

DFS Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Location:	Clark County Department of Family Services, 121 S. Martin Luther King Las Vegas, NV 89106
Date:	March 21, 2019 8:30 am – 10:00 am

Membership:		Present	Absent
Public: Matthew Vosburg, Foster Parent Samantha Charles, DFS	Dr. Lisa Morris-Hibbler	X - Phone	
	Dr. Tammy Malich		X
	Shelia Parks	X	
	Crystal Bomar	X	
	Judge Frank Sullivan	X	
	Andre Bailey	X	
	Matthew Cox	X - Phone	
	Dashun Jackson	X - Phone	
	Donna Smith	X - Phone	
	Denise Tanata	X	
Carly Aldis	X		
County/Department Management:	Tim Burch	Administrator	X
	Paula Hammack	Assistant Director	X
	Jill Marano	Assistant Director X	
	Eboni Washington	Assistant Director	X
	Judy Tudor	Assistant Director X	
	Mari Parlade	DFS Strategic Initiatives Manager X	

Agenda Item 1:	Call to order and welcome	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting was called to order at 8:35 am and roll was called by Chair Sheila Parks 	
Agenda Item 2:	Public Comments	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
Agenda Item 3:	Approval of February 21, 2018 Minutes (For Possible Action)	CAC Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved 	
Agenda Item 4:	Welcome CAC Reappointed/Appointed Members & Perform Office of Oath	For Possible Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carly Aldis was sworn in and took her oath of office. 	
Agenda Item 5:	CAC Membership Terms and Attendance	Discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mari welcomed Carly Aldis and thanked members for their renewals. Mari discussed the CAC membership and terms ensuring that members are aware of their expirations dates and the importance of notifying Linda or her when they are going to be absent, in order to have a quorum. Mari informed the members of the (4) primary topic areas of discussion, 1) Prevention (Implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act), 2) Intervention & Accountability (DFS Internal & External Communication), 3) Ombudsman Report and 4) Youth Supports (Independent Living & Transitional Aged Youth Supports) 	
Agenda Item 6:	Department of Family Services Report Out (Information only)	DFS Management

Prevention: Implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

- Jill provided an update stating that the State is not going to enact on the start date of October 2019, and is requesting a delay of the implementation.
- There is a 2-year implementation (October 2021) where, the State has an option to opt-in every 90- days at the beginning of each fiscal quarter.
There are 4 FFPSA state-wide workgroups (Safety, Prevention, Placement and Fiscal) creating action plans that identify steps to be completed in order to implement and move forward.
- Placement is the main focus in regards to eliminating or limiting the use of congregate care due to the fiscal penalties associated with FFPSA.
- The Federal government defines congregate care as staffed facilities with seven or more children in placement, with the exception of a sibling group together in a foster home. This would affect half of St. Jude’s and Genesis Group Homes because of staffed employees and there being acceptable house-parent models.
- Parents in the house-parent model are employees of the foster care agency who live in the home 24/7. The Federal government is trying to avoid the disruption of a caregiver every 8-hours.
- The Federal government allows a group type setting called “Qualified Residential Treatment Program” (QRTP). Some of our agencies are close to meeting the QRTP qualifications and have the required assessments needed to be admitted to the program. There would have to be court oversight and approval for continuous stay in these programs. Agencies have to be accredited by one of the three different accrediting agencies - St. Jude’s is already accredited by one of those agencies.
- In re-purposing Child Haven, our plan is to setup a “Gate Keeper” process. The process would include exhausting all available options (i.e., relatives and foster homes) before placing a child in shelter care.
- A culture change is needed for DFS and foster parents for emergency placements, including taking children to the foster parent’s homes at any time, day or night. We are working on changing our messaging at the front-end, as well as examining the process within the Placement Team.
- We currently have a program called, “I CARE Homes” (Interim Care Homes) for emergency placements. These are homes that are willing to take children anytime of the day or night up to 90-days. This is similar to a shelter program, but the child would still have to move and go to another home. We want the first placement to be the best placement for the child until they achieve permanency. This program has not been as successful, as there were concerns of the 90-day commitment. The daily rate is not different, but the homes receive a monthly \$500 retainer whether children are in the home or not. We are open to ideas and suggestions to improve this program.
- There was discussion regarding the lack of communication between the foster parents and CPS workers. It was suggested that foster parents have immediate communication and support on the front-end for the needs and services of the child.
- An update was provided on the PRIME application. Information could not be exchanged between PRIME and UNITY, and the matching function was very difficult considering licensing restrictions. PRIME is used to track the numbers of open beds. We are looking into other products used in other communities to help with emergency placements options.

