

**Foster Family-based Treatment Association
North Carolina Chapter Meeting
Friday, March 26, 2010
11:30am-2:30pm
Burlington, NC**

Present: 30 members; 16 non-members = 46 Total Attendees

Members: 30

Aura Anania (ESUCP), Jenny Simmons (Eliada), Phyllis Stephenson (ESUCP), Tara McMinn (Alexander Youth Network), Tosha Corpening (Turning Point), Kim Johnson (Rainbow/Barium), Ben Johnson (Rainbow/Barium), Lara Eastin (Rainbow/Barium), Turkessia Evans (Rainbow/Barium), Cindy Thomas (ESUCP), Tonya Winters (ESUCP), Michelle Maynard (CSS), Sirlena Pinnix (CSS), Marcia Moore (Triad Treatment), Alicia Bowles (Children's Home Society), Sandra Yarborough (Children's Home Society), Alex Umstead (Youth Focus), Jacqueline Messick (Triad Treatment), Mary Ellen Anderson (Wake County), Courtney Dabney (Children's Home Society), Marci White (NC Mentor), Johnathan Painter (Alexander Youth Network), George Montgomery (Alexander Youth Network), Denise Greene (Thompson), Lisa Kiser (Thompson), Tara Fields (CFSA-NC), Barbara Rich (Cardinal Clinic), Karen McLeod (CFSA-NC), Jean Kenefick (ESUCP), Kate Petersen (Triumph)

Non-Members: 16

Bill Harrington (Consultant), Bob Hensley (Division of Social Services), Eric Gabriel (RHA-Howell), John McMahan (UNC-CH), Jodi Flick (UNC-CH), Lane Cook (UNC-CH), Cathy Isaacs (FPCS), Tara Bohley (The Children's Home), Jill Krahwinkel (Caring Family Network), Kerri Shiflett (Caring Family Network), Mary Walker (Families Together), Jill Courtwright (Boys & Girls Homes), Christy Humphrey (Boys & Girls Homes), Brenden Hargett (Guilford), Alvina McCallup (Omega), Gwen Sherrod (Safe Haven Children's Services)

11:36am Began NC FFTA Chapter Meeting

I. Welcome and Introductions – Phyllis Stephenson

Noted chapter growth and reviewed agenda
Introductions of those present
Committees have been formed. Met at 10:45am today.

- A. Membership Committee – Jean Kenefick and Leslie Kellenberger, co-chairs
 - 1. Plan to review sign-in sheets from past year, will contact folks and invite to join FFTA – (non-members can attend 2 meetings before they need to become a member to attend again); share membership packet; will get a list of 119 Child Placing Agencies in NC from Division
- B. Public Relations - Cynthia Chapman & Tara Fields
 - 1. Plan to contact media - tv, radio stations, newspaper
 - 2. Set up conference calls with chapter members:

- a. April 8, 2010 at 3pm - TFS service definition discussion 1-800-699-2855, code 36526831
- C. Resourceful Connections – Aura Anania & Tara McMinn, co-chairs
 - 1. Resource table at FFTA meetings
 - 2. Books/ articles on Foster Care
 - 3. Sharing upcoming trainings/conferences
 - 4. Arrange guest speakers
 - 5. Present evidence-based models
 - 6. National Updates from FFTA research
 - 7. Link from FFTA to Chapter website

II. **National FFTA Policy Update** – Dr. Laura Boyd

- A. March 9, 2010 – HR 4787 (House companion to TFC bill last year in the Senate); bi-partisan bill; some minor changes - broadened requirements for National Accreditation– as approved by the Secretary of HHS or designee

What FFTA needs from members:

- 1. Letter of Support – sign in support of HR 4787 – sent out over email this morning groups with national or state presence to sign on. Laura to gather signatures by April 15th
- 2. Looking for co-sponsors of HR 4787 bill; in NC –last May NC FFTA members met with key legislators regarding this bill – write and encourage them to be co-sponsors – will send this out to members
- 3. Attend Public Policy Institute – thank people for co-signing
 - a. May 3, 2010 – 10am – go over status of legislation and other major issues; expert to talk about funding streams in Child Welfare (Medicaid, IV-E, etc.); panel with staff from CMS, director of National Association of State Medicaid Directors, National Child Welfare Administrators; Children’s Budget Bill (being re-filed) - federal government will have a parallel children’s budget; a second panel with key staff that will hear HR 4787 bill; working on putting together a reception to honor legislator of the year – looking for financial support in this reception
- B. Laura Boyd met with top administration officials in the White House – informed them about TFC and proven outcomes

III. **National FFTA Updates** – Phyllis Stephenson for Melissa Cole

- A. Public Policy Institute – Washington D.C., May 3-4, 2010
FFTA Board will meet May 2nd at this institute; building relationships with key legislators that have helped move legislation important to TFC
- B. Treatment Foster Care Conference – Nashville, TN, August 1-4, 2010
Will include a Chapter Development Workshop: FFTA currently has 400 members in 48 states with 13 active chapters.
- C. Consumer Satisfaction Guide – email from Melissa this week
- D. Directory of training resources – to be published released for members

