



Clark County Department of Family Services

Support and Retention Workgroup Meeting

Meeting Minutes from April 10, 2014 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

Present

Heather Brockway (SAFY), Mike Pochowski (Foster parent), Audrey Rosenstein (Fostering Southern Nevada), Karlene Ulibarri

DFS Staff - Lani Aiken, Denise Parker, Shannon Rooney, Lauren Soskin

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Meeting Minutes from 3/13/14
3. Survey – Status
4. Increasing Community Members
5. Task Force
6. Additional Goals
7. Other

Minutes

Meeting Content:

1. Greetings and introductions were made
2. Asked if there were any questions on the minutes
3. Announced the survey is approved by management
 - a. A plan is being crafted to move the survey forward
 - i. This process should be up and running within two (2) weeks
 - b. A quote to have it translated into Spanish is being requested
 - c. The manner of administering it is being crafted
 - d. Asked how many families we can contact via email
 - i. This is being researched
 - e. Survey being entered into survey monkey

- f. Department of Family Services (DFS) will also be printing it for some of the agencies who have requested it
- g. Approval for the gift cards has been received
 - i. The process for getting the gift cards out to caregivers is being worked on
- h. Bi-lingual staff are being contacted to assist with the administering of the survey
- i. DFS is unable to give an anticipated completion date for the survey
 - i. Target number of surveys we hope to complete is at least twenty-five percent (25%) of our caregivers
- j. DFS plans to be very aggressive in getting the surveys back
- k. Surveys will be sent by email first, then calls and as a last resort surveys will be sent via regular mail
- l. Asked when we email, how many days will we give caregivers to return the completed survey before we follow up with them
 - i. Suggested it be within two (2) weeks
 - ii. Suggested that it be sent, wait a week, send a second (2nd) email, then start calling
- m. Asked what the Title of the email should be
- n. Mentioned that we have to be careful what we put in the subject line so it doesn't end up in spam folders
- o. Suggested that we send a "Test" email to make sure it goes through the email servers
- p. Discussed that there was an issue with the email list for caregivers initially but it has been addressed by the Foster Parent Champions (FPC)
 - i. Many new emails have been added
- q. Suggested the creation of a flyer announcing the upcoming survey
 - i. Give flyers out at the Easter Egg event and up at the Visitation Center and Positively Kids
 - 1. Caregivers have to register for the Easter Egg event so the flyer could be at the registration desk
 - ii. Flyer can be included in the Caregiver Currier
 - iii. Discussed including in the flyer:
 - 1. Caregiver survey is on the way
 - 2. Time to share your opinion
 - 3. Be on the lookout
 - 4. Your opinion counts
 - 5. Incentive provided
 - 6. Be expecting an email or a phone call
 - 7. If you don't get a survey by May 30, 2014, contact FPC email or phone number to get your voice heard
- r. DFS can update the Agency Homes email addresses easily
- s. Peggy's Attic can have paper copies of the survey to give out

- i. Discussed if there was a way to monitor duplicate surveys completed by the same people
 - ii. It is doubtful that duplication will be an issue due to the length of the survey
 - t. Survey are not designed for Relative Caregivers and therefore should not be sent to them
 - u. Suggested that Licensing can hand it out at Home Visits or walk caregivers through getting to the survey on-line
 - v. Can making a post card with the link web address on it if a web address is available
 - w. Discussed how we are going to let people know about the changes that we are going to make based on the survey results
 - x. Survey will create work group's next steps
- 4. Discussed that the State is doing a survey, which informs Federal funding, which is now posted on the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) website
 - a. Denise Parker - QPI Coordinator, asked if we could find a few families to take their survey
 - b. It is under the Announcement section of the website
- 5. Task Force formation was discussed
 - a. It was intended to make it easier to disseminate information when there are policy changes at DFS
 - b. A discussion about the creation of the task force was staffed with Christina Vela, DFS manager over QPI, and good ideas were given
 - i. Christina suggested that we propose a similar group, but change the name and some of the focuses
 - ii. Possibly changing the name to not include "Task Force" in the title
 - iii. Suggested that a task force would be better addressed by the Communication work group
 - c. There is a fear among foster parents that there will be retaliation if they make complaints to DFS and it is hoped that the task force could address this
 - i. Possibly an impartial group to review complaints be a component of the work group
 - ii. Suggested that the work group make sure there is a DFS grievance procedure and the caregivers and agencies are educated about it
 - iii. Caregivers need to be informed as to what to do if they have a concern and where do to go to find out the results of their complaints
 - iv. Currently there is nothing in place to let caregivers know issues are dealt with
 - v. Child Welfare work group is looking at crafting a three hundred and sixty degree (360) accountability approach to this
 - vi. The work group is unclear on what the grievance procedure is with DFS and needs to research this

