

DFS Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Location:	VIA: WebEx - Clark County Department of Family Services 500 South Grand Central Pkwy, 1 st floor Pueblo Room Las Vegas, NV 89155
Date:	October 21, 2021 8:30 am – 10:00 am

Membership		Present	Absent
CAC Members:	Shelia Parks		X
	Judge Frank Sullivan		X
	Andre Bailey	X	
	Matthew Cox	X	
	Dashun Jackson	X	
	Donna Smith	X	
	Carly Aldis	X	
	Rhiannon Foreman		X
County/Department Management:	Tim Burch, Administrator		X
	Debbie Croshaw, Assistant Director		X
	Abigail Frierson, Assistant Director	X	
	Margaret LeBlanc, Assistant Director		X
	Jill Marano, Assistant Director		X
	Judy Tudor, Assistant Director	X	
	Mari Parlade, DFS Legal & Strategic Initiatives Manager	X	
Public:	None		
Guest:	Ross Armstrong, Administrator Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Kim Abbott, Team Chief Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada Gwynneth Smith, Chief Deputy District Attorney Dan Musgrove, Children’s Mental Health Consortium		

Agenda Item I:	Call to order and welcome	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting was called to order at 8:35am and roll was called by Mari Parlade. 	
Agenda Item II:	General Public Comments	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	

Agenda Item III:	Approval of Month XX, 2021 Minutes	(For Possible Action)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 19, 2021 Minutes – Not Approved due to no Quorum. 	
Agenda Item IV:	Department of Family Services Report Out	(Information only)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Crisis in Foster Care <p>Ross Armstrong shared he will be departing shortly to attend the Interim Finance Committee Meeting and they will be asking for Emergency funds to immediately contract with more staff to provide mobile crisis services in the community. Later in the year a larger request will be submitted for more mobile crisis workers and wraparound workers to help with the children’s mental health crisis. In the last month, they have had multiple meetings with stakeholders and community partners in Clark County; specifically focusing on the youth that are placed in Child Haven that need to be placed in a more appropriate placement. Half dozen of the youth were placed in DCFS facilities in an expedited way. Dr. Megan Freeman has been elevated to coordinate among all the divisions. They have established the need for ADHS, Medicaid, DCFS and Child Haven staff to have a meeting regularly to get referrals and consultations sooner. The first meeting started this week and will be held weekly to appropriately address placement. Division leadership ADHS, Medicaid, DCFS and DFS meetings will meet every other week on those youth needing higher level of care.</p> <p>Donna asked when the mobile crisis units come and determined that the child needs a higher level of care, what is being done when the child cannot remain in the home. There are a limited number of acute beds in Las Vegas for higher level of care. The availability of beds in an acute facility are pretty much non existing. Children are staying in gurneys at UMC Hospital waiting for an acute facility. She is happy to hear what is going on in the front end but is curious about what is going to happen in the back end.</p> <p>Ross Armstrong stated that, as a department, they are working on how to collect the data and surveillance of the kids waiting in emergency rooms. Currently the workforce is not there, and it has become a systemic problem as a state. If you look at the service array, it is easy to identify that we have a gap and need for Intensive in-home services. It’s on the Agenda for Monday’s meeting.</p> <p>Donna inquired if intensive in-home care is on the list. Ross confirmed that the intensive in-home care is on the list and Medicaid is on the table.</p> <p>Judy recapped what Ross Armstrong had said. She confirmed that meetings across the department occurred about a month ago to discuss both short term and long-term solutions. She thanked DCFS for providing Behavior Techs to assist Child Haven to do some one on one with children on campus. Judy acknowledged Donna’s concerns and stated, “We are very much challenged to provide higher level of care.” Judy stated in DFS custody, a total of 20 children with higher level of care need placement and in the last</p>	

four weeks DFS was able to place four children. There was discussion to expand the capacity of Oasis and Desert Willow campus. We are also looking at ways we can partner with the state in using the campus to develop either an intermediate care facility or a qualified residential treatment program. Give some space for Ross to give more information about what that expansion would look like for Oasis and Desert Willow campuses.

