

Missouri State Foster Care & Adoption Board
Truman Building Room 493
301 West High Street, Jefferson City, MO 65101
Tuesday, September 3, 2024

Welcome and Introductions Dana Lopez

Approval of Minutes from June and March Dana Lopez

Craig made a motion to approve the March 2024 Minutes. The motion was seconded, and then the majority agreed. Minutes approved. Kenya still needs to submit the minutes for June's meeting. Once she does that the team will try to approve the minutes via email.

Foster Parent Portal Update Melissa Selsor

The portal will have information including payments from CD, demographic and licensing information. The RFP was submitted to OA. It then will go to ACF for approval. The goal is to get the RFP approved by the end of year. Then a vendor will be obtained. There will be a lot of training for staff and resource parents. Individuals will be able to make inquires regarding fostering and adopting. Resource parents will be able to upload mileage and reimbursement, sign up for trainings, a centralized calendar of training will be available, and view licensing information. Licensing workers will be able to see the foster family licensing information. It will talk to FACES. It will be a big implementation.

PIP Plan for St. Louis area for R&R Melissa Selsor

Performance Improvement Plan for Recruitment and Retention. This is a result of the CFSR review which occurs every year and is updated every 5 years. There will be a Kickoff Meeting in St Louis with licensing teams, stakeholders, foster ambassadors, and youth to learn about the strategies and further planning for implementation. The National Center for Diligent Recruitment will help streamline the plan. Focus on strategic diligent recruitment. The meeting is September 11. Melissa shared that community partners are encouraged to participate. The Case Management Contractors also met with committee to provide information. The hope is all our licensing agencies will be on the same page by the end of implementation. The focus will be on finding homes for those children that require more support and those with elevated needs. The recruitment efforts will focus on increasing traditional foster homes. Additionally, the plan will seek to provide the retention of both relatives and foster care homes.

New Recruitment and Retention Funding Melissa Selsor

There is new funding (\$3.7 mill) granted to the Children's Division for recruitment and retention funds for recruitment and retention. The focus will be on obtaining suitable placement for children where placement needs are more challenging. Including older children, sibling groups, etc. Currently looking at resources that will support the RFP such as programs that are evidence-based. The committee is not exactly sure what it will look like. The scope of work is due on September 30th. This is a priority for the Children's Division. They are hopefully that the rollout can be within 6-8 months. The focus will be on placement stability, retention, recruitment and support. Concerns were shared regarding some agencies ability to provide training or the lack of training available. Sherry shared that she has not heard there is an issue with obtaining the

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elevated needs training. Please share back with her if there is. Private agencies (FCCM) pay for their own training. CD contracts out the training then the contracts are being used. Agencies can also utilize their FRC for training needs. Each FCCM does have their own funding for contracting training. And TFC is specifically different. Send concerns to Sherry Moeller. There is level B revamping of curriculum coming. CMFCAA shared that their Spaulding Training is filling quickly. The lack of training can impact retention. There is a question about the amount of training that should be provided by the FRCs. The CD and FCCMs and level of care specialist share information by region. Melissa and Lauren are looking into working with a university to create a calendar. Melissa shared that she and Lauren are the contacts for us to share information, concerns and suggestions regarding a shared calendar. We want to be able to ensure folks receive training in a timely manner. Craig asked whether there will be focus on older children. The answer is yes. Kenya shared that this sounds like an opportunity to provide those immediate services that case management teams and licensing teams are not able to immediately respond or support. Those are the times that families will make decisions about their willingness and ability to continue fostering. Another suggestion provided: We need to have a guide for how to share with a parent the process for becoming licensed.

