



**FINAL**

DHS Children, Adults and Families Division  
Child Welfare Advisory Committee

**Teens Issues in Child Welfare Subcommittee**

May 14, 2008

Attending: Stacey Ayers, Anna Cox, Kevin George, Benjamin Hazelton, Eva Jackson, , Lisa Kay, Pam Patton, Trish Reding, Mickey Serice

Guest: Chikako Yamato (University of Oregon student)

Minutes recorded by Pam Pearson

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The 4/9/08 minutes were approved.

### **FOLLOW UP ON ACTION ITEMS IN 4/9/08 MINUTES**

Jean Lasater was unable to attend today's meeting so project descriptions of the eight pilot service projects for homeless/runaway youth were not provided.

### **UPDATE ON SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT TO CWAC ON 5/14/08**

- Patton: Summarized her report to CWAC. She explained to them that we were limited in what data could be collected, but we have our baseline. We did not anticipate a change in the first six months of the Oregon Safety Model and found that to be so. Today's meeting packet includes her Powerpoint presentation.

### **POLICY AND OPERATIONS ISSUE: "HOW WELL PREPARED ARE TEENS WHEN THEY EXIT THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM?"**

- Patton: We are now moving on to Bryan's question about how well prepared teens are when they leave the child welfare system. She explained how data on the number of services provided does not say if the services were effective. For that reason we are looking at the Foster Care Alumni Study. We have one more meeting scheduled (June 11) and a final report to give to CWAC on July 9. Today we will be looking at what data we can ask for to get to Bryan's question, what it will tell us and what we are going to do with it. Benjamin Hazelton and Lisa Kay prepared a list of questions that we will use to determine what data we need.
- Hazelton: The list is a shell to build upon to be able to reasonably predict the success of the current cohort of teens in DHS Child Welfare. Our priority is to use data that is already available. We will not necessarily take off the table

requests for data that is not readily available, but we need to determine if it will give us something valuable. Used the alumni study's outcomes and the descriptions under those headings to create their list of questions. Also tried to connect to the CFSR and current initiatives. We want to get a picture of what the current teen cohort looks like and develop recommendations to improve the cohort's chances to be successful in adulthood. We are using this process rather than interviewing individuals. The alumni study did the interviewing already to get to its recommendations. One finding in the alumni study is that low rates of placement change improve foster care outcomes. We need to reach consensus on whether or not Oregon's rate of placement change qualifies as low.

- Kay: The CFSR says two or fewer placements is low and more than two is high. We can either stay with this measurement or create our own. We make an assumption that the CFSR has some rationale behind the two or fewer figure.
- Ayers: Does the data capture if the placements are with relatives or stranger foster care and how that plays into the success of a teen?
- Kay: Has not seen any data that distinguishes between the two. In her experience, moving between relatives does not happen often.
- Jackson: There is a lot to this placement change. It includes moving from shelter to an ongoing placement.
- Kay: For the CFSR, a move counts if the placement lasted eight days or longer.
- Cox: Foster care placement episodes are not captured if they are less than eight days. All placements of eight days or longer from day one count.
- Patton: We have one meeting left to come up with recommendations on this issue. The alumni study gave three factors that influence foster care outcomes. We need to decide if we will focus on those three factors and not the recommendations that follow them in the study. The three factors are:
  - Placement history and experience,
  - Education services and experience, and
  - Resources upon leaving care.

How we define placement can create more questions. We don't have data on the second factor (education services and experience); DHS began gathering it on January 1, 2008.

- Cox: We started collecting education data in January and it won't be populated until at least the end of this school year or the beginning of the next school year. Even a year later it will be an incomplete picture.
- George: The January 1 start date was due to the effective date of SB 414.
- Patton: What data can we get in one month?

- Kay: If we need to limit what data we collect, suggested we focus on number of placements, placement type and rate of placement change. We already have reentry by age, which speaks to reunification.
- Cox: Relative placements by age would be difficult to get.
- Hazelton: If we are limiting our data to the alumni study's outcomes, we would want data for #1-4 on the "Request to DHS for Data."
- Kay: Suggested adding one of the recommendations in the alumni study: "Mental Health – Maintain placement stability, which appears to have a large positive effect on adult mental health."

Question 1 (Number of placements, rate of placement changes and types of placement)

- Cox: Has data on number of placements during the first 12 months of a case and for a point in time. For number of placements at a point in time for the older youth in care, we will not know if all their placements occurred during the first year and things have been stable since then or if there were placement changes throughout all the years in care.
- Patton: Clarified that the definition of foster care for data collection purposes is any placement.
- Cox: Yes, it is any out-of-home care for children in DHS custody. It includes family foster care and residential treatment, regardless of payment. For reentry, it counts if the child returns in less than 180 days.
- Serice: We must consider some logistics that come into play when deciding how much data can be collected. The subcommittee needs it before their next meeting on June 11 and Anna has other commitments for a two-week time period between now and then.
- Cox: Can stratify existing data by age through September 2007 for question 1 (number of placements, rate of placement changes and types of placement). For the 18-21 age group, many will cross over to the DD system.
- Patton: For question 2 (length of stay/reunification success), can use reentry data that the subcommittee already has.
- Kay: Can type of placement be separated by age group?
- Cox: Doable, but not done yet. Will say yes that they can do it. However, she will discuss with her manager all the requests the subcommittee has, will recommend spending a certain number of hours on it and will get as much of the data as she can within those hours.

