

Missouri State Foster Care & Adoption Board
Minutes
December 10, 2013
10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Dean Aye, Eric Pilson, Janet Richardson, Kelly Floyd, Nickie Steinhoff, Kelly Schultz, Suzie Forbis and Lori Ross

Children's Division Support Staff: Tim Decker, Julie Lester, Amy Martin, Elizabeth Tattershall, and Sarah Bashore

Absent: Derek Williams and Melinda Nicholson

Visitors: Linda Hosman, Deanna Alonso, and Nicole Elliot

Introductions/Roll Call:

At 10:00 a.m. the meeting began with introductions.

Opening Remarks:

Julie Lester, Acting Deputy Director, congratulated the Adoption Resource Centers/Children's Division for their win on the 2013 Adoption Excellence Award from the Children's Bureau in the business contributions/initiatives category for their groundbreaking adoption programs and community collaboration.

The Recruitment, Licensure/Approval, & Retention of Missouri Resource Homes pilot contract is in place. January 2nd is the full implementation date.

Dean welcomed Julie as the Acting Deputy Director. He also gave thanks on behalf of the Board to Amy Martin, Elizabeth Tattershall and Sarah Bashore for the support they have given.

The September minutes have been approved by the Board and posted on-line. The Board also finished reviewing the revised Quarterly Visit form, no changes were made.

Children's Division Update:

Amy Martin gave an update on the Recruitment, Licensure/Approval, & Retention of Missouri Resource Homes pilot contract. Phase one is complete, November 12th started phase two which includes case transfer. The cases will be transferred to Cornerstones of Care, and then will be separated and distributed to the sub-contractors. January 2nd will begin phase three, which includes new recruits, re-licensure and placement identification.

The Recruitment and Retention workgroups and sub workgroups are concentrating on the therapeutic contract and respite policy.

Christine Wynn, who gave the Critical Event presentation at the September meeting, has joined the Interdepartmental Initiatives Unit as a Program Development Specialist in Central Office. Keri Talken is now in the Permanency Unit focusing on the foster care program.

Dean reported to the Board that the Children's Division now has just over 12,000 children in foster care. Dean asked the Division if they knew how many foster homes are available. Elizabeth did not have the numbers off hand, but said she would send the number to Dean. There is an increase in relative/kinship providers. Relative providers are subject to waivers (training, safety concerns and number of children.)

Dean expressed a concern that homes are being licensed when they should not be. Lori feels confident this issue will not be one, especially with the new contract. There were mixed feelings by the Board. If there are concerns, the Board was reminded of the revocation process and policy. Staff must have supporting documentation and facts for a fair hearing. Informal meetings do occur with the family that can prevent going to the fair hearing process. Lori, for example, adds notes into the FACES system when a family resigns or withdraws as to why and what the issue may have been. This is done so that if they were to ever re-apply at a later time, the licensing worker will have a historical reference to guide them. Elizabeth explained the application has a denial, approval or withdraw check box in FACES.

Missouri continues to see an increase in the foster care population. The Board would like to see numbers for Missouri's counties, circuits or regions. Julie is currently working on gathering data and will be happy to share once completed.

Policy Updates:

Elizabeth gave an overview of new memos.

[CD13-84](#) Revised Delayed Conclusion Policy

[CD13-85](#) Revised De Novo Judicial Review Policy and Procedures

[CD13-86](#) Revised Differential Response Policy

[CD13-94](#) Policy Revision for Working with Incarcerated Parents through Introduction of Teleconferencing and Videoconferencing

Training Guide & Respite Policy:

The Board currently has two pending policy/procedure changes under review. The CD-101 *Notification of Hazards* form and the revised respite policy. Elizabeth explained the respite policy in more detail to give clarification to board members. Respite hours will be changed to accommodate half units or 6 hours as opposed to the one unit or 12 hours as policy currently states. The Children's Division feels this is a positive change for resource providers. There

will also be mandatory training for all new respite providers. This is a two-hour training which can be taken in small groups or on-line. This training was taken from AdoptUSKids *Taking a Break* curriculum to fit Missouri's needs. This training counts towards training hours for a licensing period of two years. Kinship homes and relative homes do not have to take the training. There is an assessment at the end of the training; a true/false questionnaire. Elizabeth had a conference call with the Foster Care Case Managers on 12/6/2013. At that time, the participants on the call suggested adding three questions (8, 9 and 10). Elizabeth passed out the updated version for the Board to review. Kelly Schultz suggested changing "train" to "redirect" on the true/false question number nine. Board members had a question about the screening process. Policy gives guidelines for foster parents to screen respite applicants. County Children's Division staff have started adding information on the respite process in their newsletters. The Board agreed to review and send all feedback to Lori regarding the new respite training policy and the Notification of Hazards form by Friday, December 13, 2013. Lori will summarize and send to Dean.

