

CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL
CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSFUL YOUTH TRANSITIONS COMMITTEE
Meeting Notes – September 7, 2016 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Introductions and Warm-Up Exercise

Gordon and Rochelle welcomed Committee members. Gordon asked everyone to introduce themselves and then imagine that they would be moving to Mars and share what one item they would take with them. A good time was had by all as each imagined colleagues going off with books, music, dogs, and even a spouse.

Priority Employment

David Ambroz shared the draft Model Policy for Priority Hiring of Foster Youth intended for use by Counties and thanked Nisha and Rochelle for their edits. Yali Lincroft offered to add language to the background section regarding a federal bill that addresses the topic. It was decided to circulate the latest version to CDSYT Committee members for one last round of comments, due on September 30th. The draft will then be finalized and presented to the full Child Welfare Council on December 7th.

Housing and Runaway/Homeless Youth

The Permanency Committee members joined the CDSYT Committee for this discussion. Paul Curtis provided background on the efforts thus far to develop a model policy and noted that CDSS issued All-County Letter on the topic in April and soon will be following up with an All-County Information Notice providing details.

Bob Friend advocated for the model policy to include requirements for a deeper engagement with young people that focuses on what youth want, not what we as service providers want for them. Youth should be asked questions regarding why they are running away, what they are running from or running to, rather than being blamed for runaway behavior. We should look at what they are protesting and not regard them as “resistant.”

Judge Elizabeth Lee pointed out that for Probation foster youth the consequences for runaway behavior are more severe, i.e., a warrant, arrest and detention, whereas for Child Welfare foster youth the focus is more on safety. Members of both Committees agreed that it is important for the Courts, Probation, Child Welfare, and Community Care Licensing, and, of course, youth, to be involved in developing guidance for how to work with youth who runaway so that they can achieve permanence. Education has a role too in that the California Department of Education can share the guidance with school personnel so that they can be involved in supporting runaway youth when appropriate.

Cheryl Rave offered that solutions must include doing a far better job of getting to know the youth, and Gordon stressed the need to have family members involved in the Child and Family Team meetings so that they have opportunities to be a base of support to the youth.

Rochelle Trochtenberg offered that it is not necessary for law enforcement to be involved with runaway youth all the time as is current practice. Runaway should not be regarded as behavior that must be penalized. Current CCL Regulations need to be changed to allow for more enlightened and successful practices that support youth and lead to permanency in their lives. Anna Johnson shared her experience from when she was a teacher and worked with runaway youth and found that it was important to quickly understand the youth and take their developmental level into account. Yali Lincroft gave information about an Alameda County program that involves a Bay Area Legal Aid attorney talking with youth who run away. Alameda County also has a contract with WestCoast Children’s Center to provide mental health services to runaway youth. Some counties have specialty units for runaway youth with protocols that include a debrief with youth regarding why they ran away and resources to meet their immediate needs.

For next steps, it was agreed that representatives of both Committees plus Law Enforcement and CCL should get together and “noodle” the elements of a model guidance to counties. Bob Friend will reach out to the Permanency Committee for volunteers and forward names to Paul. Paul will follow up with CCL to request a representative. When the expanded work group is formed, Paul will facilitate a meeting to move the project forward.

Psychotropic Medications

Rochelle called on Anna to provide information on a recent report by the State Auditor on this topic. Anna played a video that summarized the report's findings. Carol Brown stated that the report was presented to the State Legislature, which had approved a \$1.7 million allocation for 42 public health nurses to monitor foster youth's use of psychotropic medications. The four counties from which sample cases were reviewed have hired consultants to advise on improving protocols and practices.

Rochelle observed that this report confirmed what we already believed to be true, and, rather than focus on the report, we should now turn our attention to looking at what mental health services should be provided in addition to medications and fill in the missing pieces in the quality of care. Anna Johnson agreed with Rochelle that we should continue to build on the progress made over the past year, which is not reflected in the report that used 2014 data. We should now be gathering data on best practices and looking at how to fill missing pieces in a comprehensive quality of care approach to mental health services for youth in foster care. John Lipp reported that CASA received funding from Kaiser to look at this issue.

