

## **DHS Report to the Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) January 15, 2010**

The following are update items that may be of greatest interest to the Committee. For each of these items, the Committee may want to discuss how they want to be updated or engaged.

### **Community Partnerships for Protecting Children**

- Regional Meetings were held 12.1.09 (Central) and 12.3.09 (Eastern), with the 12.8.09 Western Regional cancelled because of inclement weather. Agenda items included:
  - How to reframe the message of child abuse prevention: Training by Amber Russell from Prevent Child Abuse Iowa
  - Introduction of case study format: Kelly Davydov CPPC Associate Coordinator provided attendees with example case studies; volunteers will present case studies at next regional meetings
  - Sandy Lint provided update on Iowa Youth Dream Team and TYI
  - Kyla Madsen provided update on Parent Partner Approach
- Community Partnership sites have submitted their annual proposed plans for next year and will submit year-end reports 10.15.09.
- The following are CPPC regional meeting scheduled for February: 2/9 in Denison; 2/11 in Ames; and 2/16 in Coralville
- CPPC 201 is scheduled for 3/18

### **Child Protection**

- In November 2009, the Child Protection Council conducted a study of child protection intake, focusing on alleged incidents of abuse reported by medical professionals. Teams for the review consisted of child protection council members who were interested in participating and DHS workers who have expertise in child protection. The purpose of the review was of an informative nature to identify where improvements in training, changes to DHS policy and practice and changes to Iowa Code may be recommended.
- The review was completed and a report of findings and observations was presented to the Council and internal DHS staff. The report outlined several identified strengths as well as some areas needing improvement. The Council members reported having a very positive experience and would consider doing a review again in the future. Recommendations from the council will be presented to the new Centralized Intake project managers and DHS child protection policy staff for consideration and next steps.
- In order to address the challenge of diagnosing child abuse, DHS and the University of Iowa, Children's Hospital, Child Protection Program are in the final steps of executing a contract to be effective for 2/1/10 to allow for the availability of specialized medical consultation during a child abuse or neglect assessment. The contract will allow DHS statewide, 24/7 access to:
  - expert medical consultation from child abuse experts across the state
  - statewide multidisciplinary team when needed
  - University of Iowa Hospital Children's Hospital Specialists
- This may be utilized whenever a determination is made that a specialized medical consultation is warranted.

## **Parent Partners**

- The Midwest Child Welfare Implementation Center (MCWIC) continues to work with DHS to establish expansion of the Parent Partner approach as a child welfare implementation project. The MOA has been approved and signed by both parties. First reimbursement was delivered 1.4.2010
- On 12.15.09, five new expansion sites (1. Woodbury County; 2. Johnson County; 3. Webster County; 4. Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, Franklin, Grundy Counties; 5. Cerro Gordo, Hancock, Winnebago, Worth, Floyd, Mitchell, and Chickasaw Counties) were selected based on the Readiness Assessment and strengths in the following areas:
  - Identified approaches to support minority families
  - Commitment from local community, DHS, and parents
  - Identified local contributions and coordination strategies
  - Recruitment of potential Parent Partners
  - Commitment to statewide Iowa Parent Partner Approach
- On 12.17-18.09, Building a Better Future Train the Trainer was held and 24 Master and Approved trainers from across Iowa practiced their skills.
- First Parent Partner peer learning site visit will be 1.12.10 in Cedar Rapids. Forty-three participants representing all 11 sites. Agenda items are:
  - Parent Partner Team Meeting *document the Strengths, Needs/Concerns of the program, Parent Partners, and Birth Parents from the Parent Partner's and coordinator/provider perspective*
  - Supplemental Training Assessment *Team will give feedback regarding supplemental trainings, need for these trainings, quality of trainings; Meta groups*
  - Parent Partner Story Workshop *practical advice for telling and writing your personal story in an effective way*
- New site orientation for 5 NEW Parent Partner sites is scheduled for Friday 2.5.10 in Waterloo and will include:
  1. Q&A with current Parent Partner Coordinators/Parent Partners/DHS
  2. Walking through the entire Parent Partner Approach Handbook
  3. Overview of Building a Better Future training and other training expectations
  4. Parent Partner Planning Worksheet
  5. Funding allocations and MCWIC
- The 2010 Parent Partners statewide steering committee (SSC) meetings are scheduled for 3.4.10; 6.4.10; 9.17.10; and 12.3.10
- The next Parent Partner seminar call is scheduled for 3.9.10. Agenda TBD
- Planning for the Iowa Parent Partner Summit continues; and the event is scheduled for 5.13-14.09