- E. Matching Tools – Phyllis is looking at some resources to match kids with foster parents

IV. **Updates and Q&A** with Bob Hensley

- A. Smoking – smoking surveys have gone out to foster parents in NC; many foster parents have mailed in their completed surveys; 2 temporary workers will be hired to enter results of the surveys; the Division will release those results when compiled; legislation last year proposed to ban smoking in foster homes; the Division asked for time to assess the situation; want to find out how many foster parents smoke and if so, will they continue to foster if they can no longer smoke and would they be interested in participating in a cessation program; the Division anticipates that the smoking issue will not be going away; more than likely a ban will be thru general statute instead of administrative rules; because if there are enough objections to administrative rules then they can be put on hold; smoking ban would be within the house and likely the car if foster child is in the car, could include no smoking within so many feet of a foster home.
- B. New Foster Parent Application – format is different, only one new thing – regarding people who have lived outside of the state within the last 5 years & checking the CPS registry from the state in which they lived. New application was piloted by a few agencies in the state. Originally sent out as PDF document. Feb. 1 was emailed out in Word with password protection. Can't utilize spell check because of password protection. Family history and 12 skills are built into the document. New format cuts down on time for the Division to review.
- C. Foster Parent Application - Need state training in writing the 12 skills. The Division has a plan to train and hopes to implement this plan in the next few months.
- D. Shared Parenting - Licensing workers need greater understanding of Shared Parenting;
- E. Foster Parent Application - applications are being submitted to the Black Mountain office with errors
- F. Increase in substantiation of abuse and neglect in foster homes – moving to revoke those licenses.
- G. Lots of licensing packets are being returned to agencies; Bob reviewed 48 packets (45 of which were TFC) within the last 2 weeks (18 were ok, 10 had minor errors corrected thru email, 20 were returned).
- H. Fire Inspections – rumblings across the state that fire inspectors are getting tired of inspecting foster homes and are reminding folks they do not have a legal mandate to inspect foster homes; Bob encourages agencies to speak directly with those who do fire inspections to build relationships and make sure they have the new form; some foster parents are not home when fire inspector arrives for appointment – encourage licensing worker to be present during this inspection for initial licensure

- I. Physical Forms – problems: some where doctor is not signing, no checks of “yes” or “no”; TB test results missing
- J. Increase in Foster Parent applicants with mental health issues – not a rule out, but there needs to be a discussion in the packet about these issues.
- K. Foster Parents – laid off or fired, no employment, no income or reserve to sustain themselves for several months while looking for employment; the Division is returning those applications and asking that they be resubmitted when employment status improves – important to have a source of income.
- L. Agencies have asked if they can make up own forms? The answer is “no.”
- M. Year-by-Year Comparison of New Applications – Handout; increase in the number of foster parent applications; also increase in number of child placing agencies.
- N. Some agencies are stealing other agencies’ foster parents – not illegal, but unethical
- O. Increase in Foster Parent applicants with criminal histories - DWI and prostitution convictions are concerning – what is a good period of time since last DWI – 2 years; there needs to be a period of sobriety, substance abuse evaluation.
- P. Increase in foster parents who are medically categorized as obese – raises questions of stamina – the Division needs stamina to be addressed in the application packet.
- Q. Large dogs in the foster home – NC Mentor has a dog safety assessment – NC Mentor will email it to FFTA group – the Division is considering incorporating this as an attachment
- R. Agency Licensing Update – 43 Child Placing Agencies for adoption; 75 group homes; 16 maternity homes; 127 Child Placing Agencies for foster care (113 of those are TFC). Handout – map of corporate offices for CPAs. 2 agencies have recently closed; the Division is in the process of revoking the license of 2 (these agencies have appealed), and are working to revoke the license of 1 agency that voluntarily terminated.
- S. Bodies of Water – the Division trusts agencies to address and implement safety around bodies of water and understands that a foster parent has no control over putting a fence around some bodies of water– like community ponds. The Division needs clarification of supervision/safety plans for homes that are around bodies of water where fencing is simply not possible. Do not send pictures of bodies of water. It is not a waiver.
- T. High School Degree – foster parents don’t have to have a high school degree, but need to demonstrate they can read and write (this is not a waiver) – Bob stated this was the case for both FFC and TFC because this is in the state licensing rules and Medicaid and Mental Health have said that as long as state licensing is okay with this standard, then they are also okay with this standard- 131D referenced – members of the group asked Bob Hensley to send out information to address/clarify this.
- U. 54 new agencies applying to be Child Placing Agencies in NC. April 27 – May 25 will be in the process of licensing 8 new agencies. (These agencies

will be notified today); by September 2010 the Division will finish those; did license 25 new agencies since last October – too many to do at one time with current staffing.