Intervention & Accountability (internal & external communication)

- Samantha Charles, DFS Public Information Administrator provided an overview of their responsibilities, which included ways of dealing with Public Relations of foster care and how we communicate internally and externally with the community.
- They are currently working on social media and understand that social media is a little

different in Child Welfare. They want to ensure that the messaging is sensitive on how DFS communicates to the community. They are in the process of implementing communication that will improve messages with social media. DFS has access to Facebook, Pinterest, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr and Next-door.

- For the month of April, National Child Abuse Prevention Month, Judy Tudor will appear on Clark County Chronicles Channel 4 with 10 minute intervals airing all month. She will be speaking on what we do relating to Child Welfare that is specific to what parents can do throughout the month of April, and every day throughout the year to prevent child abuse.
- There is an important event coming up next month of an HBO documentary about foster care. The CAC members will be invited, and would like future updates on the social media.
- Samantha encouraged the committee members to provide feedback to her on suggestions and ideas to improve internal and external communications.

Ombudsman Report

- In regards to the Ombudsman office, there were concerns of having one staff to answer questions and whether the office is advertised other than on the County web-site for people that have issues with the department.
- The Ombudsman Report was reviewed by the committee and suggestions were made regarding the policy on responses, tracking the types of complaints and trends. Another suggestion from CAC members was to include the Assistant Directors in the chain of command for these complaints.
- There are monthly meetings with the Administrator and the Ombudsman.
- The Ombudsman monthly report will be added as a standing agenda item.

Youth Supports: Transitional Aged Youth Supports

- Jill provided an update on the marketing strategies for the MAD City Money Event that included IL workers reaching out to youth on their caseloads, working with the SFC agencies, and sending information to CASA. Flyers were made to recruit kids and volunteers at the event.
- Currently have 79 youth signed up – we would like to have 100 youth to participate in the event. All youths are able to attend from Youth Parole, Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth and Nevada Partners. Older youth can also attend the event.
- Shelia provided an update on her attendance at one of the focus groups facilitated by Denise Parker and AEC. Other stakeholders in attendance were from Foster Kinship, Foster Change, Tele-Focus and CASA. However, there were no former youth in attendance.
- The focus was on systemic issues regarding improving retention and morale among staff and retaining and supporting foster parents. **The focus group will submit all recommendations to DFS management.**
- Jill provided an update on the HUD 100-Day Challenge to End Youth Homelessness - there is a meeting next week in Illinois to finalize their strategies. **DFS will provide a follow-up at our next meeting.**
- Judy provided an update on policies and procedures.
- This will be a standard agenda Item for future meetings.
- Judy and Samantha will be working on a process to update foster parents and stakeholders by creating videos, and with articles in the Caregiver Courier to inform them of updates on policies, including website.
- The policies on Kinship support, back-end of the Safety Model and the Confirming Safe Environment Assessment are coming out this month and into next month.
- The Confirming Safe Environment Assessment will address any negative perceptions regarding placement of children in foster homes. (i.e., language, race, and gender, etc.)
- **Since DFS and CASA work closely together DFS will provide them with copies of the**

	policies.	
Agenda Item 7:	CAC Discussion &/or Recommendations on the Top 3 Priorities (delineated in Section V)	For Possible Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please see information in Section V 	
Agenda Item 8:	Informational items/Announcements	(Information Only)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Youth graduation is May 29, 2019 – sponsored by CASA Foundation and Children Advocacy Alliance • Planting of Pin Wheels at Family Court @ 12 noon is April 12, 2019 • Crystal Bomar announced that the City of Henderson is incorporating a committee to make it more comfortable and acceptable for the LGBTQ community to address their concerns and questions. She was appointed as the community liaison. 	
Agenda Item 8:	Comments by General Public	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	
Agenda Item 9:	Adjournment – 9:56 am	
	Next meeting will be Thursday, April 18, 2019 @ 8:30 am	