

# Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Meeting

October 29, 2004

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Keller Convention Center, Effingham, IL

Minutes Approved as Written 11-19

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>DCFS Staff</b>	<b>Guests</b>
Donsetta Blakely Ray Chasteen Claudia Davis Ruth Jajko Ellen Kazaras Vicky Kline Erma Lee Andrea Miller Uli Senz Adrienne Welenc Mary White Geraldine Wilson	Gladys Boyd Heidi Darville Sylvia Flory Jim Jones Jim Lane Judith McAtee	Byrd, Michael Eyer, Gwenn Gates, Ray James, Vanessa Maher, Jean McCleary, Cindy McGlothlin, Terry Selock, Susie	Backstein, Cindy Welenc, Jerry

Adrienne Welenc, Chair, opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and asked for introductions by guests from the Southern Region.

### **Ethics Training**

Adrienne distributed Ethics Training packets to each member in attendance and had them sign for the packet. She asked members to return the entire packet to her to be shredded, and to give her their signed affidavit of completion.

### **Administrative Business**

#### **Minutes from 9/10/04 Meeting**

Michael Byrd said that on Page 8 of the minutes, old Adolescent Workgroup should be changed to "Older Adolescent Workgroup".

***Donsetta Blakely made a motion to accept the minutes with this revision. Claudia Davis seconded the motion.***

**Final Reports to the Director** - There were none.

There was a brief recess (15 minutes) so that members could move to another meeting room because the ceiling fell in.

### **Announcements**

Adrienne announced that Carolyn DePalma has been appointed to serve on the SWFCAC to represent Central Region in the slot recently vacated by Linda Stone.

Adrienne asked regional council representatives to provide summary reports from their regional advisory councils to Terry McGlothlin prior to the SWFCAC meetings so that she could include them in meeting packets.

Adrienne asked that members that need to regularly miss meetings due to illness or other physical problems please provide a doctor's statement to her.

Adrienne said that she has been asked to provide three dates next week for a meeting with Barbara Piwowski and Arthur Bishop to discuss the clothing voucher issue.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Policy Committee**

#### **Approval of Review Letters**

Adrienne said that all reviews had been completed by the September 30 deadline, and commended council members for their work. There are six agencies that still have paperwork pending. The letters for 17 agencies were sent to the Policy Committee for their review. A list of the agencies and their rating was given to council members. ***Uli Senz made a motion to accept the letters that were written to the agencies as written. Andrea Miller seconded.***

#### **Enhancing Review Process**

There was discussion about how to improve the review process. Ray Gates said that the review instruments could be revised because they are not in Rule. The Policy Committee along with Ray Gates, Gwenn Eyer, and Terry McGlothlin will be meeting soon to discuss possible changes in the review process and review instruments. Some suggestions were:

- \*Summertime to conduct the reviews is not the best time because people are on vacations. However, agencies need feedback before they prepare their next year's plan. Might be better to conduct the reviews in March, April or September, October.
- \*Some questions are shallow. They need to invoke more substantive responses, and be more in-depth to gain better idea of what agencies are doing to implement their plans.
- \*Alternate questions - there should be more than one set of questions.
- \*Note on form how long interviewee has been employed with agency.
- \*Retaliation had to be explained to many. This needs to be looked at.

#### **Scoring of Implementation Plans**

Ray Gates suggested that the sections in the region's Foster Parent Law Implementation Plans that report on FPSS not be scored this year. Ray said he sent a letter to the regions telling them that they could address the effects of the FPSS reduction in their Annual Report, and suggested that they highlight these areas throughout the plan in a different color so reviewers would not score these changes.

Ray said that at the November meeting he would do training for scoring the plans. New members, Erma, Judy and Ruth, will need the full training. Jerry Welenc will score all of

the plans except Cook Central due to conflict of interest. Ray Gates will score Cook Central.

#### Adolescent Issues

Andrea Miller said that she and Uli discussed where to go with this committee because they are no longer responding to any particular issue. She will coordinate with Cynthia Moreno's office on some of the ideas Cynthia wanted to start working on, and focus on some committees from the joint meeting with the YAB (GLBTQ Issues, Drivers License Issues). Per SWFCAC joint committee members, the joint subcommittees have not yet held any meetings. Michael Byrd said that the YAB is still pulling in other people from committees with similar goals, such as CWAC's Older Adolescents group, and Dr. Small's GLBTQ committee.

