Regional Service Council

Region 6

November 15, 2023

* Welcome and update on county successes

Kerri King reported out for Huntington County. She stated their office has been busy. They just got done doing CIT training with all their law enforcement officers. She stated DCS provided a presentation on basic reporting procedures and talked about some of the trends they are seeing. She stated they had a Human trafficking component in the presentation to explain how the department works regionally, locally, and nationally with human trafficking. Kerri stated they are in the thick of JDAI. They had their Steering Community meeting and are getting ready to institute some type of parenting and mentorship program in their county and expanding education alternative for youth in Huntington. They have been working very hard with permanency and have had 12 adoptions so far this year. Their length of stay is down.

John Lane reported out for Miami County. He stated they are continuing community engagement by partnering with law enforcement, prosecutor, and others in the community. The Care Portal is up and going and they have been using it to support their families. It is going very well. They are working on length of stay and the numbers are going down considerably. October had a high number of reports. John stated the office was fully staffed but recently had a family case manager quit. He hopes to hire another FCM soon.

Alicia Velasquez reported out for Wabash County. They are continuing to work on parent engagement and the quantity and mainly working on quality. The biggest thing they are working on right now is their foster care Christmas party. They have had a lot of adoptions this year and seeing a decrease in length of stay. Alicia stated they are really changing their focus to keep kids in home when possible.

Kristina Robinson reported out for Howard County. She stated their office director has been working hard with Turning Point to break in their services with DCS along with a couple other providers in their area they will be working with. She stated the Care Portal has been working. They have started the We Care Tree in Howard County and it raised $650. The tree is donated back to the office and the office donates it to a family that needs a tree. They have been working on their engaging parent numbers and realized a lot of information in Magik was incorrect, so they have been working hard to clean up the data in Magik. She also said the assessment side in their office is working on getting their initiations up and working in the community to try and prevent going out on the lower-level cases.

Erica Haag reported out for Fulton County. She stated their office has reunified 12 kids and adopted 6 so far this year. They are currently down to 2 kids in residential. One child is placed in Virgina and Erica said that was a first for her to have a child placed out of state. Their office is up and running with Care Portal and still getting used to it. They are having an amazing response from their area churches. They are in the process of piloting a new program for the state called The Parent Alloy Program. The program is for parents who have been involved and through the process with DCS can become a mentor to a family who is involved with DCS. Erica stated their court system is doing a trauma informed work program. It’s a full trained program for the FCM supervisor and, attorney is taking part in the program, and it can take up to 3 years to get transitioned. This is what their circuit court is doing, and their judge is very passionate about it. Erica is currently working with The Outlook Youth Program. It has been amazing in their community, and they are in the process of planning a kid night for kids are in placement can hang out at The Outlet Center to allow parents to have a night out.

* Minutes

There were no corrections to the August 16, 2023, minutes. Kerri King made a motion to accept the minutes and John Lane seconded the motion.

* Financial

Liz Learned passed out and went over the budget. The expenditures are up as expected and especially in the residential section. Overall, the target was 33.3% and we are under the budget as a region at 29.65%. Fulton County has had the highest number of kids in residential this past year.

* SCAN

Christy Robbins passed out the report for Community Partners on how they are doing in the region and went over it. She added a little bit different information for this fiscal year to show a different picture on what they are doing in the community. She stated you can see a trend from July to October of how many cases and referrals they have had. Christy stated she also wanted to highlight on the short-term closures. This is for families who don’t want services and they are in and out within 30 days. There were 63 new referrals, 35 short term closures and 8 referrals that they are still working on for October. She highlighted on the goals they are achieving. Safety is the biggest goal. There was a sleep event in Cass County, and said it went very well. Community Partners was there and gave away a lot of items for safe sleep. She talked about local service dollars and broke down who is servicing our counties.

* Liz- Regional Goal discussion on DCS Director Goals: Fresh Eyes
  + Improve Child Safety
  + Reduce the average time to permanency for children exiting foster care
  + Improve relationships with foster and adoptive families.
  + Increase the number of counties that are in compliance with the FCM caseload standards.
* Services:

Iwona Morretino gave updates on new service providers. She stated we got two new options since last quarter. One is for Howard County called Omni Visions Inc. They are now referrable for homebased therapy, homebased casework and family preservation services. Cass County is gaining a provider to help with supervised parenting time, homebased casework, homebased therapy, counseling, and homemaker called Willowtree Therapeutic Services Inc. This is a provider that is coming from Region 1 & 2. They have been added for White County and Cass County. She is hoping that they can serve other areas once they get settled.

**Biennial Planning Discussion**

Will become effective July 1, 2024 for fiscal year 2025.

* + **12/5/23** @ 9 AM Wabash Co. DCS -Public Testimony
  + **12/5/23** 10 AM Wabash Co. DCS- workgroup development of plan (can be in person or virtually)
  + **12/15/23** Submittance of action steps/plan to RM and Service Coordinator

Topic areas:

1. Increase parental engagement, understanding, and knowledge of the services available and roles of the providers. LEADS- (Julie and Kerri)

Bowen Center, Lutheran Social Service, and Lifeline agreed to participate in this group.

1. Improved tracking and assessing service delivery to ensure services are meeting the individual needs of each family member on every DCS case. LEADS (Stacey and Erica)

Bowen Center, Lutheran Social Service, and 4C agreed to participate in this group.

1. Increase engagement with community resources and providers to increase the ability to meet the cultural, linguistic, and developmental needs of families. LEADS- (John and Delli)

SCAN and 4C agreed to participate in this group.

* 2024 Meetings will be sent out by end of the year and posted on website
* Happy Thanksgiving and have safe Holidays into the New Year!!!