

***Regional Services Council
Region 4 Meeting***

Date: July 12, 2021

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location of Meeting: Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Chair: Erin Shidler, Region 4 Manager

Meeting Secretary: Helen Garmon

Call to order

Start time: 12:00 p.m.

Roll call

Approval of minutes from last meeting

As read X As corrected _____

Recommended Correction: _____

Program/Committee Reports

Unfinished Business

None

New business

Welcome

Community Partners Update – Lisa Blanchard

Lisa Blanchard shared her screen to review the following reports:

- Network for Safe Families Report 7/1/20 - 6/30/21
- Service Summary Data 7/1/21 through 6/30/21
- Referral Summary Data 7/1/21 through 6/30/21
- Region 4 Local Prevention Dollars 7/1/20 to 6/30/21

Service Update – Dion Smith, Regional Service Coordinator

- **Home Based Casework Service Standard** was update. We removed the check list we had of the 39 semester credit hours that they needed in order to qualify if they didn't have a Human Services related degree. They added 4 years of experience with a GED and/or High School Diploma's would qualify you to be a Home Based Caseworker.

If you receive a Home Based Casework referral; please do not allow language to be in that Home Based Casework referral asking for Mentoring and/or Tutoring. Supervisors should not be approving referrals that have that language and Providers should not be accepting referrals that has that language. We have a Tutoring Service Standard that should be used for Tutoring. We do not have a Service Standard for Mentoring

- **Visitation** will be the next Service Standard that we are going to update
- **Family Preservation** Dion sent a spreadsheet to all Family Preservation Providers asking them to give him information on the evidence based practices that they service. The target populations they're looking for, what counties they serve etc. If you did not get that spreadsheet from Dion, please reach out and he will send it to you.

They're trying to build an App. of our Family Preservation Providers which would be FCM accessible so the FCM could go onto this app., put in the presenting causes that the family may have, link it up and the app. will provide a list Providers that can service the needs of that family.

Surveys

As a Family Preservation Provider; we are sending out a few surveys to you all. We are gathering data. Family Preservation is a service that we want to be outcome and Data driven. Our surveys are twofold.

1. One survey is looking for those outcomes measures. How's it helping our families
 2. One survey is about the fidelity of the models that you service. Each evidenced based model that you have has its own fidelity model meaning you have to do A,B and C within that model in order to meet fidelity of it
- **Cordant** rolled out across the State as of July 1, 2021. We no longer have Forensic Fluid and we no longer have Redwood. If you would like to be a Provider for Cordant for drug screens, please let Dion know so he can get you that information so you can get contracted with Cordant
 - Dion is also the Division Practice Consultant. What they want to do is bring the Providers to the table and give them an overview of what we do, the expectations we want from the Providers as they come to our meetings. We want to help the Providers understand our Practice Model, CFTM Process, Mission Statement, Values etc. and kind of bring it all together and make communication a better bridge for us all

Regional Budget Update - Katie Craft, R4 Financial Manager

- Region 4 had an excellent fiscal year 2021! Region 4 target was 100%. Region 4 spent 95.04 % of their allotted budget

County Updates

Allen - (Erin Shidler gave update for Melissa Hayden, Director) – We're continuing to have a small staff need so we're hiring more Case Managers. We have a new Supervisor, Patti Parrish who was promoted from an FCM to Supervisor effective today.

We've been focusing on looking at that least restrictive, most home like setting and also achieving permanency for children who have been in care. Since our last meeting Allen County

has reduced the number of children in residential by 6. Since our last meeting we've decreased the number of children who've been in care over 3 years by 5%

Our goal for the next quarter is looking at increasing our children that are placed with relatives or Kin.

We are all back to the offices now. We have space issues in Allen County. We have about 50 more staff than we have seats so for those Regional Staff we've been "tucking" them everywhere in our surrounding counties. DeKalb has the most because they are closer to Allen

DeKalb – (Wesley Husselman, Director) – We have a new Legal Assistant. We have 13 FCM's, we had 3 Supervisors but one moved to SAFE Act so we now have 2.

Our intakes had dropped off like most counties during COVID Pandemic. However, they have bounced back up and we're doing 70 to 75 intakes a month.

Allen County has a space issue so we have 6 additional Regional staff mostly in the area of Foster Care and Adoption working in the DeKalb office and possibly a 7th. We've been allowed to hire a second clerical and we're going through interviews right now.

DeKalb has a Family Restoration Court or Family Court which started a couple of years ago and we had our first 2 Graduates which allowed us to close a CHINS case which was successful. We're looking at about 3 additional graduates within the next 2 or 3 months

LaGrange- (Kathryn Stephenson, Director) – We currently have 6 FCM's, Randy Jones is retiring at the end of this week after 35 years of service with the Department. Stephanie is our only Supervisor here since Paul has gone back to Whitley.

Our Assessments still remain in the 40's. They dropped off a little after school being out. We average 35 to 40 assessments each month.

We recently had an adoption of 2 kids last week. That was a great success! Our CHINS dropped to about 49 with those 2 closing.

We've increased kids being In Home and our IA's over the last month or so. We've been really pushing keeping kids in the home with Family Preservation and utilizing those services vs Foster Care. Our number of Relative Placements has also increased recently.

For those in the area; there is going to be a presentation on July 27th that is being held by the Prosecutors Office. North Eastern Center and Kate are on the panel for that day. There's a desire by our Victims Advocate to have a Sexual Assault Center started up in this area. If you would like the flyer please send Kate an e-mail and she will send it out to you
(Kathryn.Stephenson@dcs.in.gov)

Noble County (Joe Sims, Director) – We're still right at 15 FCM's. We have 2 Supervisors. Supervisor, Tiffani Hovarter who transferred to SAFE Act. Justine Warren is in LaGrange

County. We've replaced Tiffani and Justine. Andrea Hoy transferred from Allen County to Noble County as a Supervisor.

We're floating around the 50's for Assessments each month. We've remained pretty consistent with right around 91 In Home and between CHINS and IA. In June we closed out about 10% of children who have been involved with DCS for over 3 years. We closed out 6 children in a category and 1 in another category

We've increased our use of Kinship homes. We are right at 71% for children placed between IA, In-Home and with Relative or Kinship. We're really shifting our focus to finding those youth connections that aren't just your typical Grandparents, Aunts and Uncles.

We're also focusing on keeping children in care less than 2 years. We've increased that by about 9% for June.

Steuben – (Ron Lahmeyer, Director) – We will be at 6 FCMs Monday. Assessments have been low the last few months; somewhere around the 30's. We anticipate that to go up when school starts.

On the Permanency end, we've been successful in finding Permanency for our children. We've had several adoptions over the last few months

Whitley - (Amanda Herendeen, Director) – The last time we met we had 10 FCM's; we are down to 9 FCM's due to 1 FCM transferring to Allen County. We have pretty similar to LaGrange statistics being at about 35 to 40 assessments a month.

We are right around 49 focused children so that's all our cases In-Home and Out of Home. We have really focused on trying to keep children in their family of origin or In-Home utilizing Family Preservation. Right now we have about 80% of our children in IA's, In-Home or with relatives

In June we closed out 2 of our longer term cases. One with unification and one with an Adoption

Next Meeting – Virtual Meeting October 4, 2021 @ 12:00 p.m.

Adjournment

With no other business meeting was adjourned.

Signatures:

Secretary Helen Harmon Chair 

Date 10-4-21 Date 10-4-21

Approved: hg (secretary's initials) Date: 10-4-21