Some ideas for consideration as the work group continues to study the issue were:

- Figure out how primary care physicians can be informed about the requirement to involve the court when prescribing to youth in foster care.
- Suggest ways that doctors can be informed about the requirement to follow up 30 days after prescribing medications.
- Involve the State Superintendent of Public Instruction who can let schools across the state know about the issue and the role schools should play in supporting mental health services for youth in foster care, including counseling, therapy, and, only when necessary, medications.
- Seek better data than paid claims to learn more about what treatments youth currently receive.
- Remove barriers to requiring that "evidence-based" mental health services provided to youth in foster care.
- Look at how to ensure the Electronic Health Record and Health and Education Passport are kept up-to-date and used in decision-making.
- Coordinate this effort with Katie A. Settlement activities, Continuum of Care Reform, Managed Care and Fee for Service policies, and the CWS – Digital Services project.
- Ask the Data Integration and Information Sharing Committee if they can provide information on both the quantity and quality of mental health services currently provided to youth in foster care and also on the frequency of and reasons for mental health services being denied.
- Examine the current state/county oversight structure for mental health services.
- Seek funding for the work group from VOCA, MHSA, and/or LCFF.

As next steps, the work group will meet via conference call to begin studying broader issue of mental health services for youth in foster care, with or without psychotropic medications being part of the treatment plan. Sylvia will send an e-mail to work group members to find a date and time for the meeting.

Education

Paige Fern reported that the issues related to Education Rights Holder were now being considered by the Legislature, and she will monitor and report on the progress being made. Pending the outcome of legislative decisions, the work group will re-convene if necessary.

Supporting Healthy Sexual Development of Youth in Foster Care

Rochelle report that this work group has participated along with other stakeholders on a CDSS committee formed to develop healthy sexual development and pregnancy prevention practice guidelines as well as update CCL regulations. She presented the DRAFT guide entitled "Healthy Sexual Development and Pregnancy Prevention for Youth in Foster Care," which is still in the beginning stages of development. Committee members had a lot of suggestions regarding how the Guide could be made more useful by taking a more strength-based approach on how to support youth in building healthy relationships in general and intimate relationships in particular. For example, the "Dating Abuse" section could be preceded with a section on what healthy dating relationships look like.

Rather than making specific edits to the draft, it was decided that a small group consisting foster parent Cherie Schroeder, residential provider Marsha Lewis-Akeem, CYC’s Joy Anderson, and Rochelle Trochtenberg would request a meeting with Ellie Jones and Lori Fuller to discuss the suggested approach in more detail.

Work Plan Update
See attached.

SUMMARY OF FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Item	Action Steps	Point Person
Housing and Homeless Foster Youth Work Group	Form an expanded work group involving Permanency and CDSYT Committees and other key stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bob to identify Permanency members ▪ Paul will reach out to CCL for a representative ▪ TBD will reach out for a Law Enforcement representative ▪ Paul will set up and facilitate a “noodling” session to review, edit, and expand the current draft guidance. ▪ Paul will bring a revised draft guidance to the December 7th meeting 	Bob Friend Paul Curtis TBD Paul Curtis Paul Curtis
Priority Employment	Circulate latest draft to all CDSYT Committee members	Sylvia (done 9/8/16)
	Review and provide feedback on draft by September 30 th .	All CDSYT Committee members
	Finalize draft and plan presentation to full Council on December 7 th	David Ambroz, Len Edwards, and Rochelle Trochtenberg
Psychotropic Medications	Send out an e-mail to set a time for the work group to meet via conference call	Sylvia
	Meet via conference call to begin studying broader issue of mental health services for youth in foster care, with or without psychotropic medications being part of the treatment plan.	Rochelle Trochtenberg and Anna Johnson
Education	Monitor and report on legislative developments related to clarifying the role of Education Rights Holder.	Paige Fern
Supporting Healthy Sexual Development of Youth in Foster Care	Request a meeting with CDSS’s Ellie Jones and Lori Fuller to discuss the approach to the Healthy Sexual Development Guide and CCR regulations.	Rochelle Trochtenberg and Sylvia
	Meet, preferably in person, with Ellie Jones and Lori Fuller to discuss a more strengths-based option for the Guide and how the CDSYT work group may support CDSS in this effort.	Rochelle Trochtenberg, Cherie Schroeder, Marsha-Lewis Akeem, Joy Anderson, and Sylvia