

## **Tri-County Meeting Minutes April 10, 2007**

Present: Kern County- Larissa Ogden, Jeanette Ross, Kristie Esquivel, Katherine Turkish, Angela Look, and Tom Baca; Fresno County-Veronica Salmeron, Annette Jones, and Jose Varga; San Luis Obispo County-Nita Kenyon, Patrick Considine, Katie McCain and Summer Frappier; Madera County-Donna Lutz and Paige Turner Sambueso

The following agenda had previously been distributed via e-mail:

- 1). Introductions/Welcome
- 2). Additions to Agenda-next meeting dates
- 3). Fresno written process and other Counties input.
- 4). Bakersfield- a). Use of Interns and how they are working in other counties if they have Interns. b). trees and if they have any pictures or outlines of how others did theirs. c).successes but also the challenges and what was learned.
- 5). Discussion- what your county has learned this year, Lessons Learned. Report on next year's plans. How are you sustaining your efforts, how are your expanding your efforts.
- 6). Announcements-Web site additions of forms, processes, procedures, Darla Henry TA, All County Call (May 23<sup>rd</sup> 10-11 am), Other

Kern requested that discussion of Heart Galleries be added to the agenda.

- 1). The following dates were set for the next meetings: July 17 in San Luis Obispo, October 23 in Fresno, and January 15, 2008 in Bakersfield.
- 3). Fresno distributed an outline of the process they follow and asked for discussion regarding when and how to involve caseworkers in the Discovery and Engagement steps. A concern is that when caseworkers are not actively involved in these two steps, then when the information is provided to them with the expectation that they take over the planning, continued engagement and visitation steps, because of the demands on them, work often stops. San Luis pointed out that Mary Stone Smith completed an excellent training in their county and stressed the importance of step one being the Establishment of the Team which includes the caseworker, supervisor, other county workers and other community resource people. A discussion took place

regarding expanding permanency into other areas of each county department. As part of this, a regular, formal review of permanency appears to be important. Sacramento's process was discussed as a possible model.

4a.). Pros and Cons of the use of interns were discussed. Role clarity is critical as well as assuring that if the interns meet with the youth, the contact with their caseworker is maintained and consistent. Both Kern and Fresno have successfully utilized interns to increase the number of staff hours available to do permanency work.

4b.). Lack of time to keep trees up to date appears to be a common problem. They can be an effective visual training and motivational tool.

4c.). The use of Heart Galleries is just one tool for child specific recruitment and so must be considered as one strategy in a plan.

5). Lessons Learned by each county:

**Kern-**The need for consistent staff needs to be a focus. It is important to plan for staff turn-over and changes. Some strategies might be cross training, training as many staff as possible initially, use of interns, and trying to minimize changes. Having management support and active by-in is critical. Involve Wrap and other Providers as soon as possible in the training and implementation of the process. In hind site the cons of doing a pilot with one unit makes spreading the model more difficult. Involving permanency planning supervisors is important from the beginning.

**San Luis Obispo-**The need for data and the ability to measure what one is doing more often is important. If too much focus is only on the process and not the outcomes, a county doesn't know if they are accomplishing what they need to in order to obtain permanency connections. In order to spread permanency through out their county they must work through the supervisors. Also, because of staff changes they see the need to expand the size of their CPYP agency Task Force so if important people leave, others understand what is happening and can step into the role. Administrative support is critical. They are exploring coordinating with their Working Toward Higher Standards processes. Also, they are focusing on the youth voice being part of permanency planning.

**Fresno-**It is important to have management actively supporting the project and visually supporting what should be happening. More supervisors need to be actively on board. Time to bring the District Attorneys and Judges on

board is important also. There must be supports for the youth and for the social workers so community partners and collaborations are important.

6). Announcements:

CPYP State web site-It was suggested that power point presentations on permanency be included.

Darla Henry-Fresno will attempt to get a large room for the June 5<sup>th</sup> session so other counties can send some people. Hand outs for the first day of her training were provided one set per county.

Fresno is having a Sibling Spring Fling to keep siblings who are not placed together connected. Counties discussed sibling connections as part of permanency and how to facilitate. Fresno is also having a Let's Talk session with care providers and others and Bob Lewis on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. A VIP after party follows with the group home unit, social workers, and others who have been involved with their project from the beginning.

Madera is having a community CPYP Kick Off on May 2 with Bob Lewis. This is occurring at the same time as their Heart Gallery opening. Madera is doing remarkable in their efforts in establishing a community and agency CPYP Team. They have developed a written plan and are going forward with implementation with the hopes of being part of the CPYP State Project in 2008.

Some of the youth who are in the project in Kern County make up a Youth Advisory Group. One of the goals of this group is to learn what permanency means for them. Kern County has been awarded a 2.4 Million dollar four year Federal Adoptions Opportunity Grant. Parts of the grant include cooperative efforts with the CPYP project.