## **Parent-Child/Family Interaction Guidelines**

- A call was held with the practice champions and family team meeting facilitators on 1/8/10 to discuss how to better integrate family interaction plans with family team meetings.
- There was also discussion about how to best train group care providers on the value of family interaction and how to integrate this practice in group care treatment.

- Service areas continue to more fully integrate practice in new and ongoing cases.

**Non-Custodial Parents (NCP)**

- In December 2009, DHS staff re-introduced two practice bulletins regarding involving and engaging fathers in child welfare cases.
- Quality Assurance staff continues to train DHS staff and interested service providers on NCP issues, focusing on addressing worker bias, addressing “gatekeeper” issues, and engaging and providing services to the NCP. Training will be completed within the next few months.

**Transition for Youth in Foster Care**

- **Transition for Youth in Foster Care – Preparation for Adult Living.** Following are PAL caseload numbers for the last several months. DHS again is supplementing the state funding for PAL with federal Chafee dollars in order to avoid/delay imposition of a waiting list.

<b>Month-End</b>	<b>Caseload</b>	<b>Average YTD Caseload</b>
October 2009	315	328
September 2009	331	330
August 2009	339	333
July 2009	327	327

- **Medicaid for Independent Young Adults (MIYA).** To improve annual eligibility recertification, DHS staff began matching the list of cases due for recertification with the list of participating youth in Aftercare. Aftercare staff then notifies youth to ensure the youth completes the required recertification. This has been successful, as evidenced by an increase in MIYA every month since April 2009. Currently, 410 youth are enrolled in the MIYA program as of December 31, 2009.
- **National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)** The DHS NYTD work group is continuing its work to ensure Iowa is prepared to begin transition data collection on October 1, 2010 and begin data submission to the Administration for Children and Families by May 15, 2011. Staff have developed draft Administrative Rules (to be formally submitted by 01/10) that define independent living services to align with the NYTD reporting framework. The Elevate youth council has committed to helping inform youth about NYTD, and to assisting DHS in program development efforts.

**Iowa Rural Homeless Youth Project (Boone Iowa):**

- Boone providers and volunteers have organized action committees and a service “hub”, with an overarching goal to establish coordinated connections to stabilize youth in housing, healthcare, mental health and substance abuse services, education and job placement, and positive youth development activities.
- Life skills services have started in Boone, with three youth participating. The first Boone area “Iowa Youth Dream Teams (IYDT)” are getting underway. IYDTs are intended to revitalize family members and involve new informal supports to support young people transitioning to adulthood.
- Boone providers are finalizing a contract with Stable Grounds to offer RHY participating youth Equine Assisted Therapy.

- The RHY project has initiated a day of service for Martin Luther King Day; Youth and advocates are joining the Salvation Army to put together bags/boxes for the homeless. Also, the RHY project will be preparing a community meal the evening of MLK day to raise awareness of the needs of homeless and transitioning youth.

### **Transitioning Youth Initiative.**

- The seven new TYI sites are in the process of forming local steering committees, recruiting youth, providing community education and scheduling Dream Team (DT) training and DT facilitator coaching sessions.
- Each new site has been assigned a Trainer/Coach to assist the site with implementation. These Trainer/Coaches meet monthly with Sandy Lint to discuss sites' progress and training schedule.
- TYI state steering committee will meet in February to provide feedback on policy and practice changes.
- Transition Planning Specialist (TPS) gave feedback and discussed their role in TYI and DT during their last meeting and included this discussion as agenda item for their next meeting in January.
- Sandy Lint and Doug Wolfe met with *e/evate* representatives to discuss partnering opportunities to maximize TYI and DT efforts.

