

Muir, Michelle

From: George Belitsos [GBelitsos@yss.ames.ia.us]
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2009 10:10 AM
To: Jerry Foxhoven; George Estle
Cc: Ann Harrmann ; Carol Behrer; Gonzales, Denise; Wolfe, Douglas D.; Klenk, Evan; Frank La Mere ; George Belitsos; Miller, Holli; Kate Lee; Kathleen Kilnoski; Kelli Malone; Krista Penrod ; Mandee Phillips; Wright, Margaret J.; McCalley, Rebecca A; Miriam Landsman ; Nancy Magnall; Alger, Pamela R; Moore, Richard [DIA]; Thompson, Roxanne; Ruth Phillips; Lint, Sandy; Tammy Mahan; Savage, Todd; Muir, Michelle
Subject: March 27 Agenda

Greetings. The Child Welfare Permanency Subcommittee requests that the following legislation be endorsed by the Child Welfare Advisory Committee:

1. HF 315 Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development and State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council
2. SF 152 Fostering Connections
3. The four bills introduced by the Elevate youth

We request that you submit this request to the Committee before the March 27 meeting so that the members can study these bills and are ready to consider. We would also like to give a progress report from the Permanency Subcommittee. We will have minutes from our February 25 meeting to submit which are attached.

We have formed an Iowa Permanency Vision Task Force. We are also considering an endorsement of the July 1 statewide startup of the Family Interaction Plan and Standards. We anticipate presenting both of these recommendations to the full Child Welfare Advisory Committee later this spring. Thanks.

George Belitsos, CEO
Youth and Shelter Services, Inc. - 2008 recipient of the Des Moines Register *Aurora* Award for excellence!
420 Kellogg, PO Box 1628
Ames, IA 50010
515-233-3141, ext. 4420



This message and any attachments are intended only for the use of the addressee and may contain information that is privileged and confidential. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient or authorized representative of the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify Youth & Shelter Services, Inc. immediately by replying to this message or emailing the message to yss@yss.ames.ia.us and deleting the message and any attachments from your system.

Child Welfare Permanency Subcommittee
Wednesday, April 22, 2009
11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
(Fourth floor, center of building just to the east of the elevators)
Room 424
Lucas State Office Building
Capitol Complex
Des Moines

Conference Call Instructions:
Call: 866-685-1580
Code: 5152817299

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions George Belitsos
2. Review & approve February 25, 2009 minutes (thanks to Carol Behrer). Volunteer for today?George
3. Review today's agenda and approveGeorge
4. Review and update membership list (see attached). Dick
5. Update from March 27 Child Welfare Advisory Committee meeting. Did they endorse the six bills recommended by the Permanency Subcommittee Dick
6. Proposal to introduce Permanency Planning Training at Coalition Annual Conference Ann Harrmann/Kate Lee
7. Progress report from the Permanency Vision Task Force. The goal is to develop a statewide shared vision with permanency as a central core (see motion from September 29, 2008). Write a permanency vision statement and development plan to submit to Child Welfare Committee Kelli Malone/Holli Miller
8. Rule changes for Kinship Guardianship and definition of relative. Outcome of SF 1512 Fostering Connections Jeff Regula (Guest)
9. Update on July 1 statewide start-up of Family Interaction Plan and standards. Consider endorsement by Permanency Subcommittee and full Child Welfare Advisory CommitteeChris Secrist/Wendy Rickman (Guests)
10. Other topics?
11. Next meeting date

Iowa Child Welfare Advisory Committee
Permanency Committee
Membership List

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>E-Mail Address</u>	<u>Subcommittee Assignments</u>
Pam Alger	palger@dhs.state.ia.us	
Carol Behrer	cbehrer@ypii.org	Mission Task Force
George Belitsos, Co-Chair*	gbelitsos@yss.ames.ia.us	Committee Co-Chair
Denise Gonzalez	dgonzal@dhs.state.ia.us	
Ann Harrmann	annt@iachild.org	
Kathleen Kilnoski*	Kathleen.Kilnoski@iowacourts.gov	
Evan Klenk	EKlenk@dhs.state.ia.us	
Frank La Mere	franklamere@msn.com	
Miriam Landsman*	miriam-landsman@uiowa.edu	
Kate Lee	kateLee@kateleeinc.com	Mission Task Force
Sandy Lint	slint@dhs.state.ia.us	
Nancy Magnall	magnall_ifapa@msn.com	
Tammy Mahan	tmymahan@msn.com	
Kelli Malone	kmalone@fouroaks.org	Mission Task Force Co-Chair
Becky McCalley	rmccall@dhs.state.ia.us	
Holli Miller	hmillier@dhs.state.ia.us	Mission Task Force Co-Chair
Dick Moore, Co-chair*	richard.moore@dis.iowa.gov	Committee Co-Chair
Krista Penrod	krista.penrod@gmail.com	
Mandee Phillips	mandee_phillips19@live.com	
Ruth Phillips	ruth.i.phillips@mchsi.com	
Todd Savage	tsavage@dhs.state.ia.us	
Roxanne Thompson	rthompson@dhs.state.ia.us	
Doug Wolfe	dwolfe@dhs.state.ia.us	
Margaret Wright	mwright2@dhs.state.ia.us	

Cc on Correspondence

George Estle	gestle@tanagerplace.org
Jerry Foxhoven	jerry.foxhoven@drake.edu
Michelle Muir	mmuir@dhs.state.ia.us

*Child Welfare Advisory Committee Member Jan. 2, 2009

**Child Welfare Permanency Subcommittee
February 25, 2009, Meeting Summary**

1) Present

Carol Behrer, YPII
George Belitsos, YSS, Co-Chair
Pam Alger, MH/DS, DHS
Kathleen Kilnoski
Kate Lee, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative
Nancy Magnall
Kelli Malone, Four Oaks

Holli Miller, DHS
Dick Moore, CAB, Co-Chair
Mary Nelson, DHS
Mindy Norwood, DHS (Guest)
Ruth Phillips, CFI-Elevate
Doug Wolfe, DHS

2) Minutes: A summary of the last meeting was not available. Carol volunteered to prepare the meeting summary of today's meeting.

3) Review Agenda: The agenda was reviewed and no changes were suggested.

4) Review and update membership list. A membership list of 24 people was circulated prior to the meeting. New members were noted. Several members were unable to attend today because of scheduling conflicts but remain interested, including: Roxanne Thompson, Evan Klenk, and Denise Gonzales of DHS. Any changes to the membership list should be brought to the Chairs' attention.

5 and 6) Family Interactions: Dick summarized from the last meeting that there really is no good data source for detailed information on parent visitation/family interaction. Information is documented in individual case files, but it is not aggregated up and analyzed. There is no system for counting frequency or nature of interactions. The question remains, what would/should we do to promote the collection of this data. Pam Alger noted that there are additional factors that impact interaction (e.g., distance of placement from family, type of placement, etc.) that would be important to know. Dick also indicated that there are several questions to ask about visitation (e.g., is there concurrent planning going on?) that would complicate data collection.

