

Marion County Children and Families Commission

To bring together community efforts and resources to ensure an equal opportunity for all children and families in Marion County to attain their full potential.

Marion County Children and Families

Family Preservation Action Team Meeting

July 10, 2017, at 10:00 a.m.

5th Floor Commissioners Board Room, Courthouse Square
Meeting Summary Notes

Members Present: Patrice Altenhofen, Ormond Fredericks, Jim Seymour, Shaney Starr, and Dick Withnell (by phone)

Members Absent: Phil Blea, Walt Beglau, Dawn Hunter, Alison Kelley, and Sam Skillern

Staff: Tamra Goettsch and Mary Grim

Guest: Shannon Biteng, Tanya Hamilton, Molly Johnson, Raquel Moore-Green, Gwen Slippy, and Shelly Winterberg

Welcome, Introductions, Announcements

Tamra welcomed members and guests.

Information

Eliminate the Gap – Strategic Plan for the Recruitment and Retention of Foster Parents

- Community Services is convening 1:1 exploratory meetings with key partners to review the plan to confirm priorities, identify what the partner or agency is already doing, and to discuss moving the plan forward. Ormond will be included in the meetings. Any FPAT members may also join.
 - Mary, Tamra, and Ormond met on June 1, 2017.
 - Mary, Tamra, and Ormond met with Shelly Winterberg and Brooke Gray on June 21. Shelly is the Director of Every Child, and Brooke Gray is the Portland Leadership Foundation Executive Director of Government Partnerships.
Mary will schedule 1:1 meetings with key partners (CASA, Catholic Community Services, Family Building Blocks, Liberty House, and the Salem Leadership Foundation).

Every Child

- Every Child is a grassroots organization that focuses on volunteer opportunities and recruitment of foster parents. There is a cross-over between the work of Every Child and the Eliminate the Gap strategic plan.
- The role of FPAT is to identify the backbone organization for Every Child.
 - The backbone organization is to serve in a non-competitive and collaborative partnership with other entities including: the faith community, special interest groups, businesses, non-profit organizations, and government. The structure of Every Child is to be determined by FPAT.
 - There is no funding available for the backbone organization. The backbone organization will be responsible for raising funds to support the Every Child position. In other communities, the position has been a volunteer for six months until a part-time person is hired.
 - Every Child is willing to write grants for multiple counties as a region and use a portion of the grant to fund part-time staff in multiple counties.
 - Community Services will work with Every Child to prepare a scope of work for the Every Child position. A team from FPAT will review the scope of work. Community Services and Every Child will let an RFI to provide an opportunity for local organizations to express interest in serving as the backbone organization.

- Identify the responsibilities of the backbone organization.
 - Be clear that there is no funding attached to the position.
 - Include timeframe and metrics – 1) secure a backbone agency in each county within five years; and, 2) metrics are based on foster parent recruitment.
 - Every Child will write a memorandum to DHS to review the recommended backbone organization. Once the organization is agreed upon, there will be a licensing agreement between the backbone organization and Every Child.
 - Four options:
 1. Select a 501c3 willing to hire an employee
 2. Select an 501c3 with an existing employee
 3. Select an organization that will identify as a DBA under the umbrella of an existing 501c3
 4. Select an agency that is in the process of obtaining 501c3 status
 - To-date both Mission Fellowship and CASA have expressed interest in serving as the backbone organization.
- Currently, Mission Fellowship has provided volunteer support in an interim capacity. Mission Fellowship has prepared welcome boxes, assisted with DHS hospitality, and managed a “meal train” to provide home cooked meals to foster children staying in motels.
- If an individual is interested in a volunteer opportunity outside of serving as a foster parent, the Every Child staff person will pass the individual off to another agency that might be a good fit – i.e. CASA. In the interim, Shelly is willing to pass the information off to the appropriate agency. Every Child would also like to include the different agency volunteer opportunities in a dropdown on their website. Shelly would need a point person within the agencies for inquiries to contact.
- It was determined in the meeting between Ormond, Tamra, Mary, Shelly, and Brooke, that the Foster Parent Champion and the Every Child staff person should be two different positions.

General Discussion

- Prevention is included in the Eliminate the Gap strategic plan. FPAT is focused on a balanced approach: prevention, intervention, and treatment for youth that need higher-end services.
- Consider inviting a representative of Early Learning Hub and WVCH to serve on FPAT.