Ross agreed in terms of having the County utilize some of the space, maybe to use two of the buildings. There is a community provider that just finished their certifications. They tried working with the county temp agency to hire three nurses, but they were only able to find one nurse due to the competitive rate. Medicaid is working with a private provider that has been approved who will also be able to provide some beds to the community. The original plan was getting out of Desert Oasis completely and maximize Desert Willow. Hearing feedback from community they will continue to operate part of Desert Oasis for a smoother transition. The County is interested in two buildings and another provider is also interested.

Abigail Frierson inquired about what Ross said, "The greatest need in Nevada is for more intensive in-home services what do you mean about that specialized foster care or mean something else?"

Ross responded to Abigail's question: Division of Family and Children Services we serve all children not just children in foster care. So specialized foster care is a great module but is not for community parental custody. Same thing to transfer to an adoptive resource and have a smooth transition.

Kim Abbott, CAP thanked both the State and County for the number of meetings and the work that has occurred in the last 30 days, which is huge progress in a collaborative way. Child Haven staff and DFS are very appreciative for all the supportive things put in place to help with the crisis. She stated that Ross talked about the proposal to build out more capacity at Child Haven and doesn't think that is the best option for the capacity of the children currently at Child Haven . Kim expressed concerns about adding a project manager for putting services at Child Haven. How do we prioritize allocating those resources? There have been some emergent very concerning safety issues both at Desert Oasis and Desert Willow. Some are tied to the workforce issues, but some are incredibly concerning. Kim posed a question for Administrator Armstrong, we talked about workforce being a barrier on all levels, what efforts if any have been taken in the last 30 days to address the workforce problems?

Ross Armstrong shared this week they met with DETR to assess if there were any creative ways to target for nursing. Due to the nationwide nurse shortage crisis by the American Academy of Pediatrics, it was declared a nationwide pediatric mental health nurse shortage. To assist, they have coordinated a pipeline for mental health. The University of Nevada Reno & Renown Health have executed a partnership. Their focus is on adolescents and children with mental health workforce to develop a three-tier program. It

will not bring workforce help until the long run. UNLV and UMC are starting the process of getting that coordination together it was approved thru legislation. DCFS and State agencies have a temporary contract with agencies as there is a current state emergency directive that allows for other state licensed agencies to come out and work. Maybe we can bring a certified nursing assistant or other classification of jobs that may be able to do the work.

Dan Musgrove shared his background. He is a lobbyist for Strategies 360 and represents clients in healthcare. He has worked with children's and adult mental health for many years. In 2014 he was asked to serve on the Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium. Children's Mental Health Consortium was created in 2001 by legislator when AB1 was passed. The Consortium was created to focus on the children's mental health needs. The setup of the membership was to reflect different agencies and folks dealing with mental health every day. Representatives from DFS, DJJS, School District, Parents with children with mental health issues, State DCFS, Advocates, Providers of mental health services and he is the business community working in the private sector dealing with children's mental health. He has been serving as the Chair, currently serving in his last term. Everyone in the committee is working for different agencies they try to be fiduciary. We honor that everyone is from a different agency but have the responsibility to look at the best interest of children. They have the responsibility for a 10-year plan. Every other year prior to the legislative sessions they identify priorities, everyone grades themselves on how well they have accomplished those priorities. Consortiums had talked about Mobile Crisis and pushed it to the legislation.

Donna S. thanked Dan and the team from Children's Mental Health Consortium.

Dan shared Children's Mental Health Consortium meet twice a month, the committee needs a foster parent representative.

Judy shared and agreed with Dan, indicated in terms of mental health issues it's been a problem for a very long time. Going as far back as when we integrated State and the County child welfare services this a similar crisis in child welfare services, being divided.

