

Minutes

Services to Children and Families Committee Meeting

April 11, 2007

1. Review Agenda, Approve Minutes and Set New Agenda Items

Present: Laura O'Neal, Co-Chair; June Koenig, Co-Chair; Cyndy Benson, Heather Skeens, Kathy Hitchcock, Tanya McDougal, Velvet Perdue, Steve Hayes, Lisa Roberson, Denise Boyette, Dannette Smith, Denise Shaffer, Cathy Dixon, Judi Akers, Tom Brewer, Daphne Green, Debbie Pershing, Warren Ludwig, Karma Warren, Andrew Payne, Kaye Radford, Keith Davis, Beverly Daniel, Phil Lassiter, Maureen Pleil, Laura Elmore, Patrick Betancourt, Terri Reichert, Rick Zechman, Sara Mims, Chris Ollis, Liula Alexander, Betty Kelly, Susunna Birdsong, Ruth Harrison, Veronica McPhatter, Angie Stephenson, Cindy Holman, Andre Payne

Conclusion: Committee co-chairs convened the meeting and welcomed members, asking attendees to introduce themselves and to sign the sign-in sheet. The March meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
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2. CFSR Preliminary Findings-Joann Lamm/Laura O'Neal

Discussion: Joann Lamm applauded the three counties that participated in the Federal Review for their hard work and effort. This was the 2nd review done for our state. This review was more intense than last review. ACFSA state representative, Linda Mitchell commented on how well services were provided to families. We are seeing positive results since our Multiple Response System, Family Centered practice and our System of Care practice. Preliminary outcome is that we most likely will not pass the outcomes in the review. However, our state has made significant improvements compared to our last review. Ms. Lamm discussed the powerpoint presentation that was created by the review team during the review debriefing. Strengths noted: strong leadership; collaboration with all levels and with stakeholders within counties as well as with the state government; MRS received big accolades; System of Care a strength; Child and Family Team meetings are positive and are being used by other agencies; great work being done with Shared Parenting; placements for sibling together and ensuring meaningful contact was impressive; attention paid to proximity of placements; attended to foster children's health, mental health, dental and educational needs; and an extraordinary level of services to families. Areas needing improvement: notable differences between In-Home and Foster care services as it relates to ensuring health, mental health, dental and educational needs as well as locating and involving absent parents; closing In-Home cases too soon which may result in multiple reports; how we involve children under age of 12 in planning and how we came up with the age of 12 (age of adoption consent); absolute need to involve fathers no matter where they are located; greater contact with parents while a child is in foster care; not assigning cases to the appropriate track; how we address the Native American identification (race codes alone are not sufficient); courts not willing to TPR, courts changing or deciding for themselves what the permanent plan should be in the

case, lengthy time for TPR appeals; concern of appearance of “long term foster care” and the provision of LINKS services (mixed messages from youth were received and indicated not being a part of teams or case plan development); targeted recruitment of foster homes (need to look at foster care population and target recruitment from those stats); cross county issues (ACF views NC as a state with no county lines); concurrent planning and alternative planning for children. Appears that the court system is our weakest link. Discussion held about bringing a focus group together with judges and legal staff from the 3 counties involved in the review. Next step is that a Program Improvement Plan will be developed. If any county is interested in helping with this, please email or notify Joann Lamm or either committee co-chair. Candice Britt will be taking the lead on developing the PIP. ACF does want to promote our Multiple Response System. No financial implications from failing review at this time. If we do not make our benchmarks indicated in the PIP, this could result in financial implications. We are looking the state's IV-E federal review being June 24th through June 27th, 2008

Conclusion: Program Improvement Plan will be developed. If any county is interested in assisted with this plan, please notify either co-chair or Joann Lamm.

Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
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<p>3. Rewrite of Notice to the Responsible Individual of the Case Decision-Terri Reichert/Sara Mims</p>
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Discussion: It was reported that more time is needed before seeking approval. Final approval on the letter with the rewrites is pending. The policy needs clarification and address and some issues surrounding the court process need to be ironed out.

Conclusion: A decision was made by the group to bring back the workgroup to revise and review the final version of updated policy.

Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
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<p>4. QSAP policy/fiscal note-Sara Mims</p>
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Discussion: It was reported that the workgroup reviewed the policy and had more comments on the redraft that had to be addressed before being brought before committee for possible approval. Some questions are surrounding where to put the policy within the Children Services manual. Concern was discussed regarding only two counties were represented on this work group. An additional request for additional counties was made.

Conclusion: Sampson and Catawba were two counties that volunteered to be added to the work group. The revised/updated policy will be brought before committee at the June meeting.

Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
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