

STATEWIDE FOSTER CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
April 30, 2004
160 N LaSalle, State of Illinois Building, Chicago, IL
Approved as Amended 5/21/04

Members Present	Members Absent	DCFS Staff	Guests
Blakely, Donsetta Boyd, Gladys Chasteen, Ray Cooper, Pat Darville, Heidi Davis, Claudia Jajko, Ruth Jones, James Kazaras, Ellen Kline, Vicky Lane, James Miller, Andrea Senz, Uli Simon, Johnnie Stone, Linda Thurman-Green, Jerri Welenc, Adrienne White, Mary Wilson, Geraldine	Edwards, Faye Florey, Sylvia	Amato, Carla Eyer, Gwenn Maher, Jean McGrath, Chris McGlothlin, Terry Pender, Kareem Rowitz, Sari Thompson, Nancy	Bilbo, Kathy Brown, Mattie Buckingham, Ann Cooper, Chris Freeburn, Linda Jones, Idalyia Lukacek, Carol Short, Eleanor Welenc, Jerry

WELCOME

Adrienne Welenc and James Lane welcomed Cook County guests, and the guests introduced themselves.

MINUTES FROM 3/25/04 MEETING

Council members made two corrections to the minutes. On Page 5 under National Foster Parent Education Conference, the sentence stating: "Gladys Boyd as President of IFAPA will also attend the Conference" will be taken out of the minutes. On page 2 under Report From Criminal Bars Committee, the conference call date will be changed from April 30 to April 20. *Adrienne Welenc made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Donsetta Blakely seconded the motion. All members voted in agreement to the motion, and the motion passed.*

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Respite Committee

Ellen Kazaras reported the following:

On April 20 the Illinois Respite Coalition, founded in 1998, had their annual summit at Starved Rock Resort. The Coalition is a group of respite providers and consumers who are trying to make respite more available and to give people a better understanding of how to get and utilize respite. The respite encompasses "life span" that includes parents, caregivers, seniors, and fragile children and adults. A variety of topics was discussed at the summit: information and referral networking, developing training and support services, identifying the full spectrum of

respite needs, developing funding resources, and public policy initiatives. The Respite Coalition meets once a month in Chicago. Membership is \$10. People can contact Ellen Kazaras if they are interested in becoming a member of the Illinois Respite Coalition.

REGIONAL REPORTS

Cook Central

Adrienne Welenc reported that Cook Central met this week and had a focus group with ACR and Quality Assurance to talk to foster parents about their experiences with ACR and to suggest ways to improve services. Next month the region will have an appreciation luncheon. Jerry Welenc said there is a new initiative to get more foster parent participation, with plans to include the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council (SWFCAC) in this initiative.

Cook South

Geraldine Wilson reported that Cook County is working hard to get a clothing pantry opened in Harvey. They are also planning a going-back-to-school picnic in August.

Northern

Ray Chasteen said he was not at the last meeting, therefore could not report on that meeting.

Cook North

Ellen Kazaras reported that Cook North discussed the issue of criminal bars. They talked about situations where a foster child or natural child might get into trouble and how that might affect licensing of a home.

Southern

Vicky Kline reported that they had not met yet since her last report at the March meeting. Vicky said, however, that members of the Advisory Council have scheduled presentations of the '04 Implementation Plan in various parts of the region.

Central

Andrea Miller reported that the next meeting is May 12. Linda Stone and Mary White reported that successful appreciation dinners were held in Central Region.

CWAC REPORT

Ruth Jajko said the next meeting is May 5, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, at Uhlich, 217 N. Jefferson. Carla Amato said the Council needs a CWAC foster parent to replace Gladys Boyd. Carla asked Ruth Jajko and Jim Jones to ask CWAC to recommend a person for this position on the Council.

TASK CHART UPDATE

Task 5 – Carla Amato said Ray Gates did draft an amendment to the by-laws. The status of this task will be changed to Task Accomplished. The Council asked for a new task for the Policy Committee to clarify the language of the by-laws.

Task 17 Update – Andrea Miller and Vicky Kline said their committee was not invited to participate in the training for children with sexual behavior issues. Carla Amato will contact

Gayle Hansen to identify the foster parents who were invited to training in order to get feedback for SWFCAC.

Task 2 – Vicky Kline asked Jim Lane to call Elizabeth Richmond to give a report on the status of clothing vouchers. Jim will call Elizabeth and Ray Gates for an update at the May meeting.

Task 7 Update – HOST FAMILY PROGRAM

Carla Amato said the Youth Advisory Board has come to the SWFCAC to present the need for kids in college to have “host families” for support. She spoke about the workgroup (made up of staff from four divisions in the Department) that is working on this program. The workgroup plans to set up a pilot program at Northern Illinois University. Carla said the Director is positive about this program that will recruit “host families” for kids in college.