Mindy Norwood provided additional information on DHS activities related to family interaction in preparation for roll-out in all service areas of new guidance by July 1st. In February a readiness survey was developed for providers and DHS staff, asking about what people knew about family interaction plans. More than 820 responses so far – survey will be open one more day. The on-line survey link was sent to a very broad distribution list. It is unclear who all has responded, but Mindy reported that there appears to be good response rates from both DHS and private providers. The survey asked about strengths and barriers related to family interaction. The results will be used to inform the training that is being developed. Norma Ginther will be in Iowa in March and June to provide training to providers and DHS staff together. Dick mentioned that some local FCRB and CASA coordinators have also been invited to the training. Pilot of the training was completed in Waterloo service area; curriculum was revised based on that pilot. Children's Justice Initiative has a conference/ meeting planned where this will also be addressed.

George asked specifically: "What will change on July 1? Will there be a standard set for frequency of visits or new expectations regarding this issue?" Mindy responded that what becomes effective July 1 is a statewide practice protocol that provides guidance on family interactions. This will include, for example, when/how we determine if visitations need to be supervised; identify developmental milestones and age appropriate interactions; who must provide supervision; etc.

Several issues related to family interactions were discussed. There was consensus that quality family interactions are an important factor in achieving permanence and this issue was important for the subcommittee to pay attention to. The following points (among others) were made during the discussion:

- It was unclear to some members who is making these decisions and how the standards will be set and enforced; a concern was raised that it's premature to establish standards when there is really no data on what's happening now.
- It is likely to get harder to get consistent documentation on the wide variety of interactions that could be part of a family's plan. For example, what normal, everyday activities (e.g., doctors appointments, etc.) need to be reported and how?

- Are these questions addressed in CFSR and QSR case reviews? Yes – but not necessarily at the level of quality/quantity detail that we may need. Those details could surface as part of the conversations that CFSR reviews trigger.
- Need to document both effort and actual interaction.
- If there are going to be standards, how and when will they be determined? Mary indicated that there will be “guidelines” rather than standards.
- Concern was expressed that there be new expectations/requirements on providers when the guidance is implemented on July 1.

Mary Nelson clarified that the Family Interaction Guidance will be adopted on July 1, but will most likely not result in immediate practice change. Mary emphasized that the “guidance” provides a philosophical foundation or framework for making decisions about interactions, rather than imposing specific requirements. It will take some time for everyone’s behavior to change. Dick noted that Iowa has been recognized for having model policies, but not as clear to what extent they are implemented in day-to-day practice.

Mary further indicated that what is being learned from FSRP is that just focusing on documenting compliance with quantity of interactions may detract from the quality of those visits. We have to be thoughtful about what data we ask to be documented and how we collect data so not to lose information on the quality aspect of visits.

The Subcommittee discussed what next step it could or should take on family interaction in light of all the work that is already going on. Mary recommended that the subcommittee can be a champion / additional voices that this is a good direction to be moving and that informal interaction is critical. She noted that the subcommittee and full Child Welfare Advisory Council can be helpful by being advocates for policy and practice change in this area and can help DHS understand barriers, gaps, what’s working well, etc.

George agreed that advocating for good implementation of family interaction is critical, but one obstacle will be asking providers to do more with the same or less reimbursement. He cautioned that it may be difficult to get the CWAC to endorse this without a lot of education and explanation. Mary agreed that this challenges the traditional ways we do business – for everyone – at a very fundamental level. Cost of supervising family interactions is another issue that will need additional attention as part of FSRP contracts. Mary also suggested that this group could also help analyze the survey data, and use it beyond just determining training needs.

The discussion then turned to seeking an endorsement by the full Child Welfare Advisory Council and other next steps. Dick cautioned that we don’t have anything concrete for them to endorse. He noted that while the Permanency Subcommittee appears supportive generally, we should be watchful of the impact of new guidance. We are not in a position to make specific recommendations right now about next steps, but we can report to the CWAC on this topic. **He asked that results from the survey Mindy described be shared with the Subcommittee.** Mary asked what other information (and in what format) would be most helpful to the CWAC. **George recommended that we ask to have an update on Family Interaction activities at the next Permanency Subcommittee meeting. If we then endorse the plan and standards, the Subcommittee will ask the CWAC to endorse. Mary and/or a member of the Family Interaction work group will develop a presentation for the next Permanency Subcommittee meeting.** (Wendy Rickman, Janice Lane, Gail Barber, Lori Modena (Mid-Iowa), and others were suggested as possible presenters.) **Mary agreed to follow-up and prepare for that presentation.** Mary also encouraged members of the CWAC and Permanency Subcommittee to attend the training, which will be offered on a statewide ICN. In addition, service area trainings are being scheduled through the spring. **DHS will share training dates when they are finalized.**

7. Fostering Connections – Review pre-filed bill: Legislation was pre-filed to bring Iowa into compliance with the federal legislation. Not all of the changes in Fostering Connections require statutory change. Dick shared copies of the bill (**SF 152 - attached**) with those at the Hoover Building and Holli briefly summarized key changes that are made by the legislation:

Transition Planning – Within 90 days of turning 18, as well as within 90 days of exiting care, a transition plan must be developed at the direction of the youth; Iowa law already requires that a transition plan be developed for all youth ages 16 and older in care; that plan is a component of the case plan. SF 152 adds language regarding the timing (90 days before age 18, etc.) and domains (education, employment, housing, etc.) that will apply to all

transition planning. Plan shall be considered a working document and reviewed at each hearing – emphasizing that transition is not an event, but a process. Language also emphasizes that the youth must be at the center of the planning and at the plan be developed at the direction of the youth.

Education Stability – Doug indicated that the education stability provisions that require that a child in placement attend his/her home school district unless it is not in the best interest of the child. Both Education and DHS are affected by this new requirement.

Discussion: There is a lot of information on the DHS website on Fostering Connections. SF 152 has been amended from the original study bill. House has agreed to let the Senate take the lead. Several registered lobbyists are “undecided.” There is some inconsistency between the Department of Education language and DHS language regarding where child goes to school – disagreement on the presumption / burden of proof regarding best interest of child. The Human Resources Committee approved the bill on Feb. 16. Senator Kreiman chaired the subcommittee and will likely be leading the conversation. The complexity of these decisions was discussed.

Doug mentioned that at the Dec. 8 Education Summit (DHS, DE, Courts) there was discussion of legislation affecting education provided by child welfare facilities. A bill has been introduced by Senator Quirnbach, who is working with the Department of Education on this, but it is unclear if action will be taken this session.

Transition Review Committees – originally removed as part of the DHS bill, but are now back in to provide oversight to ensure that transition plans are done and meet requirements.

Kathleen moved that the Subcommittee endorse and recommend that the CWAC endorse SF 152, bringing Iowa into compliance with the federal Fostering Connections Act. Mary Nelson seconded. Discussion – need to resolve inconsistency between DE and DHS language regarding education stability/home school presumption. Motion carried without dissent.

George will ask Jerry Foxhoven to put Fostering Connections bill on the next CWAC meeting agenda. The Permanency Committee will ask that SF 152 be endorsed by the full CWAC along with the four Elevate bills and HF 315 State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council. George will also recommend that the Coalition go on record in support of the bill. (Parenthetically, it was noted that Christie Oliver was named last week as the new Coalition Executive Director.)