### **Disproportionality**

- **BSC work**
- The Teams, Senior Leaders, and Day-to-Day managers continue to participate in monthly calls related to the BSC. The Teams have developed a team name, completed a self-assessment, and developed story-boards that were displayed during BSC learning session.
- In collaboration with Casey Family Programs, a two-day BSC learning session was held December 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> with all 8 community BSC teams including 91 individuals attending. The evaluations indicated participants were engaged and thought the session was very helpful. Communities' teams brainstormed and began developing plans to improve practice and services for minority families.
- DHS is working with Brad Richardson with University of Iowa to compile data that will be available to each community team to use in guiding new strategies.
- The next BSC learning session will be April 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Education and Foster Care Collaboration**

- The Education Collaborative is scheduled to meet in Des Moines January 13, 2010. On the Agenda:  
  - Elevate youth share their personal experiences around education and foster care.
  - A team organized by Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative asks the Education Collaborative to consider combining efforts toward education stability for children in foster care.
  - Roger Ferguson, of the Foster Aunt and Uncle Project—discusses secured funding for assessment and tutoring to benefit 100 children in the Des Moines area.

- Iowa College Student Aid is starting a new Iowa Scholarship and grant application process for 2010-2011, expected online mid to late January. The new process will allow students to complete a 'wizard' – a series of approximately 10 questions – to determine eligibility and at the same website will also be able to complete a single online application to apply for all eligible state programs (including ETV and Foster Grant).  
To view a step-by-step cheat sheet on creating an account, visit this link: <http://www.iowacollegeaid.gov/images/docs/file/IHAPI/useraccount.pdf>
- Questions should be directed to Julie Molenburg, Iowa College Student Aid Commission, 515-281-0336.

### **Child Welfare, Substance Abuse and Court Collaboration (Trish, Jana)**

- Ottumwa and Davenport piloted the draft protocol for working with families with substance abuse issues that are involved in child protection system during the months of July-September 2009. In October 2009, surveys were sent and focus groups were held with treatment providers and DHS staff that participated in the pilot. Survey results and feedback were shared with the HF2310 workgroup on November 24, 2009. The group discussed what worked well and what needs to be enhanced in the protocol.
- An initial report to the governor and the standing committees on human resources of the senate and house of representatives concerning the initial data collected, preliminary recommendations, and the status of the protocol implementation pursuant to HF 2310 was submitted on Dec. 15, 2009
- The project is moving forward with HF2310 Joint Protocol with DHS and IDPH to enhance practice around working with families with substance abuse issues. Two non-drug court sites were identified for the next pilot project. These counties include Warren and Montgomery counties. Joint training of DHS staff and local substance abuse providers in these counties on the pilot protocol will occur in February. The pilot will begin shortly after this and will run the next 3 consecutive months (3/1 – 5/31).

### **County Attorney Meetings**

DHS staff met with Iowa County Attorney's Association (Juvenile Section) members on 10-31-09. Discussion continued in regards to the use of substances, specifically around safety planning with caretaker(s) whose supervision of their children is impacted by the usage of substances. Federal and state ICWA policy was also discussed. The next meeting is scheduled for 1-29-09. Agenda items will include policy development specifically how county attorney's can be involved earlier in the policy making process and how they can be notified of upcoming policy changes. The group will also process if there is any concerns/issues regarding the Department's expectation of county attorney's.

### **Child Welfare Provider Training**

- The Child Welfare Provider Training Academy continues to provide accessible, job-relevant, skill-based training using a strength-based and family-centered approach. The goal of these trainings is to positively impact the job performance and organization results of child welfare providers to help keep kids safe.
- The Academy continues to offer live trainings around the state and have been at full capacity for attendance. After live trainings held in local areas, agencies are contacting the Academy to request additional training in their area and offer to

host the training at one of their local sites. The Academy offers a large selection of online courses and will be introducing webinar trainings in the next few months.