ABSENT REPORTS

Jim Lane reminded members to fill out “Good Cause for Absence Reports” and return them to the Office of Foster Parent Support Services in order to keep our files in compliance with audit requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW

Plan for Training Members Absent 3/25/04

Heidi Darville, Uli Senz and Jerry Welenc will contact all members absent from the previous training meeting to plan training for them on the implementation review process.

Reports from the 4 Captains

Heidi Darville, Uli Senz, Jerry Welenc, and Joyce Loy will contact each team leader to insure that the implementation review process is completed by September 30, 2004. Council members volunteered to review agencies and regions that were not selected at the last meeting. Following is the update on that process:

DCFS Region	Lead	Partner	Captain
Downstate Southern Region	Andrea Miller	Linda Stone	
Cook South	Gladys Boyd	Jerry Welenc	

Agency Name	Region	Lead	Partner	Captain
Beatrice Caffrey	Cook North	Heidi Darville	Ellen Kazaras	
Cabrini Green	Cook South	Heidi Darville	Ruth Jajko	
Catholic Charities of Chicago	Cook Central	Donsetta Blakely	Gladys Boyd	
Catholic Charities of Joliet DuPage	Northern	Ray Chasteen		
Catholic Charities of Peoria	Downstate Central	Linda Stone	Vicky Kline	
Chicago Association for Retarded Citizens	Cook South	Johnnie Simon		
Chicago Youth Centers	Cook South	Jerri Thurman-Green	Donsetta Blakely	

ChildServ	Cook South	Geraldine Wilson		
Circle Family Care	Cook Central	Glayds Boyd	Geraldine Wilson	
Cunningham	Central	Mary While	Linda Stone	
Evangelical Child and Family	Cook Central or Northern?			
Family Counseling Center	Southern	Vicky Kline	Claudia Dancy-Davis	
Generations of Hope	Southern or Central	Ellen Kazaras	Claudia Davis	
Jewish Children's Bureau	Cook North	Jim Jones	Heidi Darville	
Life Link/Bensenville	Cook Central	Uli Senz	Ray Chasteen	
Little City	Cook North			
Lutheran Social Services of Illinois	Cook South	Jim Jones	Jim Lane	
Our Children's Homestead	Northern			
Salem	Downstate Central	Andrea Miller	Mary White	
Shelter Inc	Cook North	Ruth Jajko	Ellen Kazaras	
Sequin Services	Cook Central	Andrienne Welenc	Donsetta Blakely	
Youth Campus	Cook North	Pat Cooper	Adrienne Welenc	
Youth Outreach Services	Cook Central	Uli Senz	Pat Cooper	

REPORT FROM PA92-0295 COMMITTEE – RAY CHASTEEN

Ray Chasteen said Harley Petri had addressed most of the concerns that SWFCAC had regarding schools' records management. Ray said the letters going to schools were a manageable number, and Ray felt Mr. Petri had stressed that schools were keeping records confidential. However, SWFCAC still has concerns about the process. The SWFCAC discussed the Committee Summary Report dated 3/17/04 and felt all issues were still valid.

Adrienne Welenc suggested that Jim Lane contact Harley Petri to get a list of schools that have received reports, and SWFCAC should interview those schools to insure they are in compliance with records' management. Ellen Kazaras suggested that SWFCAC members carefully review the comments made by Harley Petri in regard to unfounded reports going to schools and concerns about confidentiality of record keeping.

Adrienne Welenc made a motion to send the Committee Introduction to Informal Survey and Summary of Committee Concerns regarding schools' records management to Illinois State Board of Education and DCFS Educational Liaisons and to have ISBE come to a SWFCAC meeting to address these issues. Mary White seconded the motion. All members were in agreement, and the motion passed.

Carla Amato will contact Dr. Sharon Freagon to find a contact at ISBE.

SIBLING RIGHTS SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE – KAREEM PENDER

Kareem Pender reported that the Statewide Youth Advisory Board is expecting the attendance of the Sibling Rights sub-committee members from SWFCAC and IAAC at their next board meeting, which will be held May 15th in Chicago. A discussion will be held between the three council sub-committee members in an open forum to begin the dialogue that will be the work of the Task Force created by the Sibling Rights Resolution. The Sibling Rights Resolution was accepted in the Executive Committee of the State Senate on February 25, 2004 and adopted in the Senate April 22, 2004. The House of Representatives moved the Sibling Rights Resolution to their Rules Committee on April 29, 2004.

Andrea Miller, Gladys Boyd, and Geraldine Wilson are the SWFCAC sub-committee members.

