

Casey Family Foundation Coos County Project
January 12, 2009 Meeting notes

In Attendance:

Betty Albertson
Yvonne Livingstone
Nancylee Stewart
Paula Warr
Judy McMakin

Old Business:

Corrections to the minutes of 1/9/09 were discussed. Betty will email these corrections to Megara.

Up Coming Meetings:

1. Discussion was held on the reasons for the meeting on January 30th. The group reached consensus on the purpose. There are several purposes, 1) to provide information to key leaders in the community on the progress of this committee, 2) explain the purpose of the Casey Family Foundation funding, 3) to receive any suggestions key community leaders for the best ways and collaborative efforts in accomplishing the goals. The plans will be presented as preliminary with suggestions welcome.
2. Judy noted a meeting that will be held with folks from the Oregon Community Foundation where some of our suggestions could be introduced. This meeting is for CCF and a very few friends and by invitation only. Judy will carry all suggestions from this group and others to the table for the next committee meeting. The main programmatic goal we have identified at this time is wrap around services for families at risk of entering care and for those exiting care. Further conversations will be held if this becomes a viable option with OCF.

Goal 4 Discussion: Increase Foster Care Exits by 20%.

1. Considering the progress Child Welfare has recently made in this area a more realistic figure for Coos would be a 10% reduction in 2009 and then revisit the goal in one year.
2. Finding more relatives would help this statistic
3. **Task:** Nancylee will check on the possibility of utilization of a limited duration employee to work on searching for relatives of children in care for more than 15 months.
4. Increase utilization of Education Talent Search for Independent Living Program (ILP) Teens.
5. Review ILP to ensure best outcomes for teens
6. Increase wrap around services for families of children leaving care.

Goal 5 Discussion: Reduce the Disproportionality index for Native and African American children (numerical goal to be set at the end of 2009.)

1. Get accurate data from Central Office specifically about the "unknown" category.
2. Have caseworkers contact families to update data and ethnic identification.
3. Hire toward DHS diversity goals (people of color and women). Goals are set compared to population data.
4. Consider review of decision making points when considering diversity issues. These points are: 1) What case to investigate 2) What services to provide 3) What recommendation to make for placement.
5. Invite tribal workers to accompany CWS workers on assessment visits (this is done sometimes)
6. Consider local generational bias of families – as an isolated and rural community we frequently know family history and could let that history influence current decisions.
7. Understand a lot of minorities and families in poverty are not paper driven i.e. do not have ready access to birth certificates.
8. Recommend to the Disproportionate Task Force to review policies that are subtly discriminatory.
9. Question to address: How do you get people to stop making judgments based on ignorance of cultural differences?

10. Teaming new workers with experienced workers is a good learning strategy for new employees.
11. Some disproportionate issues are financial forcing clients to always be in chaos because of survival mode. These are common to families in poverty.
12. Child care, transportation, simple needs contribute to chaos and impact the family situation.
13. A bottom line is to increase TANF payments to a survival amount.
14. Counseling etc. is great but cannot replace basic needs and families will be more receptive when basic needs are met.
15. Imbedded ongoing training on cultural competency is more effective than one day trainings.
16. Incorporate this philosophy into the DHS Diversity Committee to improve practice and decision making in the key decision making points listed above.
17. Advocacy for specific support for increased gas, food, bus vouchers, etc. that keep the family from chaos. Supporting a baseline system that will take families out of survival mode.
18. Basic Philosophy: Empower clients rather than come in with the power. Older employees model this behavior and train new employees in the skills related to this philosophy.
19. Suggest training by Dr. Rita Cameron Wedding from Cal State Sacramento on bias in the child welfare system. A single bias incident may not impact but numerous incidents will compound the problem.

Discussion on NICWA,

1. Family decision making at the tribal level and the certification for tribal workers was discussed.
2. Consideration could be given to sponsoring a certification program for child welfare workers – a few from all parts of the state.
3. Quarterly meeting of certified workers could be helpful in moving this forward.

Next Steps:

1. Judy will develop an agenda for the meeting on the 30th which will be reviewed at our meeting on the 26th.
2. Next meeting January 26th at Child Welfare Office at 10:00 a.m.
3. Purpose: To finalize plans and review packet for meeting on the 30th.

Recorder: Judy McMakin