Other comments regarding Fostering Connections:

- Doug brought up that Elevate is very interested in the state option to extend Foster Care to 18 to 21 year olds. They are currently gathering input from elevate chapters. This provision is not effective until 2011.
- Mary mentioned that there is also a subsidized kinship guardianship option in Fostering Connections that DHS will be taking action on in the near future. Need to define “relative.” Mary will share information on proposed rule change when it is available. One complication is that youth placed in subsidized guardianship are ineligible for certain state-funded programs for youth that “age out” of foster care.

8. Report from Coalition/DHS Training Academy: George noted that there is next to nothing in the proposed Training Academy on Permanency or Youth Development. The survey that sought input from providers on content of the Academy did not ask about either issue. We may have missed a good opportunity to provide training for providers on permanency. George will suggest to the Coalition again that it address permanency at their annual conference or in other training. George has also suggested having a Permanency Convening in the state.

Mary and Kate both indicated that it is conceivable that the Casey foundations could help bring speakers to an Iowa event such as the Coalition Conference or provide other technical assistance to the state. Kate emphasized that we would need to have a solid plan on what our objectives are and how this would relate to other work. Mary mentioned that as DHS reworks the group care contracts, that may be an opportunity to introduce a new role for providers relative to permanency. George noted that “permanency” can be threatening to group care providers especially; they may not even understand the implications. To begin to address this issue and educate providers, George suggested that we recommend having permanency as a major theme of the Coalition Conference this year. Free speakers could be a major inducement. Mary

said that Susan Ault of Casey Family Programs has also indicated that they might be able to support providers going to other states where providers are involved in permanency efforts.

On April 2 and 3, the Chief Justice's Children's Justice Summit will include speakers on Family Interaction and Disproportionality among other issues. While too late to add permanency to the agenda, might be able to distribute materials on permanency. Gail Barber is organizing the conference and would be the person to contact. Mary and Kate will try to connect with her.

Next steps related to permanency training:

- **George will email Ann Harrmann about having permanency addressed at the Coalition conference and suggest that she contact Kate about speakers.**
- **We will keep permanency training on this subcommittee's agenda.**
- **We will continue to explore possibility of some kind of state level convening.**

9) **Michigan Example:** Kate had distributed a link to the Michigan Task Force report to the state legislature on At-Risk Youth Transitioning to Adulthood. Most of the actions taken by that Task Force are to address issues raised by older youth in care or who had transitioned out of care. One of the concrete things that may be of interest to Iowa is language that MI is putting into contracts with providers regarding permanence and disproportionality. It also looked across all the supports and services for young people in care. There are several examples and material from other states, as well.

10) **Statewide shared vision with permanency as a central core.** Several people have shared information from other states and initiatives. A May 2007 meeting in Iowa also drafted a simple vision statement, but it was not officially endorsed and did not move forward. Doug shared the vision statement that was developed in 2007: "Every child in Iowa's child welfare and juvenile justice system will have lifelong relationships with one or more caring, capable, and supportive adults."

The subcommittee discussed how having a vision statement can make a difference, especially in day-to-day practice. Kelli mentioned that CA used an organizational development model to create a 3- or 5-year plan on permanency, which included a state self-assessment. She indicated that vision statements come alive through a more comprehensive assessment and plan of action. Dick noted that the effectiveness of a vision statement depends on who's involved in creating it and who it's for. Kelli stated that it would be interesting to know how other states got statewide ownership. Mary shared that it is important to have youth give input on what permanency means to them, which may be a useful way to think about establishing a vision.

George suggested creating a subcommittee to develop a vision statement and a plan to make a difference. Mary thought that the findings from all the mini CFSR reviews could be used to inform this effort; and could be used as an assessment of current permanency efforts. George believed that the CWAC could lead the charge on Permanency, but it will need guidance/support from this group. Several members noted that there is a ton of information and activities around this issue, but it is very piecemeal. The nature of the issue and the very broad audience, statewide and diverse stakeholders that are involved makes this a complicated effort. CWAC could take the lead on holding these things together.

An Ad Hoc Task Force to develop a Permanency Vision Statement was formed. Kelli Malone and Holli Miller agreed to co-chair. Kate Lee and Carol Behrer agreed to participate. Roxanne Thompson was also suggested. George will notify other subcommittee members of the opportunity and invite them to contact Kelli or Holli if they want to participate. The charge to the ad hoc task force is to create a DRAFT vision statement and recommend a process for getting input and generating buy-in from all stakeholders.

15) **Next Meeting:** The next meeting was scheduled for April 22, 2009 – 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Conference call-in option will be available.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:05 p.m.

**Child Welfare Permanency Subcommittee
February 25, 2009, Meeting Summary**

1) Present

Carol Behrer, YPII
George Belitsos, YSS, Co-Chair
Pam Alger, MH/DS, DHS
Kathleen Kilnoski
Kate Lee, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative
Nancy Magnall
Kelli Malone, Four Oaks

Holli Miller, DHS
Dick Moore, CAB, Co-Chair
Mary Nelson, DHS
Mindy Norwood, DHS (Guest)
Ruth Phillips, CFI-Elevate
Doug Wolfe, DHS

2) Minutes: A summary of the last meeting was not available. Carol volunteered to prepare the meeting summary of today's meeting.

3) Review Agenda: The agenda was reviewed and no changes were suggested.

4) Review and update membership list. A membership list of 24 people was circulated prior to the meeting. New members were noted. Several members were unable to attend today because of scheduling conflicts but remain interested, including: Roxanne Thompson, Evan Klenk, and Denise Gonzales of DHS. Any changes to the membership list should be brought to the Chairs' attention.

5 and 6) Family Interactions: Dick summarized from the last meeting that there really is no good data source for detailed information on parent visitation/family interaction. Information is documented in individual case files, but it is not aggregated up and analyzed. There is no system for counting frequency or nature of interactions. The question remains, what would/should we do to promote the collection of this data. Pam Alger noted that there are additional factors that impact interaction (e.g., distance of placement from family, type of placement, etc.) that would be important to know. Dick also indicated that there are several questions to ask about visitation (e.g., is there concurrent planning going on?) that would complicate data collection.

Mindy Norwood provided additional information on DHS activities related to family interaction in preparation for roll-out in all service areas of new guidance by July 1st. In February a readiness survey was developed for providers and DHS staff, asking about what people knew about family interaction plans. More than 820 responses so far – survey will be open one more day. The on-line survey link was sent to a very broad distribution list. It is unclear who all has responded, but Mindy reported that there appears to be good response rates from both DHS and private providers. The survey asked about strengths and barriers related to family interaction. The results will be used to inform the training that is being developed. Norma Ginther will be in Iowa in March and June to provide training to providers and DHS staff together. Dick mentioned that some local FCRB and CASA coordinators have also been invited to the training. Pilot of the training was completed in Waterloo service area; curriculum was revised based on that pilot. Children's Justice Initiative has a conference/ meeting planned where this will also be addressed.

George asked specifically: "What will change on July 1? Will there be a standard set for frequency of visits or new expectations regarding this issue?" Mindy responded that what becomes effective July 1 is a statewide practice protocol that provides guidance on family interactions. This will include, for example, when/how we determine if visitations need to be supervised; identify developmental milestones and age appropriate interactions; who must provide supervision; etc.

