

Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Meeting
November 19, 2004
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
100 W. Randolph, Room 8-033, Chicago
Draft Minutes

Members Present	Members Absent	DCFS Staff	AAC Members	Guests
Donsetta Blakely Gladys Boyd Ray Chasteen Heidi Darville Carolyn DePalma Sylvia Flory Ruth Jajko James Jones Ellen Kazaras Erma Lee Judith McAtee Andrea Miller Uli Senz Adrienne Welenc Mary White Geraldine Wilson	Claudia Davis Vicky Kline James Lane	Byrd, Michael Gates, Ray Hansen, Gayle James, Vanessa McGlothlin, Terry	Rev. Arthur Davis Mary Debose Gwenn Eyer Dave Matthews Marilyn Panichi Gretchen Schultert Kim Wheelock	Rolando Palacio, Center for Economic Progress

Adrienne Welenc, Chair of SWFCAC & Jim Jones, Co-Chair of IAAC, opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. and introductions were made. From 8:30-10:00 members from both councils heard presentations from Rolando Palacios from the Center for Economic Progress regarding the Adoption Tax Credit, and Kim Peck & Cindy Brunger from the DCFS Division of Service Intervention regarding the Ansell Casey Life Assessment Tool for youth age 8 years and older.

Adoption Tax Credit - Rolando Palacios

Rolando Palacios, Assistant Director, Midwest Tax Clinic, Center for Economic Progress, spoke to the councils regarding the Adoption Tax Credit. He said that the Adoption Tax Credit is the most generous tax credit in the Federal Tax system. A parent who adopts through DCFS can receive a \$10,390 tax credit for 2004. Unlike a deduction that reduces income, this is a credit that goes directly against tax due for the year, and any unused portion of the credit can be carried forward for the next 5 years.

Rolando said that sometimes tax preparers are not always aware of the tax credit, and the IRS doesn't always know how to apply the credit. The Center for Economic Progress has developed a tax booklet that is sent to foster and adoptive parents each year. They have also submitted articles for Illinois Families Now & Forever with information on the Adoption Tax Credit.

Contact Info:
 Rolando Palacios

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Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment Tool - Kim Peck & Cindy Brunger

Kim & Cindy gave a presentation on the new Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment Tool. Cindy gave a brief history of the Casey Family program, which was founded in 1966 to serve children, youth and families in the child welfare system. Casey Family programs provide direct services and also promote advances in child welfare practice and policy. In 1994 Casey Family programs began to work with focus groups of youth, caregivers and child welfare staff on a new life skills assessment tool. The current version is available at three levels - Level I-ages 8-10, Level II-ages 11-14, and Level III-ages 15-18. Youth and caregivers each do an assessment of the youth's life skills at that point in time, each from his/her own perspective. The assessment is driven by youth and caregiver input - as are service plans, which are designed based on the Individual Report. The Life Skills assessment, reports, plans and activities are organized around 6 Domains - Daily Living Skills, Self Care, Money Management, Work & Study Skills, Social Development, and Housing & Community Resources. The assessment can be done on any computer with Internet connection. Youth & caregiver have 42 days to complete their respective assessments, which are linked by common Ids and email addresses. More information is available at www.Casey.org.

Adoption Celebration - Daley Center

Members of the Adoption Advisory Council and the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council walked to the Daley Center to attend the Adoption Celebration Event from 10:00 -11:30 a.m.

Following the Adoption Celebration Event, SWFCAC members resumed their meeting at 100 W. Randolph.

Administrative Business

Minutes from 10/29/04 Meeting

Uli Senz made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Donsetta Blakely seconded. The motion carried.

Final Reports to the Director - There were none.

Announcements - Adrienne passed around a sheet for members to sign indicating what contact information they do not want released to the general public when requests for the membership list are received. This sheet will be used to develop a list for requests and for the website. Any time a request is received for the list, the chair will be contacted for approval before anything is sent.

Clothing Vouchers

Adrienne said she has not heard back from Arthur Bishop or Barbara Piwowarski regarding the clothing voucher issue. She will remind Arthur/

Ethics Training

Adrienne collected signed pages and ethics training packets from members that had received them at the last meeting, and distributed packets to those members that had not yet received them.

Committee Reports

Policy Committee

Approval of Review Letters

The final six reviews were complete and presented for approval. ***Uli Senz made a motion to accept the reviews as written. Ruth seconded the motion. The motion passed.***

Adrienne said that there was only one review that was unacceptable. Ray Gates & Uli Senz will meet with the staff of that agency on Monday, November 22nd. The agency will need to submit a corrective action plan. The Policy Committee will review the plan and report back to the full council at the January meeting.

Adolescent Issues

Andrea Miller said that Cynthia Moreno was going to send her information on some of the activities her office is doing in conjunction with CWAC and YAB. Michael Byrd said he would follow up with Cynthia, and will work on pulling together a list of committees.

Youth Advisory Board Liaison

Andrea said they met November 12-14 and plan to set meetings for the LGBTQ and driver's license committees soon and connect with CWAC on those issues.

System of Care/SASS

Donsetta said she went to the last meeting and there was concern that when parents call the hotline too many questions are asked and there is sometimes imminent danger in the home of the caller. There was discussion about how the issue should be addressed. Donsetta was encouraged to make her views known at the SASS meeting. The next SASS meeting is scheduled for December 3 in Bloomington.

