

# Missouri State Foster Care & Adoption Board

Governor's Building, Room 216

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

## MINUTES

### Introductions/Meeting Information – Dana Lopez

**Board Members in attendance:** Steve Archer, Kristina Branch, Dana Lopez, Jennifer Foster, Crissy Mayberry, Nickie Steinhoff, Craig Stevenson & Jennifer Townsend

June Meeting Minutes – Jennifer Foster made a motion, Crissy Mayberry second– minutes approved.

**CD:** Lauren Hall, Joanie Rogers, Melissa Selsor, Crystal Wilson and Jessica Woodruff

**Guests:** Deanna Alonso, Sarah Bashore, Pamela Foster, Rhiannon Franklin, Julie Murray

### Memo Updates

#### Psychotropic Trainings – Melissa Selsor

**CD21-47:** Required trainings that resource parents have to take every year; a new video is created each year. Last year, it was basic psychotropic medication, this year is on healthy sleep habits. Idea to share these types of training with birth parents (i.e., birth parents that co-sleep; may benefit from healthy sleep habits). Suggestions can be submitted to the Health Information Specialists.

#### Assessing Substance Abuse in Resource Homes – Melissa Selsor

**CD21-49:** Explains the impact of Missouri laws regarding medical marijuana in resource homes, and to announce revisions to the Child Welfare Manual regarding assessment of substance use and the potential impacts to caregiver capacity. Each potential resource parent must be assessed for use of alcohol and other substances. A medical marijuana training has been created for workers. Workers can ask to see a medical marijuana card, but they do not have to show it. Melissa will find a statement to relay to resource parents during pre-service training (from the trainer standpoint). Jennifer Foster mentioned a DI-TEC training provided by the highway patrol that covers impairment on multiple substances.

#### TAPAs – Melissa Selsor

**CD21-37:** TAPAs (Temporary Alternative Placement Agreements) – Task force on child safety – thinking about other ways to do diversions. HB1414 passed in 2021, promulgated rules and went into effect on 8-1-2021. Non-residential parent – parent living outside the household. Voluntary placement agreement between CD, Relative of Child, Parent of Child. TAPA form is comprehensive in terms of what has to be done for the child (ren) to return home safely. A TDM is required within and an FCS case needs to be open within 10 days of TAPA. CD has to see the child twice a month, once in the relatives' home and see the parent once a month, have to have monthly TDM meeting. Part of the FCS case will be adding in-home supports needed in the relative home. Relatives will not receive maintenance payment for TAPA. Entering TAPA agreements in FACES, reported on a monthly basis.

#### Rate Increases for Foster Care – Melissa Selsor

**CD21-52:** Updated rates are published in the child welfare manual; newer rates were not communicated well with resource parents. Communication will improve with the foster parent portal. Discussed a resource parent newsletter to better notify of information.

### **Child Welfare Manual Changes – Melissa Selsor**

**CD21-50:** General revisions made to manual due to new model licensing standards. Had to rewrite weapon/ammunition storage, no longer needs to be stored separately. Also included a plan for when resource parents close their license and want to become licensed again to make the process easier to return.

### **Placements in Different Circuits – Melissa Selsor**

**CD21-48:** What to do when child is placed in different circuit; a situation where a child was placed in a different circuit and the placement disrupted. Now email notification and making sure the placements licensing worker is aware of the placement. Trying child worker aides in St. Louis area and four other circuits to assist with these types of cases, similar to previous 'service worker'.

### **Birth Match Program – Melissa Selsor**

**CD21-53:** The purpose of the Birth Match program is to assist in identifying infants at high risk for abuse or neglect based on the parents' previous actions. This will allow staff to assess the family and potentially determine if services are needed before abuse occurs. Discussion ensued regarding 'birth match'; specifically mothers crossing state lines to have an infant to avoid birth match program.

### **TFC Update/Relative Care – Melissa Selsor**

Children's Division will be hiring a TFC PDS. Discussion ensued regarding transitioning children out of TFC between 5-6 months with stabilization; for TFC parents this is a very tall order and the fear is that TFC parents will drop out of program with this expectation. Many TFC youth are 15 and older, meaning working towards independence and stabilization. Joanie will put something together for Melissa to send out to this group. Priority right now is to develop additional TFC homes and support them.

### **Director Update – Joanie Rogers**

Focusing on building communication and relationships with resource parents has been a priority; building communication with intention. Starting best practice strategies with resource parents (this is a more internal effort). Melissa has started taking resource parent inquiry calls directly to disseminate information and then transfer them to their local area. There is also a new email ([fosterparents@dss.mo.gov](mailto:fosterparents@dss.mo.gov)) for resource parents to get their questions answered. The southeast region is starting a foster parent ambassador program to share their stories and answer questions for the purpose of recruitment.