Several issues related to family interactions were discussed. There was consensus that quality family interactions are an important factor in achieving permanence and this issue was important for the subcommittee to pay attention to. The following points (among others) were made during the discussion:

- It was unclear to some members who is making these decisions and how the standards will be set and enforced; a concern was raised that it's premature to establish standards when there is really no data on what's happening now.
- It is likely to get harder to get consistent documentation on the wide variety of interactions that could be part of a family's plan. For example, what normal, everyday activities (e.g., doctors appointments, etc.) need to be reported and how?

- Are these questions addressed in CFSR and QSR case reviews? Yes – but not necessarily at the level of quality/quantity detail that we may need. Those details could surface as part of the conversations that CFSR reviews trigger.
- Need to document both effort and actual interaction.
- If there are going to be standards, how and when will they be determined? Mary indicated that there will be “guidelines” rather than standards.
- Concern was expressed that there be new expectations/requirements on providers when the guidance is implemented on July 1.

Mary Nelson clarified that the Family Interaction Guidance will be adopted on July 1, but will most likely not result in immediate practice change. Mary emphasized that the “guidance” provides a philosophical foundation or framework for making decisions about interactions, rather than imposing specific requirements. It will take some time for everyone’s behavior to change. Dick noted that Iowa has been recognized for having model policies, but not as clear to what extent they are implemented in day-to-day practice.

Mary further indicated that what is being learned from FSRP is that just focusing on documenting compliance with quantity of interactions may detract from the quality of those visits. We have to be thoughtful about what data we ask to be documented and how we collect data so not to lose information on the quality aspect of visits.

The Subcommittee discussed what next step it could or should take on family interaction in light of all the work that is already going on. Mary recommended that the subcommittee can be a champion / additional voices that this is a good direction to be moving and that informal interaction is critical. She noted that the subcommittee and full Child Welfare Advisory Council can be helpful by being advocates for policy and practice change in this area and can help DHS understand barriers, gaps, what’s working well, etc.

George agreed that advocating for good implementation of family interaction is critical, but one obstacle will be asking providers to do more with the same or less reimbursement. He cautioned that it may be difficult to get the CWAC to endorse this without a lot of education and explanation. Mary agreed that this challenges the traditional ways we do business – for everyone – at a very fundamental level. Cost of supervising family interactions is another issue that will need additional attention as part of FSRP contracts. Mary also suggested that this group could also help analyze the survey data, and use it beyond just determining training needs.

The discussion then turned to seeking an endorsement by the full Child Welfare Advisory Council and other next steps. Dick cautioned that we don’t have anything concrete for them to endorse. He noted that while the Permanency Subcommittee appears supportive generally, we should be watchful of the impact of new guidance. We are not in a position to make specific recommendations right now about next steps, but we can report to the CWAC on this topic. **He asked that results from the survey Mindy described be shared with the Subcommittee.** Mary asked what other information (and in what format) would be most helpful to the CWAC. **George recommended that we ask to have an update on Family Interaction activities at the next Permanency Subcommittee meeting. If we then endorse the plan and standards, the Subcommittee will ask the CWAC to endorse. Mary and/or a member of the Family Interaction work group will develop a presentation for the next Permanency Subcommittee meeting.** (Wendy Rickman, Janice Lane, Gail Barber, Lori Modena (Mid-Iowa), and others were suggested as possible presenters.) **Mary agreed to follow-up and prepare for that presentation.** Mary also encouraged members of the CWAC and Permanency Subcommittee to attend the training, which will be offered on a statewide ICN. In addition, service area trainings are being scheduled through the spring. **DHS will share training dates when they are finalized.**

7. Fostering Connections – Review pre-filed bill: Legislation was pre-filed to bring Iowa into compliance with the federal legislation. Not all of the changes in Fostering Connections require statutory change. Dick shared copies of the bill (**SF 152 - attached**) with those at the Hoover Building and Holli briefly summarized key changes that are made by the legislation:

Transition Planning – Within 90 days of turning 18, as well as within 90 days of exiting care, a transition plan must be developed at the direction of the youth; Iowa law already requires that a transition plan be developed for all youth ages 16 and older in care; that plan is a component of the case plan. SF 152 adds language regarding the timing (90 days before age 18, etc.) and domains (education, employment, housing, etc.) that will apply to all

transition planning. Plan shall be considered a working document and reviewed at each hearing – emphasizing that transition is not an event, but a process. Language also emphasizes that the youth must be at the center of the planning and at the plan be developed at the direction of the youth.

Education Stability – Doug indicated that the education stability provisions that require that a child in placement attend his/her home school district unless it is not in the best interest of the child. Both Education and DHS are affected by this new requirement.

Discussion: There is a lot of information on the DHS website on Fostering Connections. SF 152 has been amended from the original study bill. House has agreed to let the Senate take the lead. Several registered lobbyists are “undecided.” There is some inconsistency between the Department of Education language and DHS language regarding where child goes to school – disagreement on the presumption / burden of proof regarding best interest of child. The Human Resources Committee approved the bill on Feb. 16. Senator Kreiman chaired the subcommittee and will likely be leading the conversation. The complexity of these decisions was discussed.

Doug mentioned that at the Dec. 8 Education Summit (DHS, DE, Courts) there was discussion of legislation affecting education provided by child welfare facilities. A bill has been introduced by Senator Quirnbach, who is working with the Department of Education on this, but it is unclear if action will be taken this session.

Transition Review Committees – originally removed as part of the DHS bill, but are now back in to provide oversight to ensure that transition plans are done and meet requirements.

Kathleen moved that the Subcommittee endorse and recommend that the CWAC endorse SF 152, bringing Iowa into compliance with the federal Fostering Connections Act. Mary Nelson seconded. Discussion – need to resolve inconsistency between DE and DHS language regarding education stability/home school presumption. Motion carried without dissent.

George will ask Jerry Foxhoven to put Fostering Connections bill on the next CWAC meeting agenda. The Permanency Committee will ask that SF 152 be endorsed by the full CWAC along with the four Elevate bills and HF 315 State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council. George will also recommend that the Coalition go on record in support of the bill. (Parenthetically, it was noted that Christie Oliver was named last week as the new Coalition Executive Director.)

Other comments regarding Fostering Connections:

- Doug brought up that Elevate is very interested in the state option to extend Foster Care to 18 to 21 year olds. They are currently gathering input from elevate chapters. This provision is not effective until 2011.
- Mary mentioned that there is also a subsidized kinship guardianship option in Fostering Connections that DHS will be taking action on in the near future. Need to define “relative.” Mary will share information on proposed rule change when it is available. One complication is that youth placed in subsidized guardianship are ineligible for certain state-funded programs for youth that “age out” of foster care.

8. Report from Coalition/DHS Training Academy: George noted that there is next to nothing in the proposed Training Academy on Permanency or Youth Development. The survey that sought input from providers on content of the Academy did not ask about either issue. We may have missed a good opportunity to provide training for providers on permanency. George will suggest to the Coalition again that it address permanency at their annual conference or in other training. George has also suggested having a Permanency Convening in the state.