HIS Team

Christina with CD and Jill

Christina and Jill shared information regarding the psychotropic medical settlement. They are with Children's Division's Health Information Specialists Team. The psychotropic lawsuit was filed June 12th of 2017. There was a joint settlement agreement that started December 25th of 2019. There was a lot of work in between. We are still bound by the court order. Children's Division continues to meet with the lawyers and teams. Most of the implementation was launched in the 1st year. One of the biggest pieces was not finalized until February of 2024 which was the data validator. CD must complete a review and pull information by an outside agency. This gives outcomes for compliance. There are percentages that must be met. CD must comply for 3 reporting periods which are 6 months long each. A large piece of the compliance is regarding the steps for informed consent. There was a lot of training provided across the state regarding the consent process and the outcomes from the reports. There are 24 items that are validated. There are a lot of guidelines and review steps including those with the Center of Excellence. It dictates a lot of forms, (264) and (265) included. There are annual resource provider and CM trainings. Surveys are required. All this information is available online.

The consenter for psychotropic and behavior health care is the case manager. Any team member can request to be the alternate consenter. The responsibility of CD is to inform the court that someone came forward. The decision will lie with the court. Training can be provided by HIS to the alternative consenter. If there is a child under dual custody of CD and DYS, DYS is automatically the alternative Consenter. The court is the only person that can change the alternative consenter. Change of placement does not change the alternative consenter. If the resource parent is interested in being the alternate they should notify the CM in writing or verbally. It was suggested to place it in writing. Jill shared that they have encouraged the case worker to reach out to the health information specialist for clarification. Foster parents are able to reach out to the health information specialists. Of course, speak to the worker and supervisor first but please reach out when you have exhausted those locally. When reviews are occurring, foster parents will be reached out to for answers and feedback. For more information: <https://dss.mo.gov/notice-of-proposed-class-action-settlement.htm>.

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Feedback was provided regarding challenges with the training. There is 2 hours of pre-placement training required. Christina also spoke about the work she is participating in regarding behavioral health in general. She is working with the DMH and hopes for additional collaboration to see improved outcomes for children.

Data

Melissa Selsor

Melissa shared data as of July 31st. Shared the number of foster homes in comparison to last year. Also shared the number Elevated Needs homes, the number of kids in care and the number waiting for adoption. The amount of time in care. Some of the information is available on the website but it is from the prior year. There was concentration on looking at the number of homes that did not have placement. Craig shared it is helpful to know the number of TFC homes. Dana asked if there was a number that the agency was seeking to obtain. Also looking at where is the need for increasing the number of foster families. The number of children removed in counties was compared to the number of foster homes in that county. The need was based on 30% of the children in care being placed in foster homes.

MO C.A.R.E. Update/reopening a license

Melissa Selsor

The committee meets monthly. Everything is moving along. The committee is looking at some changes with session 10. People are struggling with session 9, which is psychotropic medication. They can do that training at home to have more time with the material.

Regarding re-opening licenses. There was discussion regarding the need to retake training. Consideration was given to those that need to take MO CARES/STARS after a certain period (such as 2 years). To Reopen a license the re- training is at the discretion of licensing worker. There was a question as to whether a professional parent trainer needs re-take the training. Is there inconsistency regarding how the decision is made for families to retake the training. Melissa shared there is a workgroup that is writing the manual and that may be an opportunity to further that discussion. The suggestion was made to have some guidelines on how discretionary decisions are made.

CTS Challenges

Melissa Lett

Children's Treatment Services. They are services such as parent aid and drug testing. There are now additional funds (\$1.4 mill) for court order drug testing. Service delivery, parent therapy, assessments, psychological for families, transportation for behavioral services and parent visits. To use CTS funds there must be an open case. Questions regarding how families access the services as they work reunification. Every circuit has a CTS budget that they need to follow. Sometimes Circuit Managers will have to get ahold of Melissa if there is additional approval needed. A CS-13 is completed by the case manager, and they send it through the supervisor to begin the authorization process. The service provider then receives an authorization letter. Services available depend on the location. Some rural parts of the state are limited with providers. Therapeutic services are challenging. There is a need to increase CTS payments to the levels of Medicaid pay and that may increase the number of service providers. If the family has other resources available that should be utilized before CTS funds. There are counties that are not authorizing CTS funds and therefore reasonable efforts are not made. The workers and supervisors and circuit managers need to have conversations about what services can be