- Online training is provided to child welfare providers and supervisors across the state of Iowa from a social service focused course library and a child and adolescent curriculum through Essential Learning. These courses are available to providers on a 24/7 basis. Individuals may select courses from the library, complete the readings and exercises at their own pace, take the test, and print their certificate. This is an exciting option for agencies where it is difficult to send staff to “live” trainings.
- The Training Academy has a new website with easier access and registration: <http://iatrainingsource.org/>

### **Safety Plan and Family Safety, Risk and Permanency Services**

- Contract amendments went into effect January 1, 2010 which includes the waiver approval process and graduated payment rate reduction recommended by the Timely and Safe Case Closure workgroup and approved through the Child Welfare Partners Committee as well as all of the FSRP Services Contractors.
  - Training for the Safe Case Closure request for waiver process is scheduled for Friday, January 15<sup>th</sup> from 9-11 and 1-3. The target audience for this joint training is DHS case manager supervisors and all FSRP staff supervisors. Supervisors will be responsible for sharing information directly with their staff following the training. Sessions will be taped and made available to those who were not able to attend in person.
- The next meeting of the FSRP all contractors will be sometime during the Spring of 2010.

### **Foster and Adoptive Parenting**

- For the rule changes effective October 1, 2009, with respect to families that are currently licensed, DHS has been applying the rules for those whose license renewal is December 1, 2009 or later. Staff continue in working with IFAPA and KidsNet on implementing the rules, including:
  - The Q & A process document to respond to implementation questions, and ensure consistent information across the 3 organizations is completed and shared. There will be a share accessible by staff that will have the Q & A document that will be updated monthly to add additional questions received by the Field Help Desk.
  - There will be conference calls for DHS staff, KidsNet staff and IFAPA liaisons from time to time to go over the Q & A's.
- **AdoptUSKids.** The Resource Family Partnership Team completed a the final report and presented the report to the Service Business Team for guidance on moving forward. The report has been assigned to the Recruitment and Retention Task Team. The Task Team will develop a work plan to implement the recommended strategies and will develop a plan for communication and dissemination of the plan.

### **Child Welfare Emergency Services (CWES)**

- In SFY 2010, the Department continues to contract with shelters to maintain an estimated \$910,208 in CWES reinvestments using funding from 27 formerly guaranteed beds.
- From July – November 2009, 787 children were referred to CWES (DHS = 37%, JCS = 12%, and LE 51%).
- Last year, in SFY 2009, a total of 709 children were referred for CWES for the months November 2008 – June 2009 (CWES only operated during those months in SFY 2009).
- Services provided continue to include: screening and CWES assessment; on-site intervention & mediation services; information and referral connections; in-home services; parental agreements; daily monitoring and problem solving; family team meetings; ; health screenings; referrals to Iowa KidsNet/FFC; screening for relative placement; crisis planning; and, new this year, expanded in-home shelter and functional family therapy.
- An additional two beds of unused capacity will be reinvested in CWES effective January 1, 2010 (YESS in Des Moines).
- Contracted guaranteed beds in SFY 2010 continue at 246 and the average daily use of these beds July – November 2009 was 184.
- Co-chairs Gary Lippe of DHS and Cheryl Goodwin of Family Resources, Inc. are continuing with the work of the Child Welfare Emergency Services (CWES) public/private partners' workgroup toward drafting a framework for a continuum of CWES.