Mary and Kate both indicated that it is conceivable that the Casey foundations could help bring speakers to an Iowa event such as the Coalition Conference or provide other technical assistance to the state. Kate emphasized that we would need to have a solid plan on what our objectives are and how this would relate to other work. Mary mentioned that as DHS reworks the group care contracts, that may be an opportunity to introduce a new role for providers relative to permanency. George noted that “permanency” can be threatening to group care providers especially; they may not even understand the implications. To begin to address this issue and educate providers, George suggested that we recommend having permanency as a major theme of the Coalition Conference this year. Free speakers could be a major inducement. Mary

Iowa Child Welfare Advisory Committee
 Permanency Committee
 Membership List

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>E-Mail Address</u>	<u>Subcommittee Assignments</u>
Pam Alger	palger@dhs.state.ia.us	
Carol Behrer	cbehrer@ypii.org	Mission Task Force
George Belitsos, Co-Chair*	gbelitsos@yss.ames.ia.us	Committee Co-Chair
Denise Gonzalez	dgonzal@dhs.state.ia.us	
Ann Harrmann	annt@iachild.org	
Kathleen Kilnoski*	Kathleen.Kilnoski@iowacourts.gov	
Evan Klenk	EKlenk@dhs.state.ia.us	
Frank La Mere	franklamere@msn.com	
Miriam Landsman*	miriam-landsman@uiowa.edu	
Kate Lee	kateLee@kateleeinc.com	Mission Task Force
Sandy Lint	slint@dhs.state.ia.us	
Nancy Magnall	magnall_ifapa@msn.com	
Tammy Mahan	tmymahan@msn.com	
Kelli Malone	kmalone@fouroaks.org	Mission Task Force Co-Chair
Becky McCalley	rmccall@dhs.state.ia.us	
Holli Miller	hmillier@dhs.state.ia.us	Mission Task Force Co-Chair
Dick Moore, Co-chair*	richard.moore@dis.iowa.gov	Committee Co-Chair
Krista Penrod	krista.penrod@gmail.com	
Mandee Phillips	mandee_phillips19@live.com	
Ruth Phillips	ruth.i.phillips@mchsi.com	
Todd Savage	tsavage@dhs.state.ia.us	
Roxanne Thompson	rthompson@dhs.state.ia.us	
Doug Wolfe	dwolfe@dhs.state.ia.us	
Margaret Wright	mwright2@dhs.state.ia.us	

Cc on Correspondence

George Estle	gestle@tanagerplace.org
Jerry Foxhoven	jerry.foxhoven@drake.edu
Michelle Muir	mmuir@dhs.state.ia.us

*Child Welfare Advisory Committee Member Jan. 2, 2009

**Child Welfare Permanency Subcommittee
February 25, 2009, Meeting Summary**

1) Present

Carol Behrer, YPII
George Belitsos, YSS, Co-Chair
Pam Alger, MH/DS, DHS
Kathleen Kilnoski
Kate Lee, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative
Nancy Magnall
Kelli Malone, Four Oaks

Holli Miller, DHS
Dick Moore, CAB, Co-Chair
Mary Nelson, DHS
Mindy Norwood, DHS (Guest)
Ruth Phillips, CFI-Elevate
Doug Wolfe, DHS

2) Minutes: A summary of the last meeting was not available. Carol volunteered to prepare the meeting summary of today's meeting.

3) Review Agenda: The agenda was reviewed and no changes were suggested.

4) Review and update membership list. A membership list of 24 people was circulated prior to the meeting. New members were noted. Several members were unable to attend today because of scheduling conflicts but remain interested, including: Roxanne Thompson, Evan Klenk, and Denise Gonzales of DHS. Any changes to the membership list should be brought to the Chairs' attention.

5 and 6) Family Interactions: Dick summarized from the last meeting that there really is no good data source for detailed information on parent visitation/family interaction. Information is documented in individual case files, but it is not aggregated up and analyzed. There is no system for counting frequency or nature of interactions. The question remains, what would/should we do to promote the collection of this data. Pam Alger noted that there are additional factors that impact interaction (e.g., distance of placement from family, type of placement, etc.) that would be important to know. Dick also indicated that there are several questions to ask about visitation (e.g., is there concurrent planning going on?) that would complicate data collection.

Mindy Norwood provided additional information on DHS activities related to family interaction in preparation for roll-out in all service areas of new guidance by July 1st. In February a readiness survey was developed for providers and DHS staff, asking about what people knew about family interaction plans. More than 820 responses so far – survey will be open one more day. The on-line survey link was sent to a very broad distribution list. It is unclear who all has responded, but Mindy reported that there appears to be good response rates from both DHS and private providers. The survey asked about strengths and barriers related to family interaction. The results will be used to inform the training that is being developed. Norma Ginther will be in Iowa in March and June to provide training to providers and DHS staff together. Dick mentioned that some local FCRB and CASA coordinators have also been invited to the training. Pilot of the training was completed in Waterloo service area; curriculum was revised based on that pilot. Children's Justice Initiative has a conference/ meeting planned where this will also be addressed.

George asked specifically: "What will change on July 1? Will there be a standard set for frequency of visits or new expectations regarding this issue?" Mindy responded that what becomes effective July 1 is a statewide practice protocol that provides guidance on family interactions. This will include, for example, when/how we determine if visitations need to be supervised; identify developmental milestones and age appropriate interactions; who must provide supervision; etc.

Several issues related to family interactions were discussed. There was consensus that quality family interactions are an important factor in achieving permanence and this issue was important for the subcommittee to pay attention to. The following points (among others) were made during the discussion:

- It was unclear to some members who is making these decisions and how the standards will be set and enforced; a concern was raised that it's premature to establish standards when there is really no data on what's happening now.
- It is likely to get harder to get consistent documentation on the wide variety of interactions that could be part of a family's plan. For example, what normal, everyday activities (e.g., doctors appointments, etc.) need to be reported and how?

- Are these questions addressed in CFSR and QSR case reviews? Yes – but not necessarily at the level of quality/quantity detail that we may need. Those details could surface as part of the conversations that CFSR reviews trigger.
- Need to document both effort and actual interaction.
- If there are going to be standards, how and when will they be determined? Mary indicated that there will be “guidelines” rather than standards.
- Concern was expressed that there be new expectations/requirements on providers when the guidance is implemented on July 1.

Mary Nelson clarified that the Family Interaction Guidance will be adopted on July 1, but will most likely not result in immediate practice change. Mary emphasized that the “guidance” provides a philosophical foundation or framework for making decisions about interactions, rather than imposing specific requirements. It will take some time for everyone’s behavior to change. Dick noted that Iowa has been recognized for having model policies, but not as clear to what extent they are implemented in day-to-day practice.

Mary further indicated that what is being learned from FSRP is that just focusing on documenting compliance with quantity of interactions may detract from the quality of those visits. We have to be thoughtful about what data we ask to be documented and how we collect data so not to lose information on the quality aspect of visits.

The Subcommittee discussed what next step it could or should take on family interaction in light of all the work that is already going on. Mary recommended that the subcommittee can be a champion / additional voices that this is a good direction to be moving and that informal interaction is critical. She noted that the subcommittee and full Child Welfare Advisory Council can be helpful by being advocates for policy and practice change in this area and can help DHS understand barriers, gaps, what’s working well, etc.

George agreed that advocating for good implementation of family interaction is critical, but one obstacle will be asking providers to do more with the same or less reimbursement. He cautioned that it may be difficult to get the CWAC to endorse this without a lot of education and explanation. Mary agreed that this challenges the traditional ways we do business – for everyone – at a very fundamental level. Cost of supervising family interactions is another issue that will need additional attention as part of FSRP contracts. Mary also suggested that this group could also help analyze the survey data, and use it beyond just determining training needs.