THREE UNRELATED CHILDREN POLICY – KAREEM PENDER

Kareem Pender distributed copies of the Study submitted by Mark Testa of the Children and Family Research Center. This study was given to the Director moments before he appeared in court to address their concerns, which resulted in this policy.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS – VICKY KLINE

Vicky Kline reviewed the members who had been nominated and nominated/declined for officer positions on the SWFCAC. She distributed the Officers Annual Election Ballot and asked members who could not come to the May 21 meeting to complete their ballot by May 15. Ballots can be given to members of the Nominating Committee: Ruth Jajko, Linda Stone, Geraldine Wilson, Gladys Boyd and Vicky Kline.

PLANNING FOR 5/21 MEETING IN CARBONDALE-LODGING/TRANSPORTATION – NANCY THOMPSON

Nancy distributed a list of those members needing lodging in Carbondale. Nancy gave the transportation options to members – by car and train. She will mail detailed instructions and lodging information to all members soon.

SPRING 2004 CAREGIVERS CONFERENCE – GWENN EYER

Gwenn said the three-day Conference was a success – an outstanding learning experience for foster and adoptive families!! She said the Conference gave attendees the opportunity to network and attend workshops relating to caregiver issues and problems. The Conference offered “hot topic” sessions and keynote speakers who spoke on education, family, health, and education issues.

2005 CAREGIVER CONFERENCE PROPOSAL – CARLA AMATO

Carla spoke about the proposal to try a new model for delivering a training and networking experience to foster parents. Instead of holding a three-day, two-night statewide conference, they would plan four, regional full day conferences in Cook, Northern Region, Central Region, and Southern Region. Carla said the goals of the proposal would be to increase attendance, better utilize dollars, and improve regional training. Council members discussed the pros and cons of this proposal. Carla noted all feedback from the Council and will take their comments/suggestions back to the conference-planning group consisting of the Office of Foster

Parent Support Services and training staff in order to plan for a successful 2005 Caregivers Conference.

FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH – CARLA AMATO

Carla spoke about Foster Parent Appreciation Month and events planned throughout the state. She said tool kits were put together and would be sent to each region for distribution. The kits included give away items, posters, note cards, media pieces and bookmarks. Carla also talked about foster parent interviews. She said the Communications office has been interviewing foster parents and writing articles that will be submitted to media outlets throughout the state.

NATIONAL FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE – CARLA AMATO

Carla said the Governor's Office is only considering approval of one person to attend any out-of-state conferences, although we have sent requests for two. Terry McGlothlin will follow-up on this request on Monday, May 3, 2004.

AMENDMENT TO BY-LAWS – CARLA AMATO

SWFCAC members discussed the amendment to the by-laws and the definition of "good standing". *Heidi Darville made a motion to accept the language change to the by-laws in Step 6 under Article II – Membership. Andrea Miller seconded the motion. All members were in favor, and the motion passed.*

Andrea Miller made a motion to have the Policy Committee define the term "good standing" and have the by-laws amended to reflect the new definition. Gladys Boyd seconded the motion. All members were in favor, and the motion passed.

Heidi Darville made a motion to change the language of Article VI – Committees, step 3(c) to read, "Collect at the last council meeting of the fiscal year...". Ruth Jajko seconded the motion. All members were in favor, and the motion passed.

CRIMINAL BARS SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT – JUNE DORN

June Dorn distributed the Criminal Bars Subcommittee proposed statutory changes in the waiver process. She said that in February 1997 SB 179 was added to Subsection C of the Child Care Act, adding a waiver provision for extended bars for homes where kids were already placed. However, newly applying foster parents have never been able to have crimes waived. June said the Committee agreed that they want to focus on changing the waiver criteria to make it available to new foster parents.

June pointed out that the crime list was left unchanged. She said Randy Wells gave direction/suggestions on how to introduce the legislation. Randy said he would need the draft bill by mid-June in order to have any chance for legislative action in the fall.

June said the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council approved the recommended changes to the language at their April, 2004 meeting. June asked for SWFCAC approval for these suggested changes. The Council discussed in detail the proposed changes to the Child Care Act. *Ray Chasteen made a motion that the SWFCAC support the Criminal Bars Committee findings and forward the reports on to the Department's legislative liaison. Ruth Jajko seconded the motion.*

Council members voted on the motion. James Lane was not in agreement. All other members were in agreement, and the motion carried.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Adolescent mental health needs. Carla Amato suggested we talk with the SYAB to develop a recruitment strategy. Ellen Kazaras suggested we might need an age/placement breakdown in order to start work on the issue of mental health needs. Chris McGrath said Cook County has surveys they could share.
- Psychotropic medication
 - Pre-service training
 - Medication hotline

ADJOURNMENT

Uli Senz made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 PM. Mary White seconded the motion. All members were in favor, and the motion passed.