Attendees: Melissa Selsor, Crissy Mayberry, Janice Byrd, Renae Beushausan, Lauren McKinney, Dana Lopez, Rhiannon Franklin, Heather Vodnansky, Craig Stevenson. Latichia Duffy, Katy Marquart, John Head, Kathy Haddock, Stacee Dixon, Kenya Willis

10:15 am Leadership Updates Leadership

* HB 1414 requires the disbursement of surveys. They are required to go out quarterly. In quarter 3, 50 % of adoptive parents said they strongly agreed they were satisfied. In quarter 3, 72 % of surveyed foster parents said the case manager visited the children in their home at least once per month. We wanted to celebrate that. These surveys are really focused on case manager involvement with the resource parents. Adoption process and timeline communication is strong, but there is room for improvement in case planning involvement. A suggestion was made to survey families that are closing. 35.93 % of the individuals surveyed were sent out. In the future over 4000 will be surveyed. Next quarter.

Data Melissa Selsor

* Amanda Burrus is the new TFC (Treatment Foster Home) Program Specialist. January 2025, we have 309 total children in TFC placements. There are 224 active TFC homes. Over 70 youth are waiting for TFC placement. There are now 8 TFC agencies. Potentially 3 additional agencies to on board. Efforts are being made to increase response rates and expand treatment foster care capacity. Melissa Selsor will share the TFC data report and invite Amanda Burris to the next meeting. There was discussion regarding streamlining the communication and education between foster parents, case workers TFC staff and licensing agencies.

Adoption vs. Guardianship/updates Stephanie Flowers

* Adoption and guardianship both involve financial responsibility and the availability of subsidies. Adoption subsidy can potentially extend until the child is 21, while guardianship subsidy ends at the child's 18th birthday. In adoption, adoptive parents can decide on maintaining relationships with birth parents and siblings, while in guardianship it depends on court requirements.

Prevention Update Michelle Dixon

* Primary prevention work is being done across the state of Missouri, including staff in schools, hospitals, domestic violence shelters, and low-income housing. A new policy has been implemented for primary prevention referrals, requiring formal paper referrals and additional information gathering. The goal is to connect with community partners and provide resources to families in crisis situations. Primary prevention workers can partner with subsidy workers to provide support to families in the foster and adoption system. Primary prevention staff can offer support and connect families with resources, especially in cases where the subsidy workers have a heavy workload. Daycare providers can contact primary prevention workers for concerns or referrals, as long as there is consent from the family.

Relative Policy Updates Joanna San Paolo

* Feedback on policy suggestions for relevant policies and new licensing standards is being requested. The change in policy is partially to access federal funds and improve reimbursement for relative placements. Missouri currently hovers around a 50% rate of placing children in relative homes, with other states having higher or lower rates. The agency is working on providing more resources and support to foster families. There is a need to continue searching for and supporting relative placements, even if they are not immediate placements. 13 states have not implemented new kinship standards, but the majority of states are committed to creating a kin-first culture. Moving forward staff will provide direct in-person support and training to relatives to address their specific needs. Improve communication and follow-up with families to ensure they receive necessary support and prevent children from re-entering the system.CD is focused on building relationships with families to create buy-in and provide support. Continue asking placement questions later in the process to build trust and find suitable caregivers. Roll out the new relative licensing track and ensure support is provided throughout the process. Trainers will travel the state to train individuals on how to work with relatives. CD addresses the use of waivers and barriers to working with relatives. Training will include review of the new forms, new licensing track, and a walkthrough guide for relatives. Ensure that regulations are promulgated and ready for implementation this year. Melissa Selsor will divide the monthly management report on unlicensed relatives by circuit and send it to circuits for follow-up and licensing discussions. CD is also looking into exploring ways to track unlicensed relative homes and follow up on their status. Determine why basic information on licensed homes is not being tracked consistently. Check with kinship navigators to ensure they have enough resources and support for kinship families. Develop a rubric and metric tool to measure the effectiveness of provider support. Collect baseline data on the number of families utilizing family resource centers and other services. There is a suggestion to distribute the provider support document and kinship navigator handout to staff and frontline workers. Also to consider implementing an incentivized program for attending support groups or other required activities. Ensure that staff provide direct support to relatives and address any guilt or concerns they may have about taking on caregiving responsibilities. Continue building relationships with families and ask about potential relatives as a placement option later in the process. Increase the frequency of visits with families, possibly to monthly. Consider the impact of initial questioning on trust and work towards building trust with families. Joanna San Paolo is open to receiving further feedback and questions via email.

Open Forum

Child Abuse Prevention Month Event In Jefferson City on April 5th. Office of Child Advocacy. Planting Seeds of Prevention is the theme. The parade starts at 10am. It will go along high street. Local business will participate. Anyone with interest. Share information with other resource parents. The hope is to grow this event to be bigger to bring light to an important cause. This will be a yearly event. reaching out to Kids Harbor and the new CAC in Colombia for possible participation in the community event. Volunteers are still needed.

Discussion regarding concerns about the lack of available TFC placements. There are TFC homes that would be willing to take more children needing TFC home, but they are not allowed because policy restricts them. We need more alternatives for children that are hospitalized and only remain in that placement type due to lack of available appropriate homes for them.

**2025 Meeting Dates**

Tuesday, March 4th Truman Building Room 500

Tuesday, June 3rd Truman Building Room 500

Tuesday, September 2nd Truman Building Room 500

Tuesday, December 2nd Truman Building Room 500