Foster Parent Champion

- FPAT needs to stay focused on executing the strategic plan and hiring the Foster Parent Champion.
 - Community Services Department to develop:
 - Scope of Work for the Foster Parent Champion
 - The Foster Parent Champion needs to be a critical thinker – not an entry level position.
 - What would the ideal host organization look like?
 - What is the host organization’s responsibility?
 - Identify funding partners
 - Determine how many days per week the Foster Parent Champion would work. Suggestion – 15-20 hours/week.
 - Identify organizations that are willing to commit funding, or find funding (grants) for the Foster Parent Champion Position.
 - Catholic Community Services does not feel that they are the agency to host the Foster Parent Champion; however, they would offer financial support. Jim was unsure what the amount would be – possibly \$5,000/year for the first 2-3 years.
 - Catholic Community Services would provide grant writing support.
 - Community Services and Dick are willing to approach DHS to request funding.
 - Foster Parent Champion position should begin its work in September and evaluate/redirect at the end of the fiscal year (9 months).

- Identify an organization to house the Foster Parent Champion
- Create a Foster Parent Champion workgroup to meet monthly. The workgroup chairperson would provide a report at FPAT meetings.

Visitation Workgroup

- Todd Kwapisz will be leading the visitation program. Todd will be focusing on identifying metrics.
- Identify what outcomes the workgroup intended to achieve when it was originally formed by FPAT. What is the purpose of the group? Is it to:
 - Increase the number of visitations?
 - Increase the number of children returned to their home sooner?
 - Increase the number of visitations supervised by someone other than DHS?
- The Visitation Group will continue to meet to look at DHS evidence-based data
 - Quality versus quantity
- DHS supervises visits for safety. DHS goal is to supervise visits for the shortest amount of time. For success, most visits should not be supervised by DHS. How can DHS engage the foster families and community to help supervise the visits, which allows the family to have more access to the children?
- DHS is adding an education component to group visitation. i.e. infant massage
- The court orders visitation; but, there are not enough Social Service Assistants (SSA) to staff the visitations. Currently there are 16.5 Social Service Assistants to supervise visits for more than 200 foster children. One visit can take up to 4 hours including transportation.
- When court ordered visitation increases, regular visitation decreases. This creates a service inequity.
- Could Every Child recruit community members to participate in visitations? This might help with recruitment of foster parents, CASAs, or other needed volunteers.

General Discussion

- Success – DHS and CASA booths were located next to each other at the Marion County Fair. Recruitment information was provided. Adjacent booths allowed for a coordinated pass off based on the interest of the individual visiting the booth. Explore future opportunities for partner agencies to share booths or be located close to each other.

Standing Updates

Department of Human Services

- Welcome to Shannon Biteng, program manager
- DHS is waiting for the final budget allocation.
- # of current foster children = 556
- # of foster homes = 260

Court Appointed Special Advocates – CASA – Shaney Starr

- # of children served during the current fiscal year = 246
- # of children served during the previous fiscal year = 90
- # of CASA volunteers during the previous fiscal year = 125
- Received a grant from Salem Rotary for new case management software. The software will provide demographic data that will help with prevention. Included in the data tracking:
 - Removal zip code
 - Placement zip code

Family Building Blocks – Patrice Altenhofen

- Court and Community Care in Polk County at the Academy Building

- Offering two days of childcare for parents to access while in court proceedings, mental health, etc.
- In Marion County the YMCA is managing the court care.
- Mothers and babies grant for Marion and Polk from the Community Care Organization
 - Mood improvement program for prenatal and early postnatal mothers.
 - Offered in monolingual Spanish.
 - Provide childcare and transportation.
 - Dawn Hunter will send out information to Mary to distribute to the group.

Catholic Community Services

- CCS has received a \$75,000 challenge grant for Enhanced Support for Foster Parents. CCS has currently raised \$40,000 toward the challenge. Grant proposals into Collins Foundation and the Oregon Community Foundation for the additional \$35,000.
- Regular meetings are taking place with DHS to identify families to participate in the Enhanced Support for Foster Parents program.
- Challenge with the Behavioral Care Network (BCN). Enhanced Support for Foster Parents is designed to prevent disruptive placements. Currently in Oregon in the Behavioral Rehabilitation program, if children are failing in foster care, they are moved to treatment foster care or residential treatment. The question is: should the local health authority pay for positive behavioral supports, or should the funds come from BRS? Progress is being made in discussions. However, CCS needs to be able to bill for positive behavioral support or raise substantially more funds.

Next meeting: September 11, 2017