- Serice: We need to make sure the data is meaningful because interpreting data can be difficult, especially when residential treatment is included. A move to residential treatment can be a good move.
- Hazelton: It is still a placement change that requires new relationships and new schools. Perhaps something could be done in advance to prevent the need for residential treatment.
- Kay: Placement changes in and of themselves are damaging.
- Hazelton: The alumni study does not differentiate type of placements.
- Serice: So we want to know the number of placements and type of placements?
- Kay: We want to know type of placement at a point in time and placement stability over time. They are not two things that can be compared. If we find relative placements for teens are lower than statewide for other age groups, we would then need to ask why.
- Hazelton: We can say we are using the alumni study as a guide for what experts say will work, Oregon children have X number of placement changes and that is good or bad depending on how it compares.
- Cox: Oregon already has failed the national performance measures, so we are already on the board as not being where we want to be. The national standard is set at 75% of the national level to acknowledge that some moves are good.
- Jackson: We can't get to the reasons why, only to the number of placements.
- Kay: The standard was set below 100% not because some moves are good, but because they don't believe perfection is possible.
- Cox: No state gets to 100% of all cases having two or fewer placement moves.

#### Question 2 (Length of stay / reunification success)

- Kay: Length of stay is a CFSR measure. Is not sure how it is calculated.
- Cox: We have many measures on length of stay.
- Hazelton: We want a simple report on length of stay for a point in time, regardless of placement. We seem to be focusing on APPLA (another permanent planned living arrangement), but we should be hoping for good outcomes for those adopted, returned home and guardianship too.
- Cox: Can do that for a point in time even for those currently in care, not only for those who have left.
- George: Another question is to see length of stay separated by where the child went when the child left DHS care. What is the permanency plan and how can we get them there sooner?

- Kay: JRP has data from 9/30/06 on the number of children in APPLA.
- Cox: Can get median months to adoption and tie to length of stay by age.

### Question 3 (School changes)

No data available at this time.

### Question 4 (Preparation for living independently, i.e., savings, dishes and utensils, driver license)

- George: We have data for Independent Living Programs. Have number eligible compared to # enrolled. Some data is in the Status of Children report. Suggested a footnote that the number accessing Chaffee Education and Training Voucher (ETV) is growing and so we are having to decrease the amount awarded.
- Jackson: In a previous meeting, we talked about services available for youth aging out. Are we still going to do that?
- Patton: Not within the scope of this first six months' work of the subcommittee. However, a recommendation could be that we focus on the older (18-21) population who are aging out of DHS custody.
- Hazelton: Reminder that we are to use the alumni study to grade the current cohort and determine what is needed to give it an A for success in adulthood, footnoting what is being worked on and what is measured by federal measure. The best we can do with the data we have is to determine what exists today and give it a grade. Earlier today he mentioned that we could look at only questions 1-4. Would like questions 5 and 7 added back in.

### Question 5 (Barriers to mental health assessment and treatment)

- Cox: Some mental health and treatment data have definitional issues. Billing procedure codes are used, but not consistently. The PIP will work on writing common definitions. Hesitates to publish data until that is fixed. We are also rebuilding the case management system for a better way of getting this data into the electronic system.

No data will be provided for question 5.

Question 6 (Emphasis on high school diploma and encouragement to continue education)

No data will be provided for question 6.

Question 7 (A strong transition housing program)

- Kay: Data on the number who are eligible and enrolled is available.
- George: Can get how many access housing services.
- Serice: Are these program resource limited?
- George: Not for entry into them. Caps exist in the program for how long a person can be enrolled or how much a person can receive, but not for how many can get in.

**Summary of data requests: (*this was what Benjamin wrote on the board. Will replace with a list from Anna Cox*)**

1. Reentry (done) but update to march 2008.
  2. (Kevin?) 18-21.
  3. Length of stay – composite 3
  4. Number of moves/placements
  5. Where they are placed
  6. Number of children eligible vs served (ETV funds footnote)
  7. Use of transitional housing
- Patton: The subcommittee will not meet in July and August. A report will be given to CWAC in July. However, Pam is not available to give the report. That report will go to the Future Issues Work Group and they will prepare a recommendation that CWAC accept or not accept our proposal.
  - George: So will the subcommittee continue in the fall?
  - Hazelton: We need direction from CWAC on whether or not they have an issue for us to study. Correct?
  - Patton: Yes, but our role is also to bring issues to CWAC. It can go in either direction.
  - Hazelton: Thought the subcommittee was set up for the OSM question and Bryan's question only.

- Patton: Teens are a forgotten problem and without a subcommittee of CWAC, they could be forgotten. CWAC can decide if teen issues are a priority for them or not. However, they make their decisions with guidance from the subcommittee. The subcommittee's work needs to stay within the parameters of child welfare and within the policy issue of keeping children safe and the operations issue of the Oregon Safety Model.
- George: Asked if the subcommittee was going to continue. If so, he will plan his other projects to link them to this subcommittee.
- Jackson: Another future issue would be looking at services in communities that are sustainable for children aging out.
- Patton: Our focus needs to be on the child welfare policy and operations issues she mentioned above. The subcommittee is not an ongoing subcommittee, but an ad hoc subcommittee that meets as needed on specific issues. Asked that members think about timeframes for any issues they would propose.

- ACTION:**
- **Anna Cox will let Pam Patton know what data she can get within the time she has to work on this assignment.**
  - **Subcommittee members are to think about recommendations they might propose from the data we have so far and what we want to propose for our next task.**
  - **The June 11 meeting will focus on answering the question on how well teens do when they leave the child welfare system and preparing a report to CWAC for their July 9 meeting. Because Pam Patton is not available on July 9, either another subcommittee member will need to give the report or it will need to be delayed to the September 10 CWAC meeting.**

Meeting adjourned.