- vii. Foster parents really need a committee where they can feel safe making complaints or addressing concerns
- viii. Foster parents need to be told that the issue has been addressed even if they can't have specifics on how it was addressed
- ix. Foster parents don't feel heard
 - x. What is currently in place for grievances isn't working for foster parents
- xi. Denise will research what is currently in place at DFS and email results to the Co-Leads
- xii. We will start by looking into what is currently in place
 - 1. What is the efficacy of the current system
 - 2. What is the process
 - 3. Are we using it
 - 4. Do we all know about it
- xiii. If foster parents have issues they aren't adequately being addressed
- xiv. There shouldn't be a battle between Agencies and DFS
 - 1. There is currently a lack of trust
 - 2. It needs to be more of a partnership
- xv. QPI cannot be sustained if we don't address the issues and fix them
- xvi. DFS needs to define partnerships and its basis
 - 1. It's like a marriage
- xvii. There appears to be a disconnect between Management and the middle layer employees
- xviii. Lack of consistency is an issue between workers
- xix. If DFS is going to implement a partnership agreement then there is a need to train everyone to understand what they are
 - 1. If caregivers and foster parents can't abide by them, they need to be aware that there will be no place for them within DFS
- xx. Mentioned when there is an investigation, Licensing is required to pull back and not support the foster parents
 - 1. Foster Parents are directed to Associations for support
 - 2. Foster Parents are directed to the supervisors instead of workers
 - 3. Foster families feel deserted when an investigation is opened
 - 4. Denise discussed that in other states there is a hotline for foster families to call in to for support when an investigation is opened
- d. Mentioned that information isn't even being shared appropriately internally at DFS
 - i. DFS employees still don't know what QPI is

1. This is unacceptable
- e. We need to identify who the customers are for each department and work group so that the information gets to the appropriate people
- f. Discussed that if DFS makes a requirement of the Agencies that they have to utilize DFS for specific resources then DFS needs to have backup plans in place prior to the requirement being implemented
 - i. The example of the Fingerprint Department not being able to process fingerprints for the last month was given
 - ii. There needs to be a procedure put into place that speaks to this
6. Discussed communication issues
 - a. DFS needs to make sure they effectively communicate information to customers that are affected by DFS actions
 - b. DFS needs to educate each department as to who they actually serve
 - c. DFS has internal and external customers
 - d. Suggested a training for customer service be created
 - e. Identified there is a disconnect between what is expected and what is actually happening in terms of customer service
 - f. DFS Management is very devoted to improving customer service
 - g. The work group needs to identify whether or not issues are isolated or systemic before being able to affect changes
 - h. A form is being created that will get feedback on workers and caregivers
 - i. DFS will be able to identify issues through the survey
 - j. The QPI program is all about hearing this information and making a plan to change issue
 - i. DFS has to treat information about issues as teachable moments
 - k. Suggested a need to challenge a specific workgroup to address communication issues
 - l. Suggested maybe since the root of the issue is communications maybe it would be in their workgroup
 - m. Suggested having a mandatory foster parent Town Hall meeting quarterly
 - i. Suggested that this be in conjunction with an Agency
 - ii. Suggested we video tape the Town Hall meeting and put it on to the QPI website
 - iii. There are going to be many initiatives rolled out shortly so a meeting would have to be held for information sharing
 - n. Suggested we need to have an on line area, that caregivers can be able to access, which is updated regularly
 - i. We have the ability to make the Just in Time website serve as this on line area
 - ii. We don't want the process to become sterile and be disconnected from our caregivers
 1. Communication work group needs to hear about issues agencies are having with DFS as they craft the internal and external information sharing procedure

2. Members of this work group were tasked with going to the next Communication work group meeting
7. Work group was tasked with finding a way to increase involvement of caregivers
8. Discussed the three hundred and sixty degree (360) evaluation which was born out of the market segmentation meetings
 - a. National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment (NRCDR) asked who are our good foster parents according to case workers
 - b. As a result, this survey is being crafted to interview kids five (5) years old or older, case managers, and foster parents about how their experience has been
 - c. These will be exit surveys
 - d. Once they have been completed, Licensing will keep this information and so will Quality Assurance Quality Improvement (QAQI)
 - e. The issues that these surveys identify have to be addressed
 - f. Foster parents will evaluate the case workers
 - g. Kids will evaluate the home and case workers
 - h. Case workers will be evaluating foster parents
 - i. It will create a standardization of reviews
9. Suggested that this work group, with the addition of Christina, meet with Nevada Youth Care Providers (NYCP) to get a more global view of the partnerships between foster families, agencies and DFS
10. Implementation meeting will be on May 13, 2014 and will look very different this time
 - a. Foster parents are welcome
 - b. Reports of what changes have been made by QPI will be given
 - c. Break out groups will be held to build the work groups' memberships
11. Discussed the overflow of kids at Child Haven
 - a. Placements are not being done in a quality way right now
 - b. Eight hundred ninety-seven (897) disruptions happened in 2013
 - c. One hundred seventy-seven (177) children were dropped off at child haven without any notice in 2013
 - i. A number of families included in this count dropped off children, without notice, more than once
 - ii. This is unacceptable and not in alignment with quality parenting
 - d. We have one thousand and thirty-nine (1039) open beds according to our reports but we have an overflow at Child Haven
 - e. Two hundred and twelve (212) homes closed last year and only twenty-five percent (25%) of them were for acceptable reasons
 - f. DFS can't recruit homes if they can't retain the ones they have
 - g. Clark County has a higher numbers of kids being harmed by our system
 - h. Case workers have to get involved because they are supposed to find a good home for the kids
 - i. There needs to be an understanding of what our expectations are for our families and case workers

- i. Once expectations are understood, we need to hold them accountable
- 12. Denise discussed the way other states handles disruptions
 - a. Other states required that case workers are doing home visits at least once a quarter
 - b. Training is more extensive
- 13. Discussed the fact that Permanence and Safety – Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (PS-MAPP) training does not emphasize the expectations the way it needs to
 - a. Suggested somebody objectively needs to look at the trainings as they need to be updated
 - b. The training in place needs to be supplemented with additional materials
- 14. Suggested creating a luncheon to inform the foster families about associations and inviting the associations to speak
- 15. Next meeting May 8, 2014