



Skagit County Child and Family Consortium

SCCFC General Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2014

Location:

Time: 9:00am-10:30am

Family to Family & Family Assessment Response (FAR) – K. Jellison & H. Kennedy

General Membership was provided information regarding Children's Administration (CA) to engage family and the community in efforts to make positive changes for child welfare.

Family to Family presentation focused on informing the group about how Family to Family began, what has been found in Skagit County and how CA has chosen to tailor Family to Family to fit the needs and already existing resources in the community. Discussed the main areas of Family to Family which include: 1. Building an Infrastructure, 2. Community Partnerships, 3. Family Team Decision Making, 4. Recruitment and Development of Foster Families, and 5. Self-Evaluation. **(More Detailed Power Point will be provided to General Members upon request).**

Looked at the intended outcomes of these areas within Family to Family:

- A reduction in the number and rate of children placed away from their birth families
- Among children coming into foster care, an increase in the proportion placed in their own neighborhoods or communities
- A reduction in the number of children served in institutional and group settings (shelters, hospitals, psychiatric centers, correctional facilities, residential treatment programs, group homes); a shift in resources from group and institutional care to kinship care, family foster care, and family-centered services
- A decrease in the length of stay for children in out-of-home placements

Explored how CA has become involved and committed to differential response, which is in alignment with the intended outcomes of Family to Family. CA is in the process of rolling out its approach to differential response for Child Protective Services (CPS), and it is called Family Assessment Response (FAR). This began in July for Skagit County, and this response will be available in all counties across Washington State by the end of 2016. FAR is a pathway in CPS for low to moderate risk referrals, and starts with engagement of the parents at the onset of the investigation and solicits their involvement on a voluntary basis on discussing the concerns reported and addressing family needs.

Since July – in Skagit County, there has been a lot of positive responses and feedback provided. Cases are open with FAR Social Workers for up to 90 days. There are still safety assessments being conducted, but the focus is helping the family identify current struggles or concerns and wrapping services around them to help address their family needs. Other states that have implemented FAR have been able to see

a reduction in families returning to CPS with new referrals. It is critical for community partnerships to be effective for families and FAR to be successful; FAR social workers will be attending community resource meetings held throughout the county that are already existing to assist with having updated information on resources and building stronger professional relationships.

Round Table

General members took the opportunity to share great things that are happening in the community:

- Linda Nelson Community Championship Award – SCCFC received an anonymous donation from a community member who wants to see this event continue and she will be sending a thank you letter; SCCFC will begin planning for this event that occurs in June – please notify Lyndie or Andy if you would like to be on the committee. If you would like more information about the qualification for the award it can be found on the SCCFC website.
- Multi-cultural Festival and Auction are in the planning processes; the Auction will be held in February at the DSHS office; if you're interested in providing a donation for the Auction, please contact Kari Jellison at 360-429-3042 or jellikl@dshs.wa.gov for more information.
- Strengthening Families – will begin in 2015 in Sedro Woolley (end of January/beginning of February); the target parent/child population is around the 5th grade
- Equine Therapy – Amy (Equine Specialist) is currently working towards achieving a permanent space and trying to serve the needs of both Tulalip and Skagit County communities; this type of therapy assists with facilitating self-regulation and self-assessment skills
- Samish Nation – is continuing their efforts to locate a health and human services director
- Mental Health OMBUDS – advocate for those on Medicaid and will be transitioning their advocacy to also include Chemical Dependency services
- Data Carousel – January 14th at the Skagit Valley Inn RSVP, there is a FREE lunch
- CCS Recovery – provides services for adults and youth; case management services are available for youth ages 16-24, and they can be in CD treatment with any provider; they are also partnering with OASIS daylight center to offer informal group/classes
- Substance Abuse Prevention Committee – meeting January 7th at the CHOP 2:30-3:30pm; this meeting is open to everyone

Attendees:

Andy Wheeler, NWESD/Discovery
Adriana Marti, SeaMar
Amy Schilder, Second Chance Ranch
Benjamin Jojola, Samish Indian Nation
Bill Cheney, Mount Vernon School District
Bob Hicks, Skagit Co. Community Services
Bret Turner, United Way
Diane Linnel, DSHS – CSO
Eric Holl, NWESD/Emerson HS
Ericka Christensen, Office of Juvenile Justice
Gretchen Pickett, Animals as Natural Therapy
Heather Parker, Health Department
Heidi Kennedy, DCFS
Janice Condrin, YouthNet/Emerson
Jennifer Walton, Health Department
Joelene Meckstroth, Office of Juvenile Justice

Kari Jellison, DCFS Family to Family
Kari Russom, NW Workforce Council
Kim Olander Mayer, Community Action
Kyla Yorkoski, WorkSource
Lyndie Case, SCCFC
Mick Rasch, Sedro-Woolley School District
Rinny Shelton, Sedro-Woolley School District
Seong Sa Garza, SeaMar
Tammy Dee, Mount Vernon High School
Tory Sandoz, CCS Recovery