### **Group Care**

- **Community Conversations.** *Community conversations regarding group care* were held in each of the DHS Service Areas across the state through December 2009. Information from the discussions that focused on the role of group care in the continuum of child welfare and juvenile justice services is being summarized by the Department and a draft of that information should be available soon. Community meetings targeted participation of the following: child welfare and juvenile justice service providers, DHS and JCS staff, Judges, Elevate members and other youth involved with the foster care system, Parent Partners and other parents/significant adults/family members involved with the foster care system, AEA representatives and other education staff, attorneys, foster care review board members and CASA's.
- **Technical Assistance.** Casey Family Programs has arranged to provide Iowa with no-cost training and technical assistance (TA) through the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA). The work will focus on evidence based models of practice, strategies to enhance community based programming, and outcomes measurement. A small group of DHS staff, JCS staff and providers met with CWLA staff in early November to finalize the scope of work. The next meeting of this group has not yet been scheduled.
- **Permanency Roundtables.** DHS in collaboration with the Casey Family Programs initiated the first permanency roundtable reviews of children/youth in group care in Davenport in mid-November. It was jointly planned by the Service Area Manager and the Chief Juvenile Court Officer in the Davenport area and targeted 25 – 30 CINA and delinquent youth that have APPLA. One goal of the process was to gather data to address systemic and cross-system barriers to achieving permanency. DHS and CFP will review how this process can be expanded to other jurisdictions in the state.

### **Public Provider Partnership Committee**

- The latest meeting of the DHS Provider Partnership Steering Committee was held on 12.4.09. The purpose of this meeting was to finalize the committee membership and application process as well as review updates on assigned workgroups.
  - The committee membership and application process was posted to the website and an email was sent out to all Non-Coalition members informing them of an opening on the committee beginning July 1, 2010.
- DHS is preparing to complete the CFSR Statewide Assessment (self assessment) which is due June 2010. DHS is soliciting private partners to participate in this process as well. The private partners of this committee identified one member as a representative per each of the workgroups and submitted those names to the CFSR Operations Team.
- The next meeting of this committee is scheduled for Friday, 1.22.10 from 10:00 – 1:30 p.m.
- The Child Welfare Partners Committee web page can be found at the following link:  
[http://dhs.ia.gov/Consumers/Child\\_Welfare/BR4K/CWPC/CWPC.html](http://dhs.ia.gov/Consumers/Child_Welfare/BR4K/CWPC/CWPC.html)

### **Fostering Connections for Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (FCSIAA)**

- **Option to Extend Foster Care Beyond Age 18.** DHS and Children’s Justice staff are continuing to work with The Finance Project to help Iowa determine the impact of extending foster care to age 21 on youth, Courts, DHS and the state budget. The Finance Project presented the Children’s Justice appointed Taskforce with a foster care to 21 “fund map” on December 7, estimating the cost of extending foster care to 21. The Finance Project is finalizing the fund map documents, which can be expected in February.
- **Subsidized Guardianship Option.** Concerns were raised regarding cost neutrality for the project. The rules have been put on hold pending further fiscal analysis on cost neutrality. The deadline for acting on the noticed rules is the March Council meeting on 3/22/10.

### **Title IV-B Child Welfare 5-Year Plan and Child and Family Services Review**

- **Title IV-B Plan.** DHS received approval of Iowa’s IV-B plan. It will be posted on the DHS website soon.
- **CFSR Preparation.**
  - DHS staff completed work on the summary of policy related to the CFSR outcome items, due 4.23.10. DHS staff will update the policy document with any policy changes that become effective before the 4.23.10 due date.
  - The CFSR Operations Team continues planning for the CFSR statewide assessment (SWA), which is due 6.23.10.
  - To revise the SWA, six workgroups, comprised of internal and external stakeholders, will meet in the beginning of February to discuss and revise sections of the CFSR SWA. The CFSR Coordinator will write and edit the SWA with review of draft sections by our federal partners.
  - The CFSR Operations Team is preparing a proposal for our federal partners regarding selection of Iowa’s review sites.

#### **Title IV-E**

- **Administrative Cost Review (ACR) pilot.** The final report from DHHS-ACF is still pending. Once this report is received there will need to be additional follow up with ACF to determine the next steps.
- **IV-E Administrative Claiming on Behalf of Juvenile Court Services (JCS).** At the request of the Chief Juvenile Court Officers, DHS staff have begun meeting with them to explore the feasibility of claiming IV-E administrative funds on behalf of JCS for their case management activities for children in foster care.
- **Tribal IV-E.** At the request of the Meskwaki Tribe, DHS staff have also begun meeting with them to assist them in developing their own IV-E application for approval by the Children's Bureau Regional Office.