- V. Staffing - Rita Bland, Regulatory and Licensing, 85% of her time will be Regulatory and Licensing; 60% of Bob's time is Regulatory and Licensing.
 - W. DSS directors are being inundated with requests by private agencies to introduce their new foster care programs. Bob is encouraging them to find out more about these programs especially with these new agencies who do not have a history of providing care. Just because they are licensed does not mean they provide quality care.
 - X. Some agencies may be going away with new TFS service definition due to staffing issues.
 - Y. Some agencies are merging – the Division needs a month's notice with transferring of foster parents; future CABHAs are wanting to add TFC as an additional service.
 - Z. Challenge of licensing change between FFC and TFC in a timely manner for placement and needing hard copy of the license; issuing a hard copy of the license does not occur within a 30 day working window; once license is entered in the system, it goes through a process of printing and being mailed back to the Black Mountain office and then they have to mail the licenses out to agencies; NCFast is the plan to address this issue; however, it is not going to happen soon.
 - AA. Discussion of 60 minutes of clinical supervision per TFC child; the understanding from the Division of Mental Health of 60/40 rule – 60% in the home and 40% by phone – guideline for supervision of foster parents (this is not written, but a guideline).
 - BB. Sexually Reactive Training – not spelled out what type of training this is. The intention is that if a child has these issues, the Child and Family Team identifies what training is needed in order to care for the child. There is no identified timeframe for accomplishing training. Professional Parenting has good resources for working with kids who have been sexually abused – add this to the Resource Connections Team work.
- V. **Update on the state of TFC in NC** – Karen McLeod, CFSA-NC
- A. State level group – CFSA is requesting to discuss quality of care; identifying the need to set benchmarks for quality of care - need to stop agencies brokering deals to place children for a cheaper rate; looking at what other states have done to set quality standards.
 - B. Increase acuity level of TFC referrals. CFSA is arguing for appropriate services to be wrapped around children and that quality Level III providers are still needed; “fail first” requirement – intensive in-home or Day Tx. before Level III; CFSA is arguing against this “fail first” – a lot of these kids are being referred to TFC. A group is looking at these issues and the future of Level III – kids who don't meet medical necessity for PRTF, but too high for TFC; looking at developing specialized Level IIIs; looking at having the LME's track difficult, long-term consumers.

Encourage TFC providers to contact LMEs when kids are being referred to inappropriate levels of care.

- C. Identified disparity in quality of Child and Family Teams. Suggest that the clinical director of LME to start attending Child and Family Teams. Pursuing funding for CFT trained facilitators. Need System of Care Coordinators to understand TFC.
 - D. Partnering with Disability Rights for getting kids the level of care/beds needed. Email Karen case scenario with non-identifying information to connect with Disability Rights.
 - E. CMS received TFS service definition and began to ask how to unbundle. CFSA is in contact with federal officials and DMA. Waiting for formal questions to come back from CMS. CFSA will look to determine if the push is to unbundle. CFSA will implement action to stop the unbundling and already has some legislative support (Senator Kay Hagan). DMA does not support unbundling. Karen will let FFTA know if and when there is a need for assistance. Karen will give talking points and who to talk to.
 - F. CABHA and Non-CABHA committee – made up of mostly stand alone TFC, PRTE, and MST; met with Secretary this week to discuss CABHA issues. There are legislative groups who are now thinking that CABHA is a bad idea. CFSA is mobilizing with different groups to let legislators know the impact if they stop CABHA now. If you take out CABHA, services will be affected. Looking at an extension of time allowed to become a CABHA. Probably a delay in new Day Tx. service definition and changes with Intensive In Homes. Introduction of a new tier within CABHA for small agencies with Medical Director at 8 hours. Discussion if LME does not have enough services, they could individually contract with service providers to provide the service.
 - G. Cost reports were suspended to being required every other year. CFSA has concerns about the way the cost report is done and laid out. Working toward simplification.
 - H. Work with the Department on adoptions – committee to work on recommendations to improve adoption work.
 - I. CFSA members – foster adoption residential committee – normally web-x; but next month will be face-to-face towards the end of the month.
 - J. Western Legislative Event - April 22, 2010 – 4:30pm – superintendents, LMEs, District Attorneys, Commissioners, judges, court counselors, DSS Directors – collective in different sections of the state to dispel the rumor that “provider” equals “crook.”
- VI. **Exploring TFC Training Options** with the Jordan Institute – John McMahon, Jodi Flick, & Lane Cooke
- A. Jordan Institute – Handout - list of trainings developed
 - B. Working toward placing the TFC train the trainer course online
 - C. Publications: Children Services Practice Notes, Fostering Perspectives, Guide to support Recruitment and Retention

- D. Jodi Flick – showed group the courses they are developing from classroom to online trainings; with pre and post quizzes with knowledge assessment. Covers adult mental health (depression, bi-polar, borderline personality, schizophrenia) and child mental health issues.
 - E. Availability of trainings for staff and foster parents and it would be fee for service.
 - F. Handed out training needs assessment – complete and return today
- VII. **Plans for next meeting**
- A. Friday, May 14, 2010 at The Cutting Board in Burlington, NC
On the agenda: Karen McLeod, Committee Updates, TFS definition, Public Policy, email asking for other hot topics

Meeting concluded 2:50pm