CD is working with two different consulting groups to assist with process improvement and program and structure. They are making sure they have the resources in place to increase capacity; and having the right people in the right positions. Will also be taking a look at resource unit with these consultants.

Looking at workforce development, specifically onboarding; not giving a worker a caseload the minute they finish training.

Foster parent portal: Currently creating the business case for this for the approved budget for this project. This will be a place where parents can ask questions, get support and submit training certificates and reimbursement forms. If CD has to do an RFP process, that will take a year, therefore CD is looking at other avenues to avoid this.

Clothing allowance increase – has to be available quarterly (previous process was 'as needed'). Will be looking at card that can be loaded each year.

Looking at access to quality mental health services, specifically substance abuse treatment. Question asked regarding family finding, and implementing it uniformly throughout the state.

### **Families First – Jessica Woodruff, Policy Development Specialist and Lauren Hall, Families First**

Children's Division is currently developing a memo to provide incentives for foster parents to take placement of elevated needs homes. For parents that take Level A and B and take placement of child and maintain the placement for 180 days or child is reunification with parents, resource parents will get a one-time incentive of \$1,000; this started Sept. 1, 2021. CD will be formally putting out communication regarding this incentive.

Camp: Trying to figure out the best way for children and youth to go to camp. CD can financially provide payment for specific camps that they have a contract with. What would be ideal? It will depend on the age of the child and level of care needed. For older youth, allowing them to go to overnight camp for a few days. Level of training of camp staff is also important. Timing also a factor, summer school might be going on in June. Group interested in opportunities for siblings to attend a camp together. Discussion ensued regarding what type of child would benefit the most from camp; also suggested a hybrid model so there could be some choice in camp selection including a few specialized camp for youth with higher needs.

**Families First: Prevention Services:** First draft of 5 year prevention plan submitted to Children's Bureau. Statewide Advisory Council to look at data related to prevention and removal of children. Plan explains how CD will maintain fidelity to program practices. Will now look again at plan to review what other services have been approved by the IV-E Clearinghouse. There is no new money for prevention, just a 50% match. Plan can be updated as needed as new services are approved.

**Residential Placements:** QRTP – have to meet certain requirements, i.e., providing after care services for 6 months (to a biological family, foster family), nursing and staffing requirements and involving family in case planning. CD Residential Unit looking at which residential facilities are meeting the QRTP requirement. There is some grant assistance (transitional funds) for QRTP readiness. October 1, 2021 is implementation date for QRTP and independent assessor.

**Independent Assessor:** When there is an identified concern that child may need residential services – they will be seen by qualified individuals to be assessed for residential level of care. Using CANS tool, interviews with parents, placement providers, etc. and make a recommendation. There was a 6 month pilot in two areas; 50% were recommended for placement in residential. Assessment has to happen within 30 days; assessor will also have short and long term goals for the specific child. Independent Assessment report has to be filed with the court; court has 60 days to decide if they are in agreement or not with the recommendation. Also work taking place for continue building of TFC homes; and continued focus on supporting resource homes. Lauren will check on what the target goal is for reduction in residential placement. For youth under the age of 13, at 6 month point, have to have a process in place where director approves continued placement (older youth is 12 month point). Created general 'Family First' email address for questions; will provide address to this group.

### **NTDC Update – Melissa Selsor**

Project runs to 2022; MO has reached their goal number in 2021. Spaulding is working on exit strategy for this part of the project. As we exit, we will be able to use additional components of the NTDC curriculum more freely. Comparison group in St. Louis area for STARS Curriculum; another comparison group held in the southern part of the state for the STRONG curriculum. Once comparison groups reaches their numbers, MO will make the decision regarding what curriculum will be used.

### **Open Forum**

Crissy Mayberry: What are board member terms? Needing to fill some gaps for board vacancies. Process is still taking a very long time to become appointed by the governor. Will put this on the next agenda to make a plan. Will look into inviting someone from boards and commissions to next meeting.

Craig Stevenson: Child care rate – daycares must be paid the market rate for child care. Update on digital signatures on form? CD will check with staff regarding approval and/or implementation.

Amy Martin has retired from CD; her position has been posted for internal candidates.

Meeting adjourned at 1:59 pm by Dana Lopez.

**Next meeting date:** December 7, 2021, location TBD

### **2022 Meeting Dates:**