Resource Parent Survey- Working Lunch:

Bob Larimer presented on the Resource Parent Survey at the September meeting. The Board felt as though they needed a point person to gather data and aggregate. Eric agreed to be this point person. Bob Larimer will continue to be the technical point person. The information will be used for the board's annual report. The Board will review data in the first quarter of the year. The Southwest regions concern is they will not receive feedback from the survey. Reminders will be sent to board members to send out links to survey. Dean will send out the link again for those members who do not already have it. The Board would like to have the report broke out by regions. This report will be given to Children's Division to disseminate to Regional Directors.

Overpayment Collection:

Amy Martin spoke with Randy Yancey from DFAS on overpayments. There are three ways to identify overpayments including:

- 1.) FACES identifies an overpayment.
- 2.) The local office or the Payment Unit identifies an overpayment on payroll report.
- 3.) The provider finds an overpayment.

Circuit staff will work with Resource Providers to develop an overpayment plan. Individual agreements will be made with providers to negotiate the re-payment. The Board agreed to add this topic to the Newsletter as a tip or reminder. Sarah and Nickie will assist with this task.

Annual Report & Review/ MSFCAB Goals 2014:

Dean has looked at 2012 minutes and documents from the Board. Dean would like Kelly S. to review all filed bills for the next meeting. Administrative

support will continue to be provided by Carmy Colvin. Sarah Bashore will continue to take minutes, sending the finished product to Dean in a timely manner. Dean asked the Children's Division what the process for review currently is for the Board. Any policy from the Permanency or Well Being Units will go to the State Board automatically. Lori, as a member of the Task Force on Children's Justice (CJA) would like the Board to review the recommendations of CJA's critical event review if specific to adoption, foster care or well-being. The Board would be able to make policy and procedural recommendations based on the information they have received from CJA. CJA has a meeting on Thursday, December 12, 2013. Lori will send Dean all recommendations and Dean will then send out to the Board. Julie Lester will speak to Children's Division Director, Tim Decker, on this process.

Dean went over what the board is statutory obligated to do ([RSMo 210.617](#)). The Board feels they have reviewed policy and provided comments and suggestions as required. Part of the Board's goal for 2014 is to improve on making procedural changes and recommendations. The survey may help with providing direction to the Board.

Town hall meetings or listening sessions were suggested as a way to gain insight of the needs of the foster/adopt community. A roundtable discussion with a board member and community partners, such as, local Children's Division, Juvenile Office, Courts and Guardian ad Litem was another suggestion. Challenges and solutions could be discussed; the topic on the increasing number of children in foster care could be a good place to start.

The Board will write the annual report, Lori has the template. Information needed includes feedback from survey, data points (Elizabeth will update Board on information), and goals for 2014. Lists of guests the Board would like to invite to 2014 meetings:

- Donna Cash from Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
- Beth Dessem from CASA
- Marcia Hazelhorst from Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA)
- Ryan Dowis from Cornerstones of Care or David Burch from Missouri Baptist Children's Home on therapeutic foster care
- Christy Collins from the Children's Division on healthcare/cyber access
- Patsy Carter from Department of Mental Health

Missouri Child Welfare- The Vision

Tim Decker, Children's Division's Director gave his background and explained his prior partnerships with the Children's Division. Tim has served as Director of the Division of Youth Services (DYS) since 2007. In 2012, Tim worked with leaders across various state departments and court systems to establish the

Missouri's Crossover Youth Initiative focused on preventing youth with traumatic histories of abuse/neglect from becoming involved in juvenile justice system. Tim was honored to be in attendance and had two questions to ask of the Board. What does the Division do well and what can the Division do better? Responses from the Board on what the Division could do better included:

- Resource parents need open communication, specifically with the case manager.
- Respect for resource parents as professional partners, team members and colleges.
- Include resource parents in team discussions.
- Expand the level of trust around the state between resource parents and the Division.
- Teach staff the importance of family structure-the case manager and resource parent should be a collaborative team.
- Issue with organization culture vs. practice in Jackson Co.

What the Division is doing well:

- The Division does well with reunification services.
- Good job facing issues-best interest of children is always in mind.
- Impressed with Central Office staff and working through problems.
- Much better relationship now with Board and Children's Division-great team.
- Refreshing to see positive impacts the Children's Division has made.

Tim believes culture plays a big part in the Children's Division. Everyone has belief statements and values; he is interested in knowing what values members of the Board have. Lori will send her training on values she uses in her organization, MFCAA. Tim let all members of the board know he is interested in hearing from all of them. He thanked the Board for their time and expressed his gratitude for what they all do on a daily basis as resource parents and support to the children the Division works with.

Meeting Adjourned:

Dean asked the Board if there was anything further, members said no, he asked for a motion. Kelly S. motioned to adjourn, Janet seconded the motion and all members present were in favor. Motion passed, meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2014 10a.m.-3p.m. at the Governor's Office Building, room 460, in Jefferson City, MO.