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provided, how services can be paid for. There is a question regarding sharing information regarding whether their CTS funds are being utilized. It would be up to the circuit manager whether they would share that information. Does the parent have any autonomy on which providers are utilized, or do parents have to use the CTS provider the case managers provide to them. There are concerns regarding workers using the provider that they are "friendlier" with. What if the parent has someone they would prefer to use? Melissa advised that this should be part of the conversation with the team members and then contacting Melissa after the appropriate channel of communication occurs. Do CTS funds role over? No. Those funds could be lost. Melissa said they are working with each circuit to address the individual CTS needs and reallocating funds if needed. Melissa will share information with this board regarding the state budget for CTS. Transportation is part of the contract but there is concern that the funds are not being utilized. Transporting is a team effort. Also, clarification was provided regarding the increase funds available for court ordered drug testing which is a result of the opioid settlement fund. Melissa said she believes it was a legislative decision.

12:45 pm

TAPAs

Elaine Casteel

In SW MO there have been some issues regarding the appropriate use of TAPAs. It appears that they are being used to prevent kids from coming into care. It was confirmed this is an appropriate reason. However, the concern was reiterated that it may be used to prevent children from coming into care when there is a clear need for protective custody. A couple weeks ago a family member took the kids because the worker said if you do not take the kids, they will put them with the parent and hope for the best. It appears it is being used in a way that was not intended. There is a concern that it is being misused.

Elaine provided background information regarding the Temporary Alternative Placement Agreement. Elaine advised TAPAs are a result of HB 1414 which provides language that for safety interventions and TAPAs. There was not a prior diversion process that was being tracked. TAPAs provide some direction and systematic way to track the diversion of children from their parents. This occurred in 2020 HB1414 was first implemented. The safety intervention was laid out. The safety assessment was provided through this legislation. Elaine reviewed the safety assessment. They are time specific. They can be extended 1 time. 180 days is the max time allotted to reunify children with their families without further intervention. These are voluntary placements. When the family is no longer in agreement regarding the TAPAs then CD must determine if the children can remain safe and may require protective custody. The Juvenile office is made aware of every TAPA. Also, there is a placement agreement that is signed and talks about how the safety concerns are mitigated. TDMs must be held within 10 days. FCS is always opened when there is a TAPA. TDMs are held every 30 days. We are statutorily obligated to assist families through preventive measurements.

1:15 pm

Relative and Kinship Training

Joanna and Sherry

Joanna shared that the requirements for relatives should and will look different from traditional homes. They have not been afforded the same opportunities and time as traditional parents. The Children's Division is working with legal services weekly to revise the relative foster parent regulations. They are near the end of finalizing the regulations. Will start revising policy soon.

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There is a workgroup working on new relative training. Pre-service will be much shorter. Joanna shared we are going back to the basics with relatives. They will be teaching staff how to engage and talk to, work with and support families. These changes will hopefully increase the support for and resources that families. They will be able to connect with kinship navigators, peer to peer support groups and FRCs for additional support. There are a lot of informal providers that are needing more support and through the increased placement with relatives and preventive services funds will be freed up to provide the needed help to families. We recognize that more support is needed. It was also mentioned that more information regarding the benefits of licensure needs to be shared with families.

1:45 pm Open Forum

DESE is behind in payments to many childcare providers. When calling people are waiting on hold for hours. Crystal Quaid is calling for meetings and asking for DESE to cut checks to providers. The suggestion is to keep calling legislators to keep them informed. This issue impacts placement stability and retention.

Question posed: Is kinship higher on the hierarchy of placement than traditional placement. The answer is: Yes. There is federal law and Missouri law to support this hierarchy of placement. Sherry advised that it should go straight to the circuit manager. Contact the FRC for support.

Bi laws for regional board to be shared at the next meeting.

2024 Meeting Dates

Tuesday, March 5 th	Truman Building Room 750
Friday, June 7 th	Truman Building Room 750
Tuesday, September 3 rd	Truman Building Room 493
Tuesday, December 3 rd	Truman Building Room 750

2025 Meeting Dates

Tuesday, March 4 th	Truman Building Room 500
Tuesday, June 3 rd	Truman Building Room 500
Tuesday, September 2 nd	Truman Building Room 500
Tuesday, December 2 nd	Truman Building Room 500