#### Archives

Jerry Welenc said they are still gathering information, and have had difficulty contacting some of the people suggested. Terry will send him the contact information she has on JoAnn Flaherty, Tom Brinton and MaryAnn Brownstein.

#### Youth Advisory Board Liaison

Andrea reported that they had not met. The next meeting of the Youth Advisory Board is scheduled for November 12-14.

#### System of Care/SASS

Claudia Davis went to meeting. She passed out a copy of charts depicting the number of calls the CARES line receives, and SASS utilization reports by region and by provider, and enrollment numbers by county. They talked about who is eligible for SASS. It has been broadened to include children who have been adopted or moved to guardianship as well as those living with their birth families, if they are eligible for Medicaid or publicly-funded care.

CARES will do an assessment and determine if the child needs hospitalization or not. If the child does need services then an immediate referral would be made to the local SASS provider in that LAN. SASS and the hospital determine whether the child meets the criteria. The child would be eligible for 90-day services. The Family Resource Developer works with the family. If the child does not need hospitalization, but does need immediate assistance for placement stabilization, then they reroute to community-based services through the System of Care.

A parent, neighbor, or teacher can call CARES directly at 1-800-345-9049.

Vanessa James said there is an article CARES in the next IL Families Now and Forever newsletter. She also suggested the council might want to invite Jare Hastings or Toni Rozanski to a future meeting to talk about the program.

## FPSS

Vicky Kline said they had a teleconference on September 21st. Vicky said it appears that Arthur Bishop and his staff took the committee's suggestions for changes to the program plan. However, there was a contract addendum to the program plan that the LEADS did not get. They asked Larry Chasey, Valerie Davis, Arthur Bishop and Jose Candelas for clarification to the addendum. They do not know who will be supervising the FPSS yet.

Adrienne suggested that foster parents concerned about the cuts to the FPSS program write letters to legislators, the Director and the Governor, as opposed to phone calls that would tie up important phone lines.

## PA92-0295 - Records to Schools

Ray Chasteen led the council in assigning additional schools to review. These schools have been sent child abuse and neglect (CA/N) records under this law. The reviewers (listed below) will report back at the next meeting.

*Ellen Kazaras	Mather High School, Chicago Clemente Community Academy High School, Chicago
*Erma Lee	Dunne Elementary, Chicago Carver Middle School, Chicago
*Donsetta Blakely	Dulles Elementary, Chicago
*Andrea Miller	Mattoon Middle School, Mattoon
*Claudia Davis	East Alton Middle School, East Alton
*Vicky Kline	Hawthorne Elementary School, Salem
*Mary White	Dirksen Jr. High School, Joliet

## AAC/YAB/CWAC Report - Michael Byrd

Sibling Rights Resolution Task Force – Geraldine Wilson, Andrea Miller and Gladys Boyd are the SWFCAC representatives. The Task Force will decide whom to invite to the Public Hearing.

### AAC - met October 1.

\*Criminal Bars Subcommittee discussed their next steps. Randy Wells did not feel that there was enough data to move forward. Michael said that the Criminal Bars Subcommittee suggested that June Dorn ask Steve Mentor to discuss with the subcommittee how workers engage families when a criminal bar is involved.

\*Jeanne Howard reported on a post adoption resources directory for Cook County that is available on DCFS' Home Page.

\*Peggy Slater gave a closing report on the Legacy Project that closed October 1.

### CWAC – met September 16<sup>th</sup>.

\*The meeting program content was similar to SWFCAC's Peoria Council meeting with Andrea Ingram. Tom Berkshire has stated that this is the first substantive year of administration in Springfield. Any legislation ideas need to be identified by around December 1<sup>st</sup> to be considered. Potential issues to be addressed should include post-adoption services. We need “teeth” in the Orphanage Act to add support for our youth.

