

**Safety Reducing the Number of Oregon Children in Foster Care  
Casey Partnership - Initiative Kick off Meeting  
January 5, 2009  
Red Lion Inn – Salem Oregon**

Convener: Dick Withnell, Oregon Commission Youth and Families (OCCF) and  
Marion County Children and Families Commission (MCCFC)  
Facilitator: Laurel Singer, Oregon Solutions

**Meeting Notes**

Marion County Representatives Attending: Alison Kelley – Director of MCCFC; Dawn Hunter – Program Manager of DHS – CAF; Guy Edmonds – Supervisor of DHS-CAF; Jim Seymour – Executive Director of Catholic Community Services (CCS); Tamra Goettsch – Management Analyst MCCFC; Rene DuBoise – Director 3 Manager of DHS; Sue Miller – Executive Director of Family Building Blocks; Jaime Arredondo – Salem-Keizer Coalition for Equality; LaNell Brooks – representing Eduardo Angulo.

<b>State Wide Goals for the Foster Care Initiative – By 2011</b>
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Safely reduce the number of children in foster care by 20%.</li><li>2. Increase relative placements by 50%</li><li>3. Reduce children entering care by 10%</li><li>4. Increase foster care exits by 20%</li><li>5. Reduce the disproportionality index for Native and African American children (numerical goal to be set at the end of 2009).</li><li>6. Maintain or reduce current child abuse/neglect recurrence rate of 7.9%</li></ol> |
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During the kick-off meeting, work sessions were held for county partners to begin exploring ways to implement local strategies to achieve statewide goals. The following reflects the notes from the session.

**Guiding Principles:**

County representatives collectively agree, in principle, that achieving success for our children depends on:

*Agreeing on shared outcomes, embraced by broad community partners pooling efforts to ensure safety and support of families.*

## **Preliminary Marion County's Action Strategy for Achieving Statewide Goals:**

Marion County already has many critical services in place and efforts underway. If connected, expanded, adapted or added to, many efforts would impact statewide goals. The following was achieved by consensus:

1. Review relevant data and agree on what outcome measures to use as benchmarks of success in their county.
2. Map the current efforts and programs currently in place that focus on the child welfare system.
3. Identify the gaps in services that address a care continuum.
4. Identify the current programs that could be enhanced, expanded, adapted and/or gaps that could be filled that would have an effective impact on achieving the statewide goals in Marion County.

It is envisioned that a large group will be convened for input and a core "action team" will carry out the main workload on behalf of the larger group.

## **Rough Map of Current Efforts/Services Impacting Foster Care Rates:**

Representatives identified current services and efforts in their county, including DHS efforts to serve as an initial map. See table below summarizing this discussion.

## **Additional Suggestions/Solutions:**

The following are other strategy suggestions to emerge from the discussion (not captured elsewhere):

1. Seek parity by developing resources and foster homes for Spanish speaking families.
2. Shift image of child welfare services as a supporter of families and family reunification both to foster parents and those outside DHS.
3. Target neighborhoods with high rates of children entering foster care for services and those that have Neighborhood Associations or operating Community Progress Teams (CPTs)
4. Start relative-search when the child enters the receiving home.
5. Tap into retirees as a resource to help with relative-search
6. Change statewide goal #6 to include the word trauma and goal #4 to include the word safely.

### **Who Else to Involve:**

Representatives identified other key partners who could contribute to achieving results in Marion County. These included:

Gaylynn Pack, Marion County Sheriff's office  
Marion County CFC's Foster Care Action Team  
Pam Sornson, CASA  
Lori Schiedler, Foster Care Parent  
Tom Carranza, Citizen Review Board  
Chuck Lee and/or Sandy Husk, Salem-Keizer School District  
Kimberly Allain  
Maureen Casey, Willamette Educational Service District  
AARP/Senior Center/50+ representative: To Be Determined  
Youth Representation – Jim Seymour will explore  
Jacob Potter and Mary Moller – DHS  
Janet Carlson – Marion County Commissioner  
Sam Skillern – Faith Community  
Cheryl Roberts – Chemeketa Community College

### **Next Meeting**

A follow up meetings was set for:

January 21, 2009  
10:00 am – Noon  
Family Building Blocks  
2425 Lancaster Drive  
Salem Oregon  
Convener: Dick Withnell  
Facilitator: Laurel Singer

### **Next Steps:**

Rene, Sue, Jim, Alison, and Dick will draft a joint letter to email to potential invitees regarding the initiative and the next meeting. Alison will send the email. A copy of the draft services map will later be forwarded with materials prior to the next meeting.

