**CFSA Public Town Hall Meeting**

**200 I St. SE**

**January 30, 2020**

**4:00 to 6:00 pm**

**Meeting Notes**

**Director’s Opening**

* Welcome and CFSA Overview
  + Town halls will be held quarterly.
  + An opportunity to share information about the Agency and to get feedback.
  + This first townhall will seem more like a briefing- there is a lot of information to share.
  + Demographics of in-home vs. out-of-home cases, race, and age (see PowerPoint).

**Family First/Families First DC**

* Family First 5 Year Plan was the first to be submitted and approved by the federal government. This allows the use of federal IVE money for prevention.
* Families First DC- Three goals (Empower Communities, Integrate Services, Focus Upstream)
* Introduction of Family Success Center partners in attendance.

**Entry Services**

* Overview
* Timely initiations
* Timely closures- CFSA is working to meet 90% benchmark.
* Caseloads- 90% benchmark has been consistently met (100%) recently.
* Acceptable Investigations- The 80% benchmark has not been met consistently.
* Robert Matthews emphasized the balance between compliance vs. quality – we will not close an investigation for the sake of meeting a deadline; it must be an appropriate/quality closure.

**In-Home**

* QSRs – 2019
  + Themes
  + Performance on key indicators- Improvements in Pathways to Case Closure and Planning & Intervention (over the 80% benchmark).

**Questions for FFPSA, Entry Services, and In-Home**

* Note: Copy of PPT will be available to everyone on the sign-in sheet and will be posted on CFSA website (info provided via e-mail).
* **Stakeholder Question:** What are the effects of teaming on client outcomes? How is the Agency evaluating teaming? What is the Agency doing to increase/improve teaming?
  + **Robert M response**: Scheduling stakeholders can be a challenge; the ability to hold conference calls is helpful. We are so advising social workers to do the following:
    - Identify the right members on the team.
    - Effectively communicating changes in real time.
    - Clearly assign roles to team members (including other agencies like DBH, DHS).
    - Educate each member on their role so the social worker does not feel as if they must do everything (e.g., every referral, every appointment)
* **Resource Parent question:** How can we, as resource parents, support families to be successful when children run back to their birth families? How do we support youth who want to be home? (e.g., can we remove the stigma of a child that “absconds” to birth families)
  + **Ann Reilly response:**
    - Build the relationship between resource parents and birth parents.
    - Ensure all team members remain in the loop.
    - Ensure the child’s attorney and the judge know the same details that the foster parent knows; this includes informing resource parents that they should be present at court to share their perspective.
    - Intentional conversations with social workers regarding effective case planning and monitoring of service engagement.
      * **Resource parent observation:** It can become adversarial when risk is present or when birth parents feel like we are taking their place.
        + **Robert M response:** We have to continue to realize it’s in the child’s best interest that we know where they are to ensure they are safe.

How can Resource Parents help CFSA bridge this gap?

* + - **Parent Watch (Jo Patterson) recommendation:** We need to create trusting tunnels, natural and informal resources that work with families – the recipient of information needs to know we are not adversaries. A process is needed for advocacy family run resources to work with families.
      * E.g., retreats to get resource parents together with providers, such as Families First Centers, to show we are a link and a trusting tunnel, and not an adversary.
  + **Birth parent observation/recommendation:** The issue is with communication; we know where our kids are; we also know the names of the foster parents and the addresses- the kids tell us- we need to have someone who has been through the situation to talk to the parents. The other issue is placing a child from place to place since after a certain number of days that the child is gone, the placement ends.
* **Robert M response:** The PEER program is a support in this area– we welcome help in recruiting as there is a current position available.

**CFSA Dashboard Presentation**

* Demonstration on new public dashboard highlighting Agency data. Well Being data and Family First data will be added at a later time.
* The dashboard will be updated quarterly.
* There is a feedback form available on the dashboard.
* **Parent Watch (question): –** Is there follow up on children who have been adopted?
* **Robert M response**: Yes; for any of the youth we want to know where they are and how they are doing.
  + **Ann R response**: If an adoptive parent receives an adoption subsidy, annual contact with the adoptive child is required. Adoption subsidy recipients must also fill out status forms post-adoption.

**CFSA Policies**

* Demonstration on how to access policies online and the different types of guidance documents available.

**Poster Themes**

* A number of questions were posted on the wall for input from participants.
* The questions will be sent out to participants for any additional follow-up.
* Input from participants on any resources can also be sent.

**Wrap Up**

* CFSA Priority – enhance the feedback loop in terms of
  + frequency
  + media/format
  + responsiveness
  + explanations of what we can do, and what we cannot do and why
  + notification of what is changing
  + declaration of our strengths and areas of improvement, and requests of stakeholders: how can they help?
* **Parent Watch question/observation:** Is there going to be a way to track data on natural components of the process, e.g., anecdotal data on how we are working with a birth parent that is afraid to disclose certain things in fear of removal or retribution? There are things we don’t always get from official reports, but from other community and family run organizations and sources. Community groups are more than stakeholders – they are contributors.
  + **Robert M response:** Family Success Centers can help in this area.
* **Resource parent (Donna F) question/request**: How is CFSA going to instruct advocates, e.g., from family-run organizations (FRO)s to give data in a way that works for the Agency? We have a wealth of ground-level information to share, e.g., we know where missing families are; we just need guidance as we don’t know how to craft information in a way that is useful for the Agency.
  + **Robert M response:** I hear that you feel like you have not been valued over time. What do we do different, now? We can gradually integrate suggestions and changes over time; to integrate feedback into a plan. This forum is a strategy to changing the culture – hearing difficult things.
* **Resource parent request:** Older teens have many needs that can pull on a foster parent. They need help with little things like filling out a form. We need a resource to help older teens navigate, obtain forms and receive help filling them out. Perhaps they can take a photo of the form and indicate where they have questions and get help.
  + **Ann R response:** Aftercare can help in that area.
  + **Robert M response:** We will develop resources in a way that is efficient for you.

**Director’s Closing**

* Review of dates to know (see PowerPoint).

**Announcement – Ben Davis from the Committee on Human Services**: Everyone is invited to sign up for February 18th Public Testimony at the at the RISE Center-Community on Human Services 2020 Performance Oversight. Tuesday, February 18th at 6PM at 2730 MLK Ave SE.

**Stakeholder recommendation:** Consider alternate times for birth parent/foster parent listening session – e.g., 4-6 is challenging as this is the time kids getting out of school. We also need a time when foster parents are not working.

* Send out a poll regarding better meeting times.
* CFSA will connect with FAPAC at upcoming meetings to discuss schedule accommodation.
* Possibly conduct two alternate sessions.