

Members present:

Marci Roth  
Angela English  
Stacey McNeely  
Wilma Brier  
Katy Dunn  
Laura Brown

Agenda

- I. Agency Update
- II. LGBTQ response
- III. Foster Parent Survey
- IV. MCCRCP Membership update

Minutes from last meeting

### **Agency Update**

837 calls to screening unit

- “Which is interesting” the 800 number goes to the state so we are wondering how that will effect us. The calls goes to the state and gets routed to the jurisdiction. But if there are too many calls, supposedly someone takes a message. It’s unclear how that works.
- Is that more than usual for a month? Angela: seems like less. Could be bc not in school.
- All the numbers seem low-- likely all bc it’s July
- Except the resource homes-- that one seems more typical
- The children who left care number will likely increase in November. Older, transitioning youth tied in to the agency (i.e. still getting services and \$) have likely excited out of care but there cases will be closed in the system. Those fall off in November. So this number really shows that those kids needed that support
  - AND kids did call their workers. Did ask for support.
  - Sometimes kids were sent home right before pandemic and case was kept open in case they needed services during COVID
  - What does the new non-CPS number mean? (Angela is going to track this answer down)

Biggest problem: employees! Tough time finding good folks. Some additional employees would like to go. Even the temporary service is having a hard time getting temp social workers to come.

-But also the temp workers have a lot of restrictions. (Can’t drive students, etc)

Case load numbers are high. And some numbers like-- reunification of families-- are low because the social workers don’t have the bandwidth to get the work done as efficiently.

- But also child welfare is protected-- we never get closed for lack of staff as other agencies might.
- If you know any social workers, send them our way!! -- Angela
- START program has a particular need right now. (working with families dealing with substance abuse issues)

Center for Excellence Project: we are continuing to work on this. One of the outcomes is going to be bringing more foster parents in and working with the Bio and Foster parents together.

Working on recruiting in new foster parents to work with Bio parents.

- One of the big problems is that our families/bio families do not always have phones
- Are some of the foster parents finding any hostility from the bio family?
  - The social worker is assessing how receptive the bio family is likely to be.
  - So far most of it has worked out well. But we recognize that it is a raw situation to have happen a few hours after your child has been placed with a foster family
  - Everyone is new to this so we are working to figure it all out.
  - It's a statewide policy now-- Anne Arundel County has been using it for a while
  - Agency wants it to work. Can see real benefit for the bio parent and child. You can see how it definitely is helping with the adjustment AND not destroying family ties.

## **LGBTQ Response**

Angela: It is written in the record if a youth has identified but the worker won't bring it up unless the youth wants to discuss it, feels comfortable, and decides to bring it up.

Marci: is it talked about with a prospective foster family? Angela: Yes. because we want to make sure if we place a student with a family, we want to make sure they are not placed with a hostile environment.

- we also have LGBTQ families so we especially look for safety in those families.
- some states do not allow LGBTQ families to foster but we do
- Sometimes a student is forced to leave their home of origin because of their sexuality so we try to be especially welcoming and clear that we are not passing judgment.

Stacey: What do we do with this information?

And how does that interact with what we feel our role is as a panel.

- Look thoughtfully through the answers and seek places/areas where we can help
  - i) Perhaps especially places where we could offer resources where they seem not to have any

Marci: GREAT plan-- let's all take a deeper look before next week.

## **Survey for Foster Families**

- 1) Does the survey change question formats too frequently?
- 2) Can we assure them of anonymity or confidentiality?
  - a) Add language and check format/tool we use?
- 3) Consider adding "Do you feel like..." to some of the questions

- 4) Angela: what we often hear from the parents about the resource worker is that they do not feel like they are treated well.
- 5) Stacey: Are we concerned about length?
  - a) We don't want it to be too long bc fewer people tend to complete long surveys
  - b) Marci: survey monkey will tell us how long it is
  - c) We could break it up into two surveys
  - d) We could offer a raffle for completion
- 6) Laura: It would be great if people could look at it again and make any suggestions for edits?
  - a) There are some other surveys out there. NY City did a foster parent survey during the Pandemic
    - i) (they were often struggling bc of finances)
    - ii) Angela: we happen to know we didn't have that problem. Gave gift baskets including a \$100 gift card. Many of them asked us to keep the gift card and give them to someone who was more in need.

Any feedback from Annual Report?

-Angela: not that I know of.

Next steps:

- Read Survey and suggest edits (directly in google.doc)
- Read LGBTQ [data](#) and come with any gleanings