- **Prevention:**

Judy reported on behalf of DFS. In August the state submitted the plan for Family First Prevention Services Act, the State got some questions from the Children's Bureau. The state has set a meeting the first week in November with the rest of the jurisdiction to make any necessary adjustments to that plan. DFS held an information session to providers about "The Family First Act". Judy offered to provide the 20-minute Family First presentation to the CAC members. The department is not able to start on October 1st until the plan is approved by the Children's Bureau. DFS has continued to provide Thrive by Five program, any cases that are brought in thru our hotline and do not meet the threshold or require abuse & neglect assessment with the families as they are voluntary. Youth 0-3 but don't engage thru the department but offer services thru Southern Nevada

Health District, 60% of the families have reached back out. We are hoping to expand the program Family First and expand the contract through our CARA program. A law was passed stating that substance exposed infants cannot not be screened in for abuse and neglect assessments unless we have other additional information on how it's affecting their parenting.

- **Intervention & Accountability:**

Judy shared that the Department has implemented a culture change program with Partnership and Leadership workgroup to develop agency Beliefs Statements. The month of September was Child Welfare Workforce Development Month. Our employee organization DFS Fun-Task-Tics hosted a Moral money event encouraging employees to nominate fellow colleagues who were living out the belief statements. It was a huge success: 400 employees nominated and ask to keep it until October. We are looking for ongoing recognition focus feedback and storytelling. We have been sharing information about our Ombudsman office encouraging external partners who are struggling with our interventions or have issues that need to be resolved. Racial Equity Workgroup listening sessions have been held for staff to have a space to talk about how race impacts the work that they do.

- **Transitional Aged Youth Supports & Independent Living**

DFS is celebrating its one-year anniversary of implementing the LifeSet program for youth 17 years and older. DFS is looking to create a continuum of that model by allowing our Step Up and IL who work with youth 14-16 years access to the Guide Tree program which is a tool that Youth Villages utilizes. Guide Tree program is a computer system that allows you to enter the primary issue of the youth and it will pull up evidence-based intervention resources. We received pandemic funding for Extended Foster Care for the youth who aged out of care from January 2020-September 2021. As of the end of September, the department received over 400 requests for assistance; however, 300 youth were served due to several requests were made from the same youth. The primary requests for assistance were clothing for interviews, food, housing, utilities, and transportation.

DaShun Jackson asked what efforts are being done for recruitment and retention for foster parents and kinship.

Judy responded we met our 500 goal as for foster homes. The main issue is many foster homes reduced their license to less beds due to COVID. The biggest challenge for recruitment has been community partners. Retention due to youth not being vaccinated, youth needing parental consent. Dealing with retention, the court did approve for youth 12 years and older to be able to get vaccinated. Many foster parent champions were laid off due to pandemic, so we are bringing them back.

- **Education**

	<p>Mari Parlade advised she has been working with DFS Education Liaison Dr. Leslie Murdock on updating the Children’s Educational Rights . The Foster Care Education Stakeholders Meeting is the last Wednesday of the month with Education Stakeholders, LACSN, CASA, Providers, Administrators & DFS.</p> <p>Dr. Murdock updated the Children’s Educational Rights with the new laws. During this past legislative session, Education was a topic of high priority, especially academic discipline.</p> <p>Mari will share Dr. Leslie Murdock’s email with the WebEx link to join the Education Stakeholders Meeting on the last Wednesday of the month from 12:30-2:30pm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and Procedures <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. COVID-19 Vaccination for Children 2. Emergency Response Team 3. Nevada Initial Assessment • Ombudsman’s Report <p>Ombudsman Report was provided</p> 	
Agenda Item V:	CAC Discussion and / or Recommendations on the Top 7 Priorities (delineated in Section IV)	For Possible Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donna asked if foster parents have increased the number of beds now that school is back in session. • Donna asked about trainings for bio parents due to trauma leading to substance abuse. • Donna asked to have DFS Belief Statements sent out with the minutes, add Family First Plan (20min) Presentation to the Agenda in November. • Mari is working on CAC member recruitment with CCSD to fill Brian Adams’ vacancy • CAC Members Draft Bylaws 	
Agenda Item VII:	Informational Items/Announcements	(Information Only)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined Child Welfare Network Meeting is on 10/27/2021. 	
Agenda Item VIII:	Comments by General Public	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None
Agenda Item IX:	Adjournment
	Next meeting will be Thursday, November 18, 2021 @ 8:30 am via WebEx or in person 500 South Grand Central Pkwy, Pueblo Room Las Vegas, Nevada 89155.