The discussion then turned to seeking an endorsement by the full Child Welfare Advisory Council and other next steps. Dick cautioned that we don’t have anything concrete for them to endorse. He noted that while the Permanency Subcommittee appears supportive generally, we should be watchful of the impact of new guidance. We are not in a position to make specific recommendations right now about next steps, but we can report to the CWAC on this topic. **He asked that results from the survey Mindy described be shared with the Subcommittee.** Mary asked what other information (and in what format) would be most helpful to the CWAC. **George recommended that we ask to have an update on Family Interaction activities at the next Permanency Subcommittee meeting. If we then endorse the plan and standards, the Subcommittee will ask the CWAC to endorse. Mary and/or a member of the Family Interaction work group will develop a presentation for the next Permanency Subcommittee meeting.** (Wendy Rickman, Janice Lane, Gail Barber, Lori Modena (Mid-Iowa), and others were suggested as possible presenters.) **Mary agreed to follow-up and prepare for that presentation.** Mary also encouraged members of the CWAC and Permanency Subcommittee to attend the training, which will be offered on a statewide ICN. In addition, service area trainings are being scheduled through the spring. **DHS will share training dates when they are finalized.**

7. Fostering Connections – Review pre-filed bill: Legislation was pre-filed to bring Iowa into compliance with the federal legislation. Not all of the changes in Fostering Connections require statutory change. Dick shared copies of the bill (**SF 152 - attached**) with those at the Hoover Building and Holli briefly summarized key changes that are made by the legislation:

Transition Planning – Within 90 days of turning 18, as well as within 90 days of exiting care, a transition plan must be developed at the direction of the youth; Iowa law already requires that a transition plan be developed for all youth ages 16 and older in care; that plan is a component of the case plan. SF 152 adds language regarding the timing (90 days before age 18, etc.) and domains (education, employment, housing, etc.) that will apply to all

transition planning. Plan shall be considered a working document and reviewed at each hearing – emphasizing that transition is not an event, but a process. Language also emphasizes that the youth must be at the center of the planning and at the plan be developed at the direction of the youth.

Education Stability – Doug indicated that the education stability provisions that require that a child in placement attend his/her home school district unless it is not in the best interest of the child. Both Education and DHS are affected by this new requirement.

Discussion: There is a lot of information on the DHS website on Fostering Connections. SF 152 has been amended from the original study bill. House has agreed to let the Senate take the lead. Several registered lobbyists are “undecided.” There is some inconsistency between the Department of Education language and DHS language regarding where child goes to school – disagreement on the presumption / burden of proof regarding best interest of child. The Human Resources Committee approved the bill on Feb. 16. Senator Kreiman chaired the subcommittee and will likely be leading the conversation. The complexity of these decisions was discussed.

Doug mentioned that at the Dec. 8 Education Summit (DHS, DE, Courts) there was discussion of legislation affecting education provided by child welfare facilities. A bill has been introduced by Senator Quirnbach, who is working with the Department of Education on this, but it is unclear if action will be taken this session.

Transition Review Committees – originally removed as part of the DHS bill, but are now back in to provide oversight to ensure that transition plans are done and meet requirements.

Kathleen moved that the Subcommittee endorse and recommend that the CWAC endorse SF 152, bringing Iowa into compliance with the federal Fostering Connections Act. Mary Nelson seconded. Discussion – need to resolve inconsistency between DE and DHS language regarding education stability/home school presumption. Motion carried without dissent.

George will ask Jerry Foxhoven to put Fostering Connections bill on the next CWAC meeting agenda. The Permanency Committee will ask that SF 152 be endorsed by the full CWAC along with the four Elevate bills and HF 315 State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council. George will also recommend that the Coalition go on record in support of the bill. (Parenthetically, it was noted that Christie Oliver was named last week as the new Coalition Executive Director.)

Other comments regarding Fostering Connections:

- Doug brought up that Elevate is very interested in the state option to extend Foster Care to 18 to 21 year olds. They are currently gathering input from elevate chapters. This provision is not effective until 2011.
- Mary mentioned that there is also a subsidized kinship guardianship option in Fostering Connections that DHS will be taking action on in the near future. Need to define “relative.” Mary will share information on proposed rule change when it is available. One complication is that youth placed in subsidized guardianship are ineligible for certain state-funded programs for youth that “age out” of foster care.

8. Report from Coalition/DHS Training Academy: George noted that there is next to nothing in the proposed Training Academy on Permanency or Youth Development. The survey that sought input from providers on content of the Academy did not ask about either issue. We may have missed a good opportunity to provide training for providers on permanency. George will suggest to the Coalition again that it address permanency at their annual conference or in other training. George has also suggested having a Permanency Convening in the state.

Mary and Kate both indicated that it is conceivable that the Casey foundations could help bring speakers to an Iowa event such as the Coalition Conference or provide other technical assistance to the state. Kate emphasized that we would need to have a solid plan on what our objectives are and how this would relate to other work. Mary mentioned that as DHS reworks the group care contracts, that may be an opportunity to introduce a new role for providers relative to permanency. George noted that “permanency” can be threatening to group care providers especially; they may not even understand the implications. To begin to address this issue and educate providers, George suggested that we recommend having permanency as a major theme of the Coalition Conference this year. Free speakers could be a major inducement. Mary

said that Susan Ault of Casey Family Programs has also indicated that they might be able to support providers going to other states where providers are involved in permanency efforts.

On April 2 and 3, the Chief Justice's Children's Justice Summit will include speakers on Family Interaction and Disproportionality among other issues. While too late to add permanency to the agenda, might be able to distribute materials on permanency. Gail Barber is organizing the conference and would be the person to contact. Mary and Kate will try to connect with her.

Next steps related to permanency training:

- **George will email Ann Harrmann about having permanency addressed at the Coalition conference and suggest that she contact Kate about speakers.**
- **We will keep permanency training on this subcommittee's agenda.**
- **We will continue to explore possibility of some kind of state level convening.**

9) **Michigan Example:** Kate had distributed a link to the Michigan Task Force report to the state legislature on At-Risk Youth Transitioning to Adulthood. Most of the actions taken by that Task Force are to address issues raised by older youth in care or who had transitioned out of care. One of the concrete things that may be of interest to Iowa is language that MI is putting into contracts with providers regarding permanence and disproportionality. It also looked across all the supports and services for young people in care. There are several examples and material from other states, as well.

10) **Statewide shared vision with permanency as a central core.** Several people have shared information from other states and initiatives. A May 2007 meeting in Iowa also drafted a simple vision statement, but it was not officially endorsed and did not move forward. Doug shared the vision statement that was developed in 2007: "Every child in Iowa's child welfare and juvenile justice system will have lifelong relationships with one or more caring, capable, and supportive adults."

The subcommittee discussed how having a vision statement can make a difference, especially in day-to-day practice. Kelli mentioned that CA used an organizational development model to create a 3- or 5-year plan on permanency, which included a state self-assessment. She indicated that vision statements come alive through a more comprehensive assessment and plan of action. Dick noted that the effectiveness of a vision statement depends on who's involved in creating it and who it's for. Kelli stated that it would be interesting to know how other states got statewide ownership. Mary shared that it is important to have youth give input on what permanency means to them, which may be a useful way to think about establishing a vision.

