

**DHS Report to the Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC)
November 13, 2009**

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

- On October 13 and 14, Community Partnership Immersion was held with approximately 30 individuals participating. Immersion is a two-day intensive learning process about Community Partnership and associated four strategies. Participants included community stakeholders who have recently become involved in local CPPC activities.
- This year CPPC will be assisted statewide by 12 AmeriCorps volunteers that are coordinated by Prevent Child Abuse Iowa.
- On Nov 12, Community Partnership 101 will be held. This training is focused on training community stakeholders on how to give Community Partnership presentations.
- The following are CPPC regional meeting scheduled for December: 12/1 in Ames; 12/3 in Coralville; 12/8 in Denison.

Child Protection

- On 11.10.09, the Child Protection Council conducted their review of child protection intakes, focusing on alleged incidents of abuse reported by medical professionals. The Council will issue a report and recommendations on or before 3.1.10.
- At CWAC request, DHS has provided information on types of confirmed child abuse by age, as well as two Councils that review child protection.

Parent Partners

- The memorandum of agreement (MOA) between DHS and the Midwest Child Welfare Implementation Center (MCWIC) has been approved by both parties and is awaiting signatures.
- On 11.6.09, Readiness Assessment forms were sent to all Service Area Managers to be disseminated to the appropriate community partners and staff. Readiness Assessment forms are to be completed and submitted no later than 12.1.09. New Parent Partner sites will be selected no later than 12.15.09 based on 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
- The next Parent Partners statewide steering committee (SSC) meeting is scheduled for 12.09.09 and will include: 1) restructuring of SSC; 2) engaging stakeholders and parents in other committees; 3) ongoing construction of peer learning group; 4) ongoing construction of curriculum/training group; 5) discussion regarding supplemental trainings and trainings; 6) BABF TTT on 12.17-18.09. 6) evaluation and approval of BABF trainers. 7) Readiness

Assessment form 8) TA plan for new sites and site visits 9) discuss new site orientation 10) MCWIC evaluation updates.

- First Parent Partner peer learning site visit will be 1.12.09 in Cedar Rapids.
- The second Iowa Parent Partner Summit is scheduled for 5.13-14.10.

Parent-Child/Family Interaction Guidelines

- DHS published a Practice Bulletin in October, available on the DHS website http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/docs/10.09_Family_Interaction_Practice_Bulletin.pdf
- Discussion is beginning on how to train residential facility staff on the importance of family interaction, and how to engage residential providers in the practice.
- A modified curriculum has been developed for a shorter and more focused training for foster parents, court and other stakeholders.
- Discussion is also beginning on building a framework to collect and assess outcome data to see the impact of family interaction on permanency outcomes.
- Service areas continue to implement on new cases and ongoing cases. Work continues in service areas to engage and train foster parents and court.

Non-Custodial Parents (NCP)

- Based on findings of a recent case review by DHS quality assurance/improvement staff, DHS developed pamphlets entitled, *Why Is A Father's Involvement Important?* and *Why Is A Non-Custodial Parent's Involvement Important?*, one page handouts reflecting information in each pamphlet, a sample letter for staff to use to send to incarcerated NCP, and a Resource Guide for staff to utilize to identify, locate, and engage NCP. In addition, each service area will be training staff and interested service providers focusing on addressing worker bias, addressing "gatekeeper" issues, and engaging and providing services to the NCP. Training should 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 will again be supplementing the state funding for PAL with federal Chafee dollars in order to avoid/delay imposition of a waiting list.

| Month-End | Caseload | Average YTD Caseload |
|----------------|----------|----------------------|
| September 2009 | 331 | 332 |
| August 2009 | 339 | 333 |
| July 2009 | 327 | 327 |
| June 2009 | 334 | 293 |

- **Medicaid for Independent Young Adults (MIYA).** Currently, 404 youth are enrolled in the MIYA program.
- **Transitioning Youth Initiative (TYI).**
 - Three new TYI sites have been selected through an application process to receive \$10,000 for one year and \$6,000 the following year plus technical assistance (TA) and Dream Team training. These sites are: Keokuk, Jefferson, Van Buren, Washington; Pottawattamie; and Scott. In addition, the Waterloo Service area has allocated resources for two new TYI sites: Bremer, Butler, Franklin and Grundy; and Chickasaw, Floyd and Mitchell.

Two additional sites applied for TYI but were not selected; however they will receive Dream Team TA and training: Benton and Johnson. Finally, Des Moines Services Area is in the process of developing a plan to implement Dream Team and TYI strategies throughout the service area. In summary, there are 17 current counties participating; 13 new counties starting TYI; and 3 new counties receiving Dream Teams and TA only.

- Over the last two months, with the assistance of Marno Batterson, the following items have been completed and disseminated: Iowa Youth Dream Team (IYDT) curriculum and participant handbook; IYDT coaches' guide; IYDT facilitators' guide; and TYI community guide. DHS anticipates that within the next three months there will be approximately eight-ten potential IYDT trainers and coaches available throughout the state.
- **Iowa Rural Homeless Youth Project (Boone Iowa).** Youth and Shelter Services Inc kicked off the four year demonstration project 10.1.09. 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.