FPSS

Adrienne said there have been concerns about the FPSS contract process. Some contracts have had the wrong attachments on them. Some of the contracts had no addendum when they were sent to the FPSS for signature, but when a copy of the final contract was returned to the FPSS there was an addendum attached. Adrienne said that Vicky Kline emailed Arthur Bishop and he responded that he is looking into the concerns.

Mary White said that in Central Region, they referred to FPSS 57 times in their implementation plans regarding services they provide. They will have to revise their plan to show how those services will be provided.

PA92-0295 - Records to Schools

Ray Chasteen said interviews are still being set up with schools. If members are having trouble getting interviews with the records custodian, they should call the DCFS Educational Advisor for that school and ask them to help gain access. Ray Chasteen said he would call members that are doing the interviews at the schools around the 5th of December. Ray Gates suggested he call Nancy Thompson to set up a conference call.

AAC/YAB/CWAC Report - Michael Byrd

SYAB - The youth met November 12-14. They reviewed purpose/objectives of the board officers, provided board officer training, and set their goals. They are working on recommendations to the Department, for example, because of concerns regarding caseworkers' lack of knowledge about services and special programs available to youth in care, they identified a need for ongoing training on this issue. Issues that will be focused on will include education, employment, policy, and Driver's License/State IDs. When these recommendations are drafted they will be shared with the other councils.

Dr. Sharon Latiker presented on several programs sponsored by DETS. She reported that raising the scholarship amount is under legislation. Now is the time to go and register youth for free tutoring services under the No Child Left Behind Act. The Educational Training Voucher (ETV) worth \$5,000 for 16-23 year olds has currently been extended. Norman Brown presented on the Residential Monitoring Unit. Outreach to solicit youth membership from around the state continues in every region. The Northern regional YAB is preparing to work on the nominations for the Advocate of the Year Award and the Foster Parent of the Year Awards.

Sibling Rights Resolution Task Force – The Governor's Joint Task Force on Sibling Rights has been established. *Senate* President Emil Jones has appointed Senator Mattie Hunter, Vice Chair, Health & Human Services Committee with Representative Annazette Collins appointed by the House. A minority leader of the Senate and House member will also be appointed.

Youth Board Members: Bryan Austin (Cook South), Samantha Barkus (DS Northern), Luvenia Sims (Central Region), Karina Lopez (Cook Central), Mario O'Neil (DS Southern), Melissa Perez (Cook North).

Youth Board Alumnus: April Curtis, Children and Family Research Center

Youth Board Coordinators: Kareem Pender (DCFS) and Leslie Welch (CAP)

Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council: Andrea Miller, Geraldine Wilson, Gladys Boyd

IL Adoption Advisory Council: Tammy Hay, Elizabeth Richmond, Vance Johnson

Director's Designee: Richard Echevarria, DCFS Investigator

DCFS Sibling Rights Task Force Coordinator: Michael Byrd

SYAB members Sibling Rights Task Force conference call is scheduled for 9 a.m. December 12, 2004.

IAAC - The IAAC will meet on December 3rd in Bloomington at the Hawthorne Suites.

CWAC - They met November 17th. They reviewed the Lifetime Approach Plan.

The Public Education subcommittee is looking to get some supportive messaging and help private agencies engender community support to recruit homes but also to tell the community that there are other ways to help other than being a foster parent.

Enhanced Subsidized Guardianship Waiver Extension - Peggy Slater

This program is a part of the SG waiver. The waiver was continued through 2008 and as part of that continuum an agreement to allow us to try in three locations that would bring a package of benefits to children who are adopted or in subsidized guardianship after age 14. These benefits were formerly only available to youth that remained in care. These benefits include Youth In College, Youth In Employment, Education & Training vouchers, and housing advocacy. This is a small demonstration program and will only happen in three locations, Cook Central, East St. Louis Subregion and Peoria Subregion. This will be rolling out early summer 2005 and go through 2008. Peggy asked for volunteers from the council to serve on an advisory council for this project. The meetings will be 2-3 times a year, there will be paperwork to review and serve as a liaison to report back to the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council. Adrienne asked that Peggy send information to her via email and she would get back to her with the names of representatives.

Children with Sexual Behavior Problems (CSBP) Training - Gayle Hansen

Gayle passed out an overview of what the curriculum will be addressing. The curriculum is close to done and council members will receive the final version. The two-day pilots will be held on February 10-11 in Cook South, and the Rockford Field Office on February 17-18th. Gayle said they submitted a request to Cheryl Peterson for approximately \$2,000 from Juvenile Justice funds to pay for a Master Trainer and refreshments. Two Master Trainers have been identified. This will be a team training model to include foster parents, child welfare staff, investigators, supervisors, ACR, etc. Terry will send Gayle a list of council members so that they are invited to participate in the pilot training. Feedback from the participants of the pilot training will be shared with the council as well. Gayle complimented the SWFCAC on all of the comments and feedback that they submitted on the policy and training. She said they provided more than any other committee.

Scoring Implementation Plans Training - Ray Gates

Ray Gates trained the council members on scoring the implementation plans for 2005.

Scoring meetings will be scheduled for December 9th in Chicago and the 10th in Bloomington.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be January 28 at the DCFS Office at 227 South 7th Street, Springfield from 9:00 - 3:00.