Major reforms are proposed. Council discussion centered on a lot of the challenges faced by youth and families. Michael stated that if Council members have ideas as to how to move forward legislatively, now is the time to act, i.e. increase Medicaid benefits to cover youth to 21 years of age.

\*CWAC meets again November 17th and plan to address the joint SWFCAC/CWAC position at that meeting.

CWAC's Type of Support/Legal Issues/Older Adolescents Committee – There is a need to broadly define expectations for older youth, work with living in stable and least restrictive environments, and build age appropriate life skills. Key strategies include the following:

- \*Explore the use of “Professional Foster Care” for adolescents 18-21.
- \*Establish training around issues of older adolescents
- \*Refocus respite resources, focusing on community resources
- \*Lower caseload ratios to increase opportunities for visits

NACAC Project with Freddie Mac – Met October 14. This project is moving forward and they will meet again in January. It is a Chicago-focused Urban Parent Program with a focus on adoption issues. It is designed for the development and enhancement of support groups. They are looking for leaders. Diana Martin Hushman is the contact.

Statewide Youth Advisory Board - Kathy Bankhead, Assistant States Attorney, has requested cooperation in training and helping States Attorneys become better advocates. There is a specific youth component within the training that YAB members may present. Michael Byrd and Bryan Austin will speak to social workers at Jane Adams School of Social Work regarding preparing youth for independence. A Council member suggested offering students the opportunity to “shadow” foster parents for a few days, and including foster parents in a statewide speakers’ pool. “Kids Hope United” (formerly Central Baptist) added youth to their advisory board. The DCFS Statewide Quality Council has requested help.

### **Working Lunch**

During lunch the Council viewed and then discussed a Channel 2 news segment about the sibling rights resolution.

**Task Chart** - Members reviewed and updated the task chart.

### **Training Update**

Jean Maher reviewed information gathered during a conference call held October 19th. Following were some of the discussion items:

- \*Funding is very limited. There will not be reimbursement for lodging, travel or childcare. The committee will identify free meeting space and staff or volunteer speakers who will present at no charge.
- \*A light lunch will be provided to participants.
- \*The committee is planning four sessions, one for Cook County and one in each of the downstate regions.

\*Dates will be on Thursdays or Saturdays in March or April 2005 depending on input from regional representatives.

\*Training times will be approximately 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

\*Training focus will be working with older children.

\*The next conference call is scheduled for November 16th from 11:30-1:00.

### **Report from Office of Foster Parent Support Services**

#### **Host Family/Care Package Update**

Ray Gates reported that of 10 youth from NIU, seven have been matched with their host families. The other three youth at NIU have indicated that they need a host family, but matches have not yet been made. A social event is scheduled for 6-9 pm November 10th at the Center for Child Welfare and Education at NIU in DeKalb. Expected participants include students, Director Samuels, Deputy Director Velma Williams, host families, press, representatives of the Office of Foster Parent Support Services, etc. The hosts for the event will be the African American Advisory Council and State Wards' Association at NIU.

#### **Care Package Component**

Ray reported that 169 youth have been linked with volunteers, and 98% of the volunteers are DCFS employees. Student response has been very positive. 18 youth are waiting for a care package sender. 55 additional youth have requested profile forms.

#### **Adoption Subsidy Forms Update**

Ray Gates relayed the following information that was provided by June Dorn.

\*Training for staff is planned for November and December.

\*The plan is to train adoption attorneys in December

\*The target date for roll-out is January.

\*June Dorn and Joan Langan are coordinating the training.

\*The forms will be distributed to SWFCAC members at the next meeting if they are ready by that time.

#### **Children with Sexual Behavior Problems (CSBP) Training**

Ray Gates said the training is still being planned to pilot in January.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be November 19th **at the JRTC, 100 W. Randolph, 8th Floor, Room 8-033, Chicago.**

The joint meeting with the Adoption Advisory Council will begin at **8:30 a.m.** sharp. Our first presenter will begin speaking promptly at 8:30 a.m.

At 10am both councils will attend the Adoption Celebration at the Daley Center.

**At noon SWFCAC members will reconvene at the JRTC. The SWFCAC will then have their regular meeting from noon - 3:00 p.m.**