Disproportionality

- **BSC work**
 - Since the last update, there has been one change in the BSC faculty – Judge Joe Smith will serve on the faculty in place of Judge Stephen Clarke.
 - The Teams, Senior Leaders, and Day-to-Day managers are participating in monthly calls related to the BSC. The Teams are developing a team name and completing a self-assessment, in preparation for the first learning session in December.
 - Casey Family Programs sponsored Peer Technical Assistance 10.22.09 and 10.23.09. This event focused on the child abuse intake and assessment process, which has been identified as a critical decision point in child protection that can impact disproportionality. The peer TA team included representatives from various counties across the state of Minnesota. The event itself involved facilitated conversations around some of the work that they have done, and generate ideas that BSC teams in Iowa can test in their teams/communities.
- **Annual Conference.** The annual disproportionality conference is scheduled December 9 – 11. Featured speakers include Karl Dennis, Andrea Coleman, Rita Cameron Wedding, Alton Jamison, and Hasan Davis.

Education and Foster Care Collaboration

- DHS, in partnership with the Education Collaborative and at the suggestion of the Children's Justice State Council, has developed a November practice bulletin for social workers and others, the first in a series referred to as the Education Stability Series. DHS and DE staff members are also developing a guidance document on referring children below the age of three to Early ACCESS. It has a target release date of February 2010. These documents are part of a series to be released over the next year and will examine policies, procedures, and practices to improve education outcomes for children involved in child welfare. Additional topics include Fostering Connections Law education requirements, Early Access (birth to 3), special education, and transition.

- Children's Justice is also publishing newsletters focused on education and foster care covering many of the same topics.

Child Welfare, Substance Abuse and Court Collaboration

- 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 will be shared with the HF2310 workgroup on 11.24.09. The group will discuss what worked well and what needs to be enhanced in the protocol. Discussion will also include planning for the next pilot in two non-drug court sites.
- Chris Corken, an attorney from Dubuque, has taken the lead on reviewing laws regarding disincentives for pregnant women to participate in treatment as it may lead to drug testing the newborn and a founded "presence of illegal drugs" finding. She will be presenting the research to the group in November. The group will make recommendations in their final report.

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 1.29.10. 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), as well as DHS expectations and concerns regarding legal representation.

Child Welfare Provider Training

- DHS and the Coalition will be meeting in November to focus on expanding opportunities for joint training.
- The Training Academy has a new website with easier access and registration: <http://iatrainingsource.org/>

Safety Plan and Family Safety, Risk and Permanency (FSRP) Services

- Doug Johnson and Evan Klenk presented their workgroup recommendations on Timely and Safe Case Closure. The payment structure recommended will replace the existing 10 and 15 month case rate reduction. The group also develop recommendations regarding practice improvement that encompasses evidence based practices, benchmarking, and accountability for safety and timely case closure that align with good stewardship of finite resources (both personnel and financial).
- The most recent FSRP all contractors meeting was held on 11.5.09. The recommendations from the above workgroup were presented and discussed with those in attendance at the meeting. There will be a conference call in early December to address any additional questions that surface regarding the recommendations. The payment structure recommendation will be incorporated

into amendments effective 1.1.10. The next meeting of the FSRP all contractors will in the Spring of 2010.

Foster and Adoptive Parenting

- The Council on Human Services adopted the proposed rule changes in July; changes are effective 10.1.09. Staff have been working with IFAPA and KidsNet on implementing the rules, including:
 - Holding a webinar with DHS staff, KidsNet staff and IFAPA liaisons the week of 9.21.09 to go over the rules and respond to questions; and
 - Developing a question and answer (Q & A) document to respond to implementation questions, and ensure consistent information across the 3 organizations scheduled to be completed before the end of November. DHS, IFAPA and KidsNet also plan to review the implementation of the rules after they have been in effect three to six months.
- **AdoptUSKids.** The Resource Family Partnership Team will complete a final review of the report on 11.13.09. The team has identified three strategies that could be implemented soon, and these are highlighted in the report.

Child Welfare Emergency Services (CWES)

- From July - September 2009, 434 children were referred to CWES (DHS = 142, JCS = 38, and LE = 254). This compares to a total of 709 children referred for CWES for the months November 2008 – June 2009 (CWES only operated during those months in SFY 2009). In addition to continuing the range of services provided last FY, at least one CWES provider has added expanded in-home shelter and functional family therapy.
- Contracted guaranteed beds in SFY 2010 continue at 246 and the average daily use of these beds July - September 2009 was 183.
- Led by co-chairs Gary Lippe of DHS and Cheryl Goodwin of Family Resources, Inc. the Child Welfare Emergency Services (CWES) public/private partners' workgroup continued working toward drafting a framework for a continuum of CWES. Work completed recently will be shared for discussion at the next full shelter providers' meeting planned for 12.10.09 (rescheduled from October).
- Regarding the target population for CWES, DHS' legal counsel has reviewed the appropriation language and advised that the language limits services to youth that would otherwise be eligible for shelter care (i.e., "system children/youth").

