

Regional Services Council
Region 4 Meeting

Date: April 12, 2021

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location of Meeting: Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Chair: Erin Shidler, Region 4 Manager

Meeting Secretary: Helen Garmon

Call to order

Start time: 12:00 p.m.

Roll call

Approval of minutes from last meeting

As read X As corrected

Recommended Correction:

Program/Committee Reports

Unfinished Business

None

New business

Welcome

Community Partners Update - Jennifer Ruthkowski-Smith, Program Director

Jennifer Ruthkowski-Smith shared her screen to review the following reports:

- Network for Safe Families Report 7/1/20 - 6/30/21
- Service Summary Data 2/1/21 through 2/28/21
- Referral Summary Data 2/1/21 through 2/28/21
- Region 4 Local Prevention Dollars 7/1/20 to 6/30/21

Service Update – R4 Manager Erin Shidler for Dion Smith, Regional Service Coordinator

- Community based contracts will be extended for 4 years to 2025
- Cordant will be the new drug screen provider starting July 1
- Redwood is doing a referral clean up, some referrals go back 5 years
- HBCW is not to be used for Mentoring or Tutoring or E-learning services
- We hold Family Preservation meetings bi-weekly on Friday's for providers to pose questions, let me know if you are not on the calls and would like to be

- We hold Community Based meetings bi-weekly on Monday's for providers to pose questions, please let Dion know if you are not on the calls and would like to be

Regional Budget Update-R4 Manager Erin Shidler for Katie Craft, R4 Financial Manager

- Region 4 target was to have spent 77.0 % of our budget. Our actual spent is 71.43% of our budget

County Updates

Allen - (Melissa Hayden, Director) – We're still working on getting kids out of residential. We've gotten a couple of kids out of residential since last month. We're working on getting cases closed that are 2 and 3 plus year kids to permanency.

We have a lot of personnel changes. **We are pleased to announce and welcome Jimmy Cornish who will be the new Division Manager over Assessments for Allen County effective Monday, April 19, 2021. Jimmy transferred to us from St. Joe County. He replaces Chad Smith who resigned.**

We've been able to hire some FCMs over the last couple of months and into May. We lost a couple of Supervisors with SAFE Act which is a new Assessment Program.

DeKalb – (Wesley Husselman, Director) – We've had 3 resignations since our last meeting so we're adjusting to that. We currently have 13 full time FCMs.

We're managing 8 cases from Allen County. The cases are being managed by DeKalb, we're still using Allen County Courts and Allen County Attorney. We have those cases assigned to DeKalb FCM Krystal Hawn

DeKalb continues to work on permanency for our youth. We've been able to establish permanency for several of our youth and close out some cases. A few of those cases our kids were in our care for 2 to 3 years. We've made some relative placements, relative guardianships and adoption.

Our intakes dropped because of the Pandemic but we've been steadily going up. We average about 70 intakes per month so we're keeping up with those as well.

Our Child Abuse Prevention Month Event is this Friday, April 16, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. it will be virtual. We want it to be interactive. We're doing some finalizations to that and looking forward to the event

LaGrange- (Kathryn Stephenson, Director) – We lost our FCM Supervisor, Maureen Bartow to SAFE Act so Stephanie Walker is the primary Supervisor. Whitley County Supervisor, Paul Watson is supervising 2 of the LaGrange staff at this time so he is split between both counties. We are excited to have Paul as part of our team as well.

We have 2 staff that are leaving this month and hopefully will be able to replace them as well.

We have 9 children being adopted at the end of the month so that's very exciting!

We are also working our 2 year plus cases towards permanency as we have quite a few kids in the Length of Stay report

We don't have a Child Abuse Prevention Event going on but if you drive by our office we did paint our front windows so people can see the art work of our FCM Samantha Cares. She was able to do that last week and it looks great!

Our caseloads in assessments are remaining the same, not much fluctuation over the past year. Hopefully with those 9 kids closing out at the end of the month we won't be replacing them with new cases.

Noble County (Joe Sims, Director) – We have 15 FCM's. We are down a Supervisor, Tiffani Hovarter who transferred to SAFE Act. Justine Warren left the agency in February. We've replaced Tiffani and Justine. Andrea Hoy transferred from Allen County to Noble County as a Supervisor.

We've been able to reduce our number of CHINS since January by 15 so that's great! We're working those cases that are 2 plus years really focusing on those children that we have TPR that we haven't finalized their adoption yet

We really don't have a Child Abuse Prevention Event planned. However, we put Pin Wheels outside of our office and we've given them to a lot of our Community Partners, Public Defenders and CASA. We have a lot more to give out if anybody would like some

Steuben – (Ron Lahmeyer, Director) – We're fully staffed. We have 10 full time FCMs. We decorated the front gate area of our fence for Child Abuse Prevention. Our caseload is dropping in assessments they're pretty steady. We're really looking forward for SAFE Act

Whitley - (Amanda Herendeen, Director) - We currently have 10 FCMs. We just started sharing a Supervisor, Paul Watson with LaGrange last week. Our caseloads have remained pretty steady. We've really focused on trying to utilize Family Preservation Services so most of our caseload are In-Home or IA's. Our assessment numbers have remained pretty steady.

We are excited SAFE Act is about to start. We don't have an event planned for Child Abuse Prevention but we do have pinwheels out front to decorate our front yard.

We are working with Mission 25 which is our local shelter here in Columbia City. We're taking up a donation for them this month to present to them at the end of the month for Child Abuse Prevention

Next Meeting – Virtual Meeting July 12, 2021 @ 12:00 p.m.

Adjournment

With no other business meeting was adjourned.

Signatures:

Secretary Helen Harmon

Chair Eun Shidle

Date 7-12-21

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Approved: hg (secretary's initials) Date: 7-12-21