George suggested creating a subcommittee to develop a vision statement and a plan to make a difference. Mary thought that the findings from all the mini CFSR reviews could be used to inform this effort; and could be used as an assessment of current permanency efforts. George believed that the CWAC could lead the charge on Permanency, but it will need guidance/support from this group. Several members noted that there is a ton of information and activities around this issue, but it is very piecemeal. The nature of the issue and the very broad audience, statewide and diverse stakeholders that are involved makes this a complicated effort. CWAC could take the lead on holding these things together.

An Ad Hoc Task Force to develop a Permanency Vision Statement was formed. Kelli Malone and Holli Miller agreed to co-chair. Kate Lee and Carol Behrer agreed to participate. Roxanne Thompson was also suggested. George will notify other subcommittee members of the opportunity and invite them to contact Kelli or Holli if they want to participate. The charge to the ad hoc task force is to create a DRAFT vision statement and recommend a process for getting input and generating buy-in from all stakeholders.

15) **Next Meeting:** The next meeting was scheduled for April 22, 2009 – 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Conference call-in option will be available.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:05 p.m.

**Child Welfare Permanency Subcommittee
February 25, 2009, Meeting Summary**

1) Present

Carol Behrer, YPII
George Belitsos, YSS, Co-Chair
Pam Alger, MH/DS, DHS
Kathleen Kilnoski
Kate Lee, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative
Nancy Magnall
Kelli Malone, Four Oaks

Holli Miller, DHS
Dick Moore, CAB, Co-Chair
Mary Nelson, DHS
Mindy Norwood, DHS (Guest)
Ruth Phillips, CFI-Elevate
Doug Wolfe, DHS

2) Minutes: A summary of the last meeting was not available. Carol volunteered to prepare the meeting summary of today's meeting.

3) Review Agenda: The agenda was reviewed and no changes were suggested.

4) Review and update membership list. A membership list of 24 people was circulated prior to the meeting. New members were noted. Several members were unable to attend today because of scheduling conflicts but remain interested, including: Roxanne Thompson, Evan Klenk, and Denise Gonzales of DHS. Any changes to the membership list should be brought to the Chairs' attention.

5 and 6) Family Interactions: Dick summarized from the last meeting that there really is no good data source for detailed information on parent visitation/family interaction. Information is documented in individual case files, but it is not aggregated up and analyzed. There is no system for counting frequency or nature of interactions. The question remains, what would/should we do to promote the collection of this data. Pam Alger noted that there are additional factors that impact interaction (e.g., distance of placement from family, type of placement, etc.) that would be important to know. Dick also indicated that there are several questions to ask about visitation (e.g., is there concurrent planning going on?) that would complicate data collection.

Mindy Norwood provided additional information on DHS activities related to family interaction in preparation for roll-out in all service areas of new guidance by July 1st. In February a readiness survey was developed for providers and DHS staff, asking about what people knew about family interaction plans. More than 820 responses so far – survey will be open one more day. The on-line survey link was sent to a very broad distribution list. It is unclear who all has responded, but Mindy reported that there appears to be good response rates from both DHS and private providers. The survey asked about strengths and barriers related to family interaction. The results will be used to inform the training that is being developed. Norma Ginther will be in Iowa in March and June to provide training to providers and DHS staff together. Dick mentioned that some local FCRB and CASA coordinators have also been invited to the training. Pilot of the training was completed in Waterloo service area; curriculum was revised based on that pilot. Children's Justice Initiative has a conference/ meeting planned where this will also be addressed.

George asked specifically: "What will change on July 1? Will there be a standard set for frequency of visits or new expectations regarding this issue?" Mindy responded that what becomes effective July 1 is a statewide practice protocol that provides guidance on family interactions. This will include, for example, when/how we determine if visitations need to be supervised; identify developmental milestones and age appropriate interactions; who must provide supervision; etc.

Several issues related to family interactions were discussed. There was consensus that quality family interactions are an important factor in achieving permanence and this issue was important for the subcommittee to pay attention to. The following points (among others) were made during the discussion:

- It was unclear to some members who is making these decisions and how the standards will be set and enforced; a concern was raised that it's premature to establish standards when there is really no data on what's happening now.
- It is likely to get harder to get consistent documentation on the wide variety of interactions that could be part of a family's plan. For example, what normal, everyday activities (e.g., doctors appointments, etc.) need to be reported and how?

- Are these questions addressed in CFSR and QSR case reviews? Yes – but not necessarily at the level of quality/quantity detail that we may need. Those details could surface as part of the conversations that CFSR reviews trigger.
- Need to document both effort and actual interaction.
- If there are going to be standards, how and when will they be determined? Mary indicated that there will be “guidelines” rather than standards.
- Concern was expressed that there be new expectations/requirements on providers when the guidance is implemented on July 1.

Mary Nelson clarified that the Family Interaction Guidance will be adopted on July 1, but will most likely not result in immediate practice change. Mary emphasized that the “guidance” provides a philosophical foundation or framework for making decisions about interactions, rather than imposing specific requirements. It will take some time for everyone’s behavior to change. Dick noted that Iowa has been recognized for having model policies, but not as clear to what extent they are implemented in day-to-day practice.

Mary further indicated that what is being learned from FSRP is that just focusing on documenting compliance with quantity of interactions may detract from the quality of those visits. We have to be thoughtful about what data we ask to be documented and how we collect data so not to lose information on the quality aspect of visits.

The Subcommittee discussed what next step it could or should take on family interaction in light of all the work that is already going on. Mary recommended that the subcommittee can be a champion / additional voices that this is a good direction to be moving and that informal interaction is critical. She noted that the subcommittee and full Child Welfare Advisory Council can be helpful by being advocates for policy and practice change in this area and can help DHS understand barriers, gaps, what’s working well, etc.

George agreed that advocating for good implementation of family interaction is critical, but one obstacle will be asking providers to do more with the same or less reimbursement. He cautioned that it may be difficult to get the CWAC to endorse this without a lot of education and explanation. Mary agreed that this challenges the traditional ways we do business – for everyone – at a very fundamental level. Cost of supervising family interactions is another issue that will need additional attention as part of FSRP contracts. Mary also suggested that this group could also help analyze the survey data, and use it beyond just determining training needs.