Jim Seymour will contact CCS's youth group to explore how they might want to include their voices in this process.

All representatives will consider how to include a representative from the retiree community. Laurel will type up notes including the map of services and DHS efforts and submit to Dick and Alison for review.

**Current Services and Efforts in Marion County Impacting Foster Care  
Initial Mapping: 1/5/2009**

<b>Effort</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Service Focus</b>	<b>State Goal</b>
Great Beginnings	CFC	Prenatal-5 years	Child development through family support	1, 6, 5
Foster Care Action Team	CFC	0-18	Recruitment, Retention, Training of Foster Care parents	1, 2, 4, 6
Receiving Home	CCS, DHS, CCF	0-7 sibling groups	Crisis Intervention Temporary Foster Care	2-6
Family Finders	CCS	Any age, but targets older youth	Connect youth with family to aide transition out of foster care	2, 4, 5, 6
Family Lifelines	CCS	Out of Control Children 0-18, in or out of FC	24/7 crisis intervention behavioral support, in-home intervention, prevention of hospitalization/ incarceration	1,3,6
Fostering Hope	CCS	All	Support networks in neighborhoods with highest % of FC placements	1,3,4,5, 6
Relief Nursery	FBB	0-5	Keep children out of FC- social emotional supports of families & children	1,3,5
Fostering Attachment	FBB, DHS, Court	0-5	Drug TX Court – Court ordered reunify family	1,4,6
Healthy Start	CCS, WESD, CCF, FBB	Prenatal – 3	Home visiting, prevention, psycho-social support	1,3,5
Father Taft Homes	CCS	Pregnant/ Parenting moms	Residential support	
School Transportation	School District	School age children	Transport to home-school from Foster Care placement	Reduce trauma
Students in trauma/ Children in Trauma	School District & Judge Abernethy	School age & 0-5 entering FC	Wraparound supports for children in School & Training professionals in trauma and how to identify resources	6
Children of incarcerated	Sheriffs office	0-18	Parent training for incarcerated parents to	6

Effort	Sponsor	Age	Service Focus	State Goal
parents			prevent abuse	
Marion County re-entry VOTE	CCF	All age	Support to recently incarcerated parents to decrease abuse	1,3,5
CASA	Court	0-18 ward of courts	Child Advocacy	1-6
Community Homes for Children	CCS	10-18	Stable Nurturing Homes targeting sibling groups in foster care	4 (safe exit)
Community college courses	CC College	Older youth	Free Community College Courses	

**Potential Strategies:**

- Upon entering the receiving home, initiate relative-search -- Family finders (relative-search): Start making connections sooner.
- Family Lifelines: Consider their mental health resources to help youth with stress when working toward family reunification.
- Healthy Start: High number of Latino families; need to increase parity of services.
- Father Taft Homes: Three homes are only utilized at 30%, yet are completely paid for and could serve as a resource for future services.
- Start to give a balanced message to relatives de-emphasizing the need to stop all contact with the abusive parent, as this is often difficult in practice. Put focus onto the safety plan.

**Current Efforts within Marion County DHS to Safely Reduce the Number of Children in Foster Care:**

P.I.P. (Program Improvement Plan)

QSR (Quality Service Review)

Oregon Safety Model – Practice Model

Family Support and Connections

Wellness Staffing (SSP)

Rate Redesign

Certification/Placement Mapping

Wellbeing Team

ICPC

Work with Consulate