

Southern California Youth Permanency Collaboration

“Permanency should be as fundamental as safety for all youth in the system”

Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2008

Vista del Mar

3200 Motor Ave

Los Angeles, CA 90034

Attendees:

Jeff Griffin – Orange County CFS

Greg Manning – Orange County Health Care Agency

Melanie McCallum – Orange County CFS

Jan-Michael Silbaugh – CASA Orange County – Creating Family Connections

Felicia Martin – Canyon Acres

Tiffany Collins – Los Angeles County DCFS

Bob Friend – CPYP

Linda Labrizzi – Hollygrove Family Finding

David White – Los Angeles County DCFS

Art Mayfield – Los Angeles County Probation

Riverside County DCFS – WELCOME

San Bernardino County DCFS - WELCOME

Review of Minutes from January: Minutes approved.

Mission and Vision Statement: Formally adopted – please see attached document

Case example of collaboration between Orange and Los Angeles Counties – Jeff G & Tiffany C

- Involved a dependent youth of Orange County with a prior Los Angeles County adoption
- Jeff was unable to secure information regarding the birth family so he called Tiffany and LA DCFS P3 program for assistance.
- Tiffany was able to apply the recently passed law allowing for the opening / review of adoption records and provide a thorough summary of the family health history, relatives on both maternal and paternal sides and placement history for the youth.

CPYP Updates – Bob Friend

- Technical assistance with the 10 Pioneer 2 counties has been completed
- 6 new counties – “Pioneer 3” have begun the Assessment Process and receiving Technical Assistance including Riverside and San Bernardino – Welcome to our collaboration!
- 6 Steps to Family Finding paper has been published (**insert internet link here**)
- Family Finding and Engagement – Organizational Practice Guidelines – pending publication
- Presenting at: National Convening on Youth Permanency – May 2008 in Washington D.C.
- Summary of permanency services targeting 20 specific former foster youth who exited the foster care system without any connections – pending publication. Primary conclusion = There is NO success without permanency!

Basics of Family Finding and Engagement: Linda Labrizzi and group discussion

- Importance of ongoing technical assistance and support for case carrying workers

Southern California Youth Permanency Collaboration

“Permanency should be as fundamental as safety for all youth in the system”

- Wide variance of the level of documentation within the Child Welfare chart related to family finding and engagement
- Wide variance in the level of skills and motivation to have the work done on their cases among child welfare workers / supervisors
- Challenging to sustain the work: When and how to engage the youth in the process, time and staffing constraints, misconceptions about the process, unrealistic expectation to find the perfect fit right away, changes in workers, delay in securing approvals, funding constraints, power and control issues within the team, poor communication among team members, how do outside vendors join the team / review CFS files
- Importance of identifying the key action people to have on the team and to get the buy-in / acceptance of the case carrying worker
- Delicate balance between getting “everyone” on board and delaying the start of the work versus getting started with whomever you can and try to get the rest on board later
- Critical that the people doing the family finding and engagement work have a relationship or will establish a relationship with the child
- Snowball of excitement that becomes contagious once members on a team have a positive experience with this process
- Preparation important for both the youth AND the family. Some of the families that we are uniting our youth with may have their own issues related to permanency.
- Importance to recognize and celebrate the successes and hard work of everyone involved

Orange County TA - Catholic Community Services of Western Washington – Jeff G and Greg M

- 1x/month day long sessions for April, May and June 2008
- Funded through CPYP grant
- Includes CFS staff from all the divisions, Greg M, Canyon Acres and CASA CFC
- ½ day of didactic training followed by 2 ½ days of active case work and consultation
- Excellent practice guide available on their website: www.ccsww.org

LA DCFS Older Adoption contract – David H and Linda L

- Participants: UCLA, 5 Acres, Star View, Hathaway-Sycamores, Vista del Mar
- Development of a toolkit to use in overcoming the obstacles related to adopting older youth
- First 2 days were focused on skill building

LA DCFS Placement Crisis – Tiffany C and David W

- Several hundred foster youth will need to be moved from their current foster / group home placements in the next few months
- Challenge of viewing this as an opportunity to implement permanency efforts for these youth versus viewing this process as an opportunity to find a new placement
- Specialized TDM-like meetings to be held for each of the youth with a wide-range of public and private agencies at the table to address all life domains

5 Acres – Permanent Connections Team – David H

- Reorganization of the Family Finding and Engagement efforts within the agency
- Modeled after the LA DCFS P3 and Wraparound programs – Therapist, case manager, family finding / engagement staff, youth partner, parent partner
- Increase integration of these efforts into all of the other programs within the agency

Southern California Youth Permanency Collaboration

“Permanency should be as fundamental as safety for all youth in the system”

LA County Probation Permanency Efforts – Art M

- Unit of Deputy Probation Officers within the Probation Department’s Placement and Quality Assurance unit
- Job duties include review the court records for both accuracy / appropriateness of services and progress towards permanency for all cases at each 6-month court hearing
- Permanency probation staff are assigned to work with the case carrying DPO to provide assistance in gaining permanency for the wards
- Successful in securing multiple adoptions / legal guardianships!
- Working to develop flexible work schedules to meet the needs of the families

Next meeting:

Date: Thursday July 24, 2008
Time: 1-3pm
Location: Canyon Acres Children and Family Services
160 S Fairmont Blvd
Anaheim Hills, CA 92808
(714) 998-3272