Family Connections Oregon
Task Force Meeting
September 19, 2013

Introductions

Present:

Katharine Cahn
Sydney Putnam
Elizabeth Hisatake
Stacy Lake
Angie Blackwell
Angela Rogers
Timothy Phipps
NeCola Henderson
Jason Walborn
Melissa Grier
Lisa Lewis
Maurita Johnson
Marty Lowry
Jennifer Kelly
Tonya Ferguson
Joel Broussard
Sarah Kopplin
Suzie Barrios
John Radich
Sherril Kuhns
Sonya Olsen-Hasek
Alli Schisler
Jennifer Blakeslee
Carrie Furrer
Rene DuBois
Michelle Warren
Kristen Chappell
Laurie Price
Lois Day
Ted Keys
Kellie Herold
Margaret Carter
Ruth Taylor
Amy Baker (p.m.)
Sandy Bumpus (a.m.)
Shary Mason

Not Present Today: Pam Bergreen, Charity Biggs, Jerry Burns, Darline D’Angelo, Carolyn Graf, Rhonda Helser, Leslie Johnson, Nadja Jones, Doug Mares, Jennifer Myllenek, David Pike, Jason Walling

Introduction of Lois Day by Laurie Price

Welcome: Lois Day

This is a time of transformation for the child welfare system with the goal to reduce the number of children interacting with the system. While the foster care system sometimes “works”—and there’s nothing bad about foster care—it is designed to be a temporary service for families. Foster care is not meant to be a solution. Children are best raised in a family setting. Anytime we can avoid disrupting the family system, children are going to be healthy and safe. The more connected the child stays with the family (extended or nuclear) while in foster care, the less disruption to the family system.

Current DHS strategies to reduce children in foster care:

1. Reduce entries into foster care system
2. Reduce amount of time spent in foster care
3. If children are in care and cannot go home, speed up permanency plan
4. Tend to children’s cultural, educational, health and emotional needs while in foster care
5. Looking for ways to increase family voice
6. Provide rich service array
7. Implementing differential response, to allow for less punitive measures
8. Permanency round tables (extensive staffing with case workers for children in care for 2+ years)
9. Agenda around meeting education and health needs for children in care

Hopefully, the FCO project will interact with the implementation of DHS’s strategies. This grant allows us to find the best way to connect the children with families.

Families should have the expectation that DHS provides these meeting services. The work that comes out of this group will inform the safe and equitable services for families.

Children have a right to be safe and should have the expectation that the adults in their life are working hard for their safety.

**Review of progress made since last meeting: Katharine**

- Increased tribal voice at the table
- Clarity surrounding role of the task force: What does it take to sustain and make consistent this blend of services (FF and FGC)

While Oregon is a leader in family meetings, we still cannot assure all families that they will receive certain sorts of meetings

Update on intervention: 3 sites, families are up and running

1 family in Douglas County (Options Counseling)
2 families in Lane County (DHS employee)
3 families in Multnomah County (Options Counseling)

**Review agenda and plan for the day: Marty**

**Introduction of subcommittees**

**Subcommittee workgroups**

**Facilitated input and feedback activity**

Subcommittee recaps:

**Workforce Development:**

- Emphasis on being respectful of current processes.
- Must be open to shifting model if people are engaged but it isn’t getting children home.

**Model Subcommittee:**

- The earlier, the better for meetings.
- Define successful meeting
- Ongoing monitoring when evaluation ends

**Systems Engagement and Alignment**

- Alignment for sustainability: Begin legislative communications process
• Develop communications package, but don’t make it top down

Infrastructure Subcommittee:
• Don’t duplicate efforts of other subcommittees
• Messaging the model as a piece of the current work already begin done

Parent Leadership Subcommittee:
• Seeking help from districts to recruit parent leaders and mentors
• Immediately introduce parents to parent mentors to help guide them through the system
• Sensitive to differences between counties when implementing parent leadership model

Feedback Opportunity:
1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree
5. Don’t Know

1. The Family Connections Task Force has all of the right people at the table
   a. 1
   b. 7
   c. 20
   d. 3
   e. 1

Verbal feedback: Need more line staff or people who do the work, we need those who are invited to attend

2. I have a clear sense of the vision and principles of the Family Connections Task Force
   a. 1
   b. 3
   c. 20
   d. 6
   e. 1

Verbal feedback: We need to help new people who are joining the taskforce understand the project and model rather than assuming they understand, clearly communicating the model is difficult

3. People and organizations that are critical to the success of the Family Connections initiative are actively engaged
   a. 0
   b. 9
   c. 14
   d. 1
Verbal feedback: Not enough representation from the people actually doing the work, some important people who are on the list are not here—these people need to be contacted to see if they are still the right person.

4. I am confident that Family Connections Task Force members will work together constructively to set a plan for sustainable practice
   a. 2
   b. 1
   c. 17
   d. 9
   e. 3

Verbal feedback: There’s a perception that there are too many initiatives that are alike.

5. I have a clear sense of my roles and responsibilities as a Task Force member
   a. 0
   b. 7
   c. 197
   d. 4
   e. 1

Verbal Feedback: Not enough clarity around the facilitator’s role.

6. I see opportunities to move this project forward when I return to work
   a. 0
   b. 3
   c. 13
   d. 13
   e. 3

Verbal Feedback: Inspired some DHS administrators to check in with the coordinators and supervisors in their county, would like an intake/CPS worker at the table, easy ways to interact with tribal representatives/ICWA.

7. My Family Connections Subcommittee has clear, attainable goals and objectives
   a. 0
   b. 8
   c. 17
   d. 3
   e. 3

Verbal Feedback: Unclear about legislature’s timeline or session schedule.

8. Other Family Connections Subcommittees have clear, attainable goals and objectives
   a. 0
   b. 3
   c. 17
Verbal Feedback: Didn’t get a chance to determine if the other subcommittees have clear goals and objectives

9. I will have opportunities to provide input to other Family Connections Subcommittees
   a. 0
   b. 0
   c. 16
   d. 14
   e. 2

10. My Family Connections Subcommittee has a plan to meet and communicate often enough to get the work done
    a. 0
    b. 2
    c. 19
    d. 9
    e. 2

11. I have additional feedback or input that I would like to provide
    a. 4
    b. 11
    c. 7
    d. 4
    e. 5

Facilitator and scribe session:
Avoid jargon for subcommittees (especially parent leadership)
Reevaluate the strategy behind how to incorporate family voice into every group and how to diversify the parent leadership group
New taskforce members were not well prepared or knowledgeable about the model
Not enough time for feedback from other groups
Begin every taskforce with a re-orientation of the model details
Cooperation between the evaluation and the systems change piece
Opportunities for preparatory communication work with the Legislature prior to full recommendations
Monthly meetings or phone calls for facilitators to ensure subcommittees are working collaboratively and not duplicating efforts
Keeping the spirit of the practice alive in these taskforce meetings