

Licensed Child Placement Agency Meeting Minutes

Date of meeting: 12/1/21

LCPA Agenda Items

ICPC Process – Karen Hayden (Kinship Navigator):

- Regarding the ICPC process Karen Hayden noted some confusions such as who pays ICPC costs, beginning the licensing process too soon and so forth.
- To prevent confusion Karen suggests all providers ask at the start of conversation if the family is willing or not willing to accept a youth from out of state. If the family wishes to accept children from out of state, then this will expedite the ICPC process and not lump those families with others who only want children in Indiana.
- Please forward your questions or need for clarification to either Crystal.Whitis@dcs.in.gov or Karen.Hayden@dcs.in.gov

Changes in Foster Care Unit – Nicci Chenowith:

- Portia Boney (Foster Care Consultant) will leave her position on Friday 12/3/21.
- Elisa Suarez (Foster Care Manager) will leave her position Friday 12/10/21. Elisa's work will be forwarded to Paegan Kersey (DCS FCM Supervisor).
- Also there are a few staff members off work for personal/health reasons. If you need anything from the team, please reach out to Nicci Chenowith (Nicci.Chenowith@dcs.in.gov) and she will direct your inquiry.

SAFE trainings (Nicci Chenowith)

- The SAFE trainings for January and March of 2022 will be held virtually.
- SAFE Practitioner training will occur January 24 and 25.
- SAFE Supervisor training will be held January 26.
- Please send to Nicci.Chenowith@dcs.in.gov any requests to be assigned to SAFE training slots.

Annual Overdue Reports:

- The Annual Overdue Reports number is 730 and this is a good decrease and is good news.
- Foster Care Consultants will continue to contact those agencies will overdue reports on weekly/monthly basis.

Co-Care Webinar – David Reed:

- A webinar titled *Virtual Foster Parent Inclusion and Engagement Event: Co-Care* was held 11/30/21 with 350 in attendance. The attendees were a diverse grouping of job titles, foster parents, etc.
- Purpose of webinar was to provide an overview of DCS' commitment to co-care, the principles of co-care, and guidance on including birth/resource parents in CFTMs.
- One suggestion made was to offer that those involved shift from the terms "biological parents" and "foster parents" to something that better reflects those relationships and connections.
- Recommended that DCS and providers cease the use of an "us versus them" culture/mentality when discussing foster/biological families. Doing so will improve peoples' wellbeing and outcomes as well as minimize feelings of de-humanization.
- The webinar tenants are not meant to force the usage, but rather the consideration of such.
- The webinar event was recorded, and a link will be given to staff in near future. Another updated version of the Co-Care webinar will be held in the future to bolster this important idea of Co-Care. In Indiana, kids average 600 days in out of home care which is very high and we need to seek better, more efficient methods of caring for kids.
- Need to encourage Foster Parents to cultivate an open mind when speaking about the biological parents.
- Crystal Whitis offered how some judges, legislators and others asked youth in care what would make the Foster Care experience better for them? The responses from youth was consistently that they wish that something more had been done to help their parents with the issues they faced. This opens the door for professional staff to be empathic, compassionate and supportive of parents in cycles of addiction, poverty and domestic violence, etc. It presents the opportunity to humanize people.
- David Reed spoke to how the courtroom is not an ideal place for the foster/biological parents to have their first meeting. FCM and DCS have an opportunity to set the tone of the relationship between the foster/biological parents and should be mindful of doing so. Again this sets the stage for using empathy, compassion and using people skills to forge a respect amongst all parties.

Review Tool for 2022 – Rick Stiegerwalt:

- For 2022 Reviews, the Residential Licensing Team will be returning to the use of a more full-length tool. Similar to what was utilized in 2019 and early 2020. The Review Tool for 2022 will have 30 to 35 items.
- A copy of the Review Tool will be given to all LCPAs in advance of your scheduled review. If you do not receive a copy please contact your local Residential Licensing Consultant.
- The team will continue to utilize virtual methods for a much of the review process as possible in 2022.

Cyber Security Insurance – David Reed:

- A letter was sent to all contracted LCPAs last week about the Cyber Security Insurance requirement in the upcoming contract modification.
- All companies are experiencing breaches to their data and compromising the confidentiality of data. Therefore, DCS is requiring all DCS contractors to carry Cyber Security Insurance. This Cyber Security Insurance must be in place by June 2022. There must be \$1million dollars residing within the aggregate.
- Contact David.Reed@dcs.in.gov with any questions.

Professional Foster Care – Crystal Whitis:

- Indiana is willing and ready to use Professional Foster Care beginning January 2022. DCS is working on finalizing the details of a Professional Foster Care pilot with a licensed/contracted LCPA.
- Discussion was had regarding DCS providing a standard/framework for Professional Foster Care for the LCPAs to follow. DCS would like to continue these conversations about Professional Foster Care, but also allow agencies to have creativity and flexibility to create a program that works for their agencies, foster parents, etc. Staff are encouraged to research how other states utilize Professional Foster Care.
- Discussion was had regarding the pay structure for Professional Foster Care.
 1. The pay structure could use a per diem model with the payment issued with or without child in the home.
 2. The pay structure could use negotiated rates for high acuity behaviors seen in children. Still a continuous focus must be upon training and preparing Foster Parents to accept and be successful with high acuity behaviors.
 3. The pay structure could include allowing the LCPA to add the Professional Foster parents to their payroll as employees
- Creating a Mobile Response Unit within Professional Foster Care networks is something that is also being assessed. This would be a method of support/assistance for Professional Foster Parents and creating a support network with other Professional Foster Parents. For instance, a person sends an alert to the Mobile Response Unit and within an hour, other Professional Foster parents respond to the home to assist with responding to the crisis or situation and providing assistance.

Topics for January Meeting:

- Send Crystal.Whitis@dcs.in.gov any topics you have for the January LCPA meeting.

Next LCPA meeting is January 5 at 2:00pm eastern time.