The discussion then turned to seeking an endorsement by the full Child Welfare Advisory Council and other next steps. Dick cautioned that we don’t have anything concrete for them to endorse. He noted that while the Permanency Subcommittee appears supportive generally, we should be watchful of the impact of new guidance. We are not in a position to make specific recommendations right now about next steps, but we can report to the CWAC on this topic. **He asked that results from the survey Mindy described be shared with the Subcommittee.** Mary asked what other information (and in what format) would be most helpful to the CWAC. **George recommended that we ask to have an update on Family Interaction activities at the next Permanency Subcommittee meeting. If we then endorse the plan and standards, the Subcommittee will ask the CWAC to endorse. Mary and/or a member of the Family Interaction work group will develop a presentation for the next Permanency Subcommittee meeting.** (Wendy Rickman, Janice Lane, Gail Barber, Lori Modena (Mid-Iowa), and others were suggested as possible presenters.) **Mary agreed to follow-up and prepare for that presentation.** Mary also encouraged members of the CWAC and Permanency Subcommittee to attend the training, which will be offered on a statewide ICN. In addition, service area trainings are being scheduled through the spring. **DHS will share training dates when they are finalized.**

7. Fostering Connections – Review pre-filed bill: Legislation was pre-filed to bring Iowa into compliance with the federal legislation. Not all of the changes in Fostering Connections require statutory change. Dick shared copies of the bill (**SF 152 - attached**) with those at the Hoover Building and Holli briefly summarized key changes that are made by the legislation:

Transition Planning – Within 90 days of turning 18, as well as within 90 days of exiting care, a transition plan must be developed at the direction of the youth; Iowa law already requires that a transition plan be developed for all youth ages 16 and older in care; that plan is a component of the case plan. SF 152 adds language regarding the timing (90 days before age 18, etc.) and domains (education, employment, housing, etc.) that will apply to all

transition planning. Plan shall be considered a working document and reviewed at each hearing – emphasizing that transition is not an event, but a process. Language also emphasizes that the youth must be at the center of the planning and at the plan be developed at the direction of the youth.

Education Stability – Doug indicated that the education stability provisions that require that a child in placement attend his/her home school district unless it is not in the best interest of the child. Both Education and DHS are affected by this new requirement.

Discussion: There is a lot of information on the DHS website on Fostering Connections. SF 152 has been amended from the original study bill. House has agreed to let the Senate take the lead. Several registered lobbyists are “undecided.” There is some inconsistency between the Department of Education language and DHS language regarding where child goes to school – disagreement on the presumption / burden of proof regarding best interest of child. The Human Resources Committee approved the bill on Feb. 16. Senator Kreiman chaired the subcommittee and will likely be leading the conversation. The complexity of these decisions was discussed.

Doug mentioned that at the Dec. 8 Education Summit (DHS, DE, Courts) there was discussion of legislation affecting education provided by child welfare facilities. A bill has been introduced by Senator Quirnbach, who is working with the Department of Education on this, but it is unclear if action will be taken this session.

Transition Review Committees – originally removed as part of the DHS bill, but are now back in to provide oversight to ensure that transition plans are done and meet requirements.

Kathleen moved that the Subcommittee endorse and recommend that the CWAC endorse SF 152, bringing Iowa into compliance with the federal Fostering Connections Act. Mary Nelson seconded. Discussion – need to resolve inconsistency between DE and DHS language regarding education stability/home school presumption. Motion carried without dissent.

George will ask Jerry Foxhoven to put Fostering Connections bill on the next CWAC meeting agenda. The Permanency Committee will ask that SF 152 be endorsed by the full CWAC along with the four Elevate bills and HF 315 State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council. George will also recommend that the Coalition go on record in support of the bill. (Parenthetically, it was noted that Christie Oliver was named last week as the new Coalition Executive Director.)

Other comments regarding Fostering Connections:

- Doug brought up that Elevate is very interested in the state option to extend Foster Care to 18 to 21 year olds. They are currently gathering input from elevate chapters. This provision is not effective until 2011.
- Mary mentioned that there is also a subsidized kinship guardianship option in Fostering Connections that DHS will be taking action on in the near future. Need to define “relative.” Mary will share information on proposed rule change when it is available. One complication is that youth placed in subsidized guardianship are ineligible for certain state-funded programs for youth that “age out” of foster care.

8. Report from Coalition/DHS Training Academy: George noted that there is next to nothing in the proposed Training Academy on Permanency or Youth Development. The survey that sought input from providers on content of the Academy did not ask about either issue. We may have missed a good opportunity to provide training for providers on permanency. George will suggest to the Coalition again that it address permanency at their annual conference or in other training. George has also suggested having a Permanency Convening in the state.

Mary and Kate both indicated that it is conceivable that the Casey foundations could help bring speakers to an Iowa event such as the Coalition Conference or provide other technical assistance to the state. Kate emphasized that we would need to have a solid plan on what our objectives are and how this would relate to other work. Mary mentioned that as DHS reworks the group care contracts, that may be an opportunity to introduce a new role for providers relative to permanency. George noted that “permanency” can be threatening to group care providers especially; they may not even understand the implications. To begin to address this issue and educate providers, George suggested that we recommend having permanency as a major theme of the Coalition Conference this year. Free speakers could be a major inducement. Mary

said that Susan Ault of Casey Family Programs has also indicated that they might be able to support providers going to other states where providers are involved in permanency efforts.

On April 2 and 3, the Chief Justice's Children's Justice Summit will include speakers on Family Interaction and Disproportionality among other issues. While too late to add permanency to the agenda, might be able to distribute materials on permanency. Gail Barber is organizing the conference and would be the person to contact. Mary and Kate will try to connect with her.

Next steps related to permanency training:

- **George will email Ann Harrmann about having permanency addressed at the Coalition conference and suggest that she contact Kate about speakers.**
- **We will keep permanency training on this subcommittee's agenda.**
- **We will continue to explore possibility of some kind of state level convening.**

9) Michigan Example: Kate had distributed a link to the Michigan Task Force report to the state legislature on At-Risk Youth Transitioning to Adulthood. Most of the actions taken by that Task Force are to address issues raised by older youth in care or who had transitioned out of care. One of the concrete things that may be of interest to Iowa is language that MI is putting into contracts with providers regarding permanence and disproportionality. It also looked across all the supports and services for young people in care. There are several examples and material from other states, as well.

10) Statewide shared vision with permanency as a central core. Several people have shared information from other states and initiatives. A May 2007 meeting in Iowa also drafted a simple vision statement, but it was not officially endorsed and did not move forward. Doug shared the vision statement that was developed in 2007: "Every child in Iowa's child welfare and juvenile justice system will have lifelong relationships with one or more caring, capable, and supportive adults."

The subcommittee discussed how having a vision statement can make a difference, especially in day-to-day practice. Kelli mentioned that CA used an organizational development model to create a 3- or 5-year plan on permanency, which included a state self-assessment. She indicated that vision statements come alive through a more comprehensive assessment and plan of action. Dick noted that the effectiveness of a vision statement depends on who's involved in creating it and who it's for. Kelli stated that it would be interesting to know how other states got statewide ownership. Mary shared that it is important to have youth give input on what permanency means to them, which may be a useful way to think about establishing a vision.

George suggested creating a subcommittee to develop a vision statement and a plan to make a difference. Mary thought that the findings from all the mini CFSR reviews could be used to inform this effort; and could be used as an assessment of current permanency efforts. George believed that the CWAC could lead the charge on Permanency, but it will need guidance/support from this group. Several members noted that there is a ton of information and activities around this issue, but it is very piecemeal. The nature of the issue and the very broad audience, statewide and diverse stakeholders that are involved makes this a complicated effort. CWAC could take the lead on holding these things together.

An Ad Hoc Task Force to develop a Permanency Vision Statement was formed. Kelli Malone and Holli Miller agreed to co-chair. Kate Lee and Carol Behrer agreed to participate. Roxanne Thompson was also suggested. George will notify other subcommittee members of the opportunity and invite them to contact Kelli or Holli if they want to participate. The charge to the ad hoc task force is to create a DRAFT vision statement and recommend a process for getting input and generating buy-in from all stakeholders.

15) Next Meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for April 22, 2009 – 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Conference call-in option will be available.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:05 p.m.