Group Care

- **Community Conversations.** Nine meetings were held in Service Areas in October; the goal is to complete the meetings by mid-December. Discussions have focused on the role of group care in the continuum of child welfare and juvenile justice services; outcomes, performance measures, and expectations for group care; and, potential contracting approaches. Invitations have targeted the following and participation has been broad: 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. Draft summaries of all the meetings are expected to be complete by mid-December 2009 for further use in the spring of 2010 when

other technical assistance and community activities regarding group care have been completed.

- **Technical Assistance.** A small group of DHS staff, JCS staff and providers met with Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) staff in early November to finalize the scope of work. Future meetings are scheduled in January, and will include all group care providers.
- **Permanency Roundtables.** DHS will initiate the first permanency roundtable reviews of children/youth in group care, with the assistance of Casey Family Programs in Davenport the week of 11.16.09. The reviews have been jointly planned by the Service Area Manager and the Chief Juvenile Court Officer in the Davenport area. The focus will be on 25 – 30 CINA and delinquent youth that have APPLA (Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement) as their permanency goal. In addition to expediting permanency for the individual youth whose case is reviewed, the goal of the process is to gather data to address systemic and cross-system barriers to permanency. After this initial roundtable, DHS and CFP will review how this process could 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 10.30.09. The committee revised and finalized its beliefs, vision, and primary purpose; the new language will be posted to the website. The next meeting of this committee will be early December.
- The committee also approved recommendations submitted by the workgroup on Timely and Safe Case Closure co-chaired by Evan Klenk (DHS) and Doug Johnson (LSI). The approved recommendations were shared with the FSRP Contractors at the meeting held on 11.5.09.
- The Committee also reviewed a draft version of committee membership, which will be finalized by the next meeting. The document will address membership term limits and selection of new members. Once this has been approved by the committee, it will be posted to the website.
- The Partners workgroup on performance based contracting and quality assurance met with CWLA staff on 1.3.09 to finalize the scope of CWLA technical assistance. CWLA will be back on January 11th and 12th to continue to move forward with the scope of work.
- 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

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

- **Option to Extend Foster Care Beyond Age 18.** The Children's Justice Taskforce guiding this work developed program recommendations, which The Finance Project has developed into an Iowa "fund map", estimating the cost implications of extending foster care past age 18. The Finance Project will present the fund map to the Taskforce 12.7.09.
- **Subsidized Guardianship Option.** The proposed rules for the subsidized guardianship option have been noticed and can be found on the DHS website at <http://www.dhs.iowa.gov/policyanalysis/RulesPages/whatsnew.htm> under ARC 8183B. Public comments were due 10.13.09, and the Council on Human Services reviewed the rules 11.10.09. The proposed effective date for the rules

is 2.10.10. These rules will replace the current subsidized guardianship waiver. DHS has received comments from the Regional Office in Kansas City. They noted some concerns that not all of the eligibility requirements were spelled out in the proposed rules. The necessary changes have been incorporated into the latest version of the rules.

- For more information on the federal law and DHS activities to implement, see http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/Consumers/Child_Welfare/BR4K/Fostering_Connections/Fostering_Connections.html.

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

- **IV-B Plan.** DHS has received approval of Iowa's IV-B plan; and will post the final approved plan on the DHS website by 12.1.09.
- **CFSR Preparation.**
 - On 11.9.09, DHS staff presented information on the CFSR to the Child Welfare Stakeholder Panel and asked for their input on workgroup membership and data sources to include in the state's self-assessment.
 - On 11.17.09, the CFSR Operations Team and external stakeholders will participate in the first CFSR planning call with our federal partners.

Title IV-E Federal Funding

- **Administrative Cost Review (ACR) pilot.** DHS received the preliminary draft report from the Administration on Children and Families (ACF) 11.10.09. ACF requested that staff review the draft findings and recommendations for accuracy prior to issuance of a final report at, which point, it will become public

NCSL/NGA/CFP Policy Institute

- On November 4 – 6, an Iowa team attended a Policy Institute, "Changing the Outcome: Achieving and Sustaining a Safe Reduction in Foster Care – An Institute for State Policymakers". The Institute was sponsored by the National Governor's Association (NGA) for Best Practices and the National Council of State Legislators (NCSL). Iowa's team included DHS Director Charles Krogmeier, State Senator Keith Kreiman, State Representative Beth Wessel-Kroeschell, Parent Partner Coordinator Melony Storm, Polk County Community Partnership for Protecting Children Program Manager Denise Moore, and DHS Child Welfare Director Mary Nelson. Rep. Wessel-Kroeschell served on a panel on "Addressing Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare"; and Melony Storm and Denise Moore served on a panel, "Foster Care through the Eyes of Foster Care Alumni and Parents". The Institute included presentations from other states and national groups, as well as time for the state team "action planning".