Meeting w/The Cradle - June Dorn

June said that a conference call was held with The Cradle staff, AAC members and Legertha Barner from the Post Adoption Unit regarding the resource directory that The Cradle is contracted to develop in FY'06. Melinda suggested that council members look at the website at http://www.state.il.us/dcf/post_adoption/, provide any feedback, and help to identify providers in their regions that could be listed in their regional inserts. The next conference call will be held June 9th.

Grant Committee - Gretchen Schulert

Gretchen said that they looked online but did not find anything adoption related. They will continue to look and check into resources that Bobby Hall shared this morning.

Reports on SWFCAC/YAB/CWAC/CIAC/CFS - Janise Alston

Janise Alston gave updates from the following councils/committees:

SWFCAC

*The Policy Committee will meet June 9th to discuss the agenda for training that they will be providing to agency foster parent law liaisons.

*Arthur Bishop and Bill Schnidt attended the 5/20 meeting to discuss the problems that foster parents have with using of clothing vouchers. A corporate account has been set up with Target stores, and if successful, other stores will follow. They are also trying to speed up payment by paying out of federal funds rather than general revenue because payments are much quicker out of federal accounts.

*Director Samuels and Velma Williams attended the 5/20 meeting to present awards to the 6 top agencies that received the highest scores on their Foster Parent Law Implementation Plans. Janise announced that she has been reassigned to work on the Child Youth Investment Teams, and would no longer be liaison to the council. She did not know who her replacement would be yet.

*The FPSS subcommittee continues to meet with staff via conference calls to discuss FPSS issues. The FPSS program is not expected to have any further cuts for FY'06.

CIAC

The Director appointed a new birth parent to serve on the council. Their next meeting will be held June 21 in Chicago.

CFS - Have not met. They are discussing their summit date.

CWAC - They are working on filling vacancies. Jim Jones will serve as the foster parent professional joint appointment to CWAC/SWFCAC.

YAB

*They will be meeting jointly with the SWFCAC in September in the Southern Region.

*They are continuing their graduation celebrations.

Report from Office of Foster Parent Support Services - Terry McGlothlin

Terry reported that the four Caregiver Institutes that were provided this year were successful and that the evaluations received from attendees were very positive. The Director has approved increasing the number of Caregiver Institutes to 9 for next year. The budget has been requested to provide nine, but that will be determined after the Governor signs the budget. The plan is to schedule one training in each of the old DCFS subregions and two in Cook. The Executive Planning Committee has been chosen and will have their first meeting on July 18th at 2:00 p.m. Susanne Loss has agreed to represent the Adoption Advisory Council.

Adoption Day Events/Council Involvement - Gwenn Eyer

Gwenn reported that Diane Jackson could not attend today because she had an assignment from the Governor and had to be in St. Louis. Diane suggested that the council identify a celebrity adoptee or adoptive parent that they could present an award to. Possibilities mentioned were: Jamie Lee Curtis - The Cradle has a connection with her, Latrice Berry, Muhammed Ali, Bernie Mac, and perhaps Merri Dee knows someone. Another suggestion was to have posters and other items created such as those done for Foster Parent Month.

Newsletter Group - Gwenn, Elizabeth, Melinda, Vanessa

Vanessa said she used the Central Region portion of the newsletter to list resources for medical, dental, and vision providers for specific counties. She gave the draft to the subcommittee to review. She asked council members to send her ideas on what other information they would like to see related to adoption.

NACAC Support Groups - Donsetta Blakely

Donsetta reported that they met on June 2nd. There were seven groups present. They had a speaker on how to write your 501C3 application. In September they will have grant writing training.

Old Business

Approval of Minutes of April 1, 2005 Meeting

Terry Solomon made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Gretchen Schulert seconded. The motion passed.

Set Calendar for FY'06

The calendar for FY'06 was scheduled as follows:

Friday, August 12, 2005 - Bloomington

Friday, October 7, 2005 - Springfield

Friday, November 18, 2005 - Adoption Day Event - Chicago

Friday, February 3, 2006 - Bloomington

Friday, April 7, 2006 - Springfield

Friday, June 2, 2006 - Chicago

Agenda for Next Meeting/Wrap-Up

Suggested topics for the next meeting agenda:

Training

Adoption Curriculum - Council would like to review before it is rolled out. (Judy Zaleski?)

PIP - What final report looked like.

LANS Services - What will they provide

Budget Update/Restructing issues - June Dorn

Adoption Celebration

Adjourn

Terry Solomon made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Gretchen Schulert seconded.

The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.