

FAMILY POLICY BOARD

Monday, August 3, 2020

Held via Zoom

12:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tita Yutuc, Kristi Arenz, Heather Quackenboss, Tracy Puent, Ann Kappauf, Jane Klekamp, Catherine Kolkmeier, Elizabeth Wright, Jason Witt, Barbara McPeak, Melisa Myers, Lurch, Megan DeVore, Bethany Matsick, Hetti Brown, Heather Quackenboss, Isaac Hoffman, Nicole Brei, Lauren Journot, Mandy Bisek, Vie Matty, Jodi Widuch, Robert Partarrieu, Mary Kay Wolfe, Lacie Ketelhut

GUESTS/OTHERS PRESENT

Wendy Henderson, Administrator for the Division of Safety and Permanence Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, Emily Coddington, Associate Director of the Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies, Deanna Hoffman, Michelle Johnston, Jenny Schroeder

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Tita Yutuc called the meeting to order at 12:00pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION made by Lurch from Bikers Against Child Abuse and seconded by Catherine Kolkmeier to approve the June 1, 2020 minutes as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting began with members and guests taking the "How Are You Feeling Survey" by Mentimeter at the request of Catherine Kolkmeier. Mentimeter (<https://www.mentimeter.com>) is a company that provides real-time polling tools for groups. This poll showed a snapshot in time of how board members were feeling which could then be used to steer the meeting accordingly.

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND BOARD UPDATES

HS Director Update: Jason Witt

- La Crosse County Human Services Department is funding a Housing Specialist staff located at the Salvation Army. Loretta LaPoint has been hired for the role and will focus on assisting families in finding housing as part of their path to family stability. She will be working closely with families, case workers and landlords to develop relationships and housing opportunities.
- La Crosse County's Twitter feed now includes media coverage of the county's Covid 19 statistics, responses and plans.
- Human Services employees are no longer staffing homeless shelters but are currently assisting the Health Department with contact tracing.

Family and Children's Section Update: Tracy Puent

Due to COVID, the implementation of the Safe Babies Treatment Court program had been put on pause but is once again moving forward. The Family and Children's Section received a grant through the Wisconsin Department of Human Services for \$50,000 to receive technical assistance from the national infant-toddler court program, Zero to Three. The 14-month collaboration will begin in August. There is a strong community component to this work and there will be continued updates in the future.

HHS Board Update: No updates per Tina Tryggestad

PRESENTATION: Family First Legislation and the Direction of the State of Wisconsin's Child Welfare System

Presented by Wendy Henderson, Administrator of the Division of Safety and Permanence for the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families and Emily Coddington, Associate Director of the Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies.

Family First is legislation that has changed how child welfare agencies are receiving funding. It is based on a shift from a child protective approach to a child welfare approach. The vision is that all Wisconsin children are safe and loved members of thriving families and communities and children belong with their families. The idea is to plan for safety and bring services into the home because trauma happens to a family when children are removed.

The major system transformation goals include building local prevention services, increasing the number of children served in family settings and reducing the number of children in and duration of stays at out of home and congregate care settings.

Areas of focus include:

- Having a Home-Like Continuum which supports children in their communities, including having more relative and like-kin caregivers.
- Providing a truly higher level of care to children with complex needs in Congregate Care Settings.
- Infrastructure and workforce support to increase the time caseworkers have with children, provide evidence-based training practices, and better align the child welfare system and juvenile justice system values.

The current system has been set up to remove children from their homes. Family First is an attempt to change that by expanding the service array. The focus should be on prevention and diversion in order to keep children and youth from entering the system or progressing deeper into the system. A wider variety of services will allow children who are out of state and those that are served in congregate care settings to be brought back into their homes. Two major changes include funding will only be provided for evidenced placed practices and interventions and the introduction of Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) as a new resource on the continuum of care.

ADJOURNMENT TO THE NEXT MEETING TO BE HELD MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020, AT NOON

Chairperson Tita Yutuc adjourned the meeting at 1:00pm.

Approved September 14