

Report for the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood
July 6, 2010

Department: Social Services, Children's Division

Liaison to the Board: Paula Neese

Report as of: Tuesday, July 6

Action Items Completed:

- The Children's Division concluded their Children and Families Services Review. The results of the review provided us with three areas of focus; strengths, needs, and program improvements. Areas of strengths showed promising practice in timely responses to CA/N investigations; keeping children who must be placed in out of home arrangements in close proximity to their parents; keeping children with their siblings; assessing children's educational needs; and providing supportive services to children in care. The Division was also commended for the frequency in worker visits with children in care. The next step in the process is to develop a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) addressing areas of need. We will be building on strengths of community partnerships, sharing outcomes, continuing to strengthen practice as identified in our Council on Accreditation (COA) standards, and using data to inform our quality assurance and improvement models in our PIP.
- Children's Division is modifying the CA/N Hotline protocol regarding reports classified as non-CA/N calls of concern. When a call comes in that does not meet the statutory standard for child abuse or neglect, the caller will be given contact information for possible resources for the family, if available. This information will be given out by the hotline worker, rather than someone in the county office, as it was prior to July 1, 2010. The change in protocol is necessary to address a reduction in field resources. Information about the change in protocol has been shared with various partners who are frequent users of the Hotline to report concerns, including public schools.

Action Items In-progress/Pending:

- Children's Division will be awarding Facility Improvement Grants to licensed child care providers in the very near future. The Governor's office is reviewing our recommendations and we expect a press release to come out from the Governor's office about the awards sometime this month.

Announcements:

- Paula will be leaving the Division in the fall. She is retiring from state employment but has every intention of staying connected to the work of improving the lives of children and families. A national recruitment effort is underway for the director's position.

Questions for the board/larger group:

- None

Other Notes:

- Becky recently returned from a national work issues group meeting sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau. The meeting, held in Washington D.C., was a convening of various federal staff and 20 State Child Care Administrators to inform potential changes to the Child Care and Development Fund state plan process. In addition, the Bureau is focusing their priorities on efforts to support a child care system that is "child focused, family friendly and fair to providers". Discussions around how technical assistance can be reframed to address the Bureau's priorities were held with an expectation that current TA will be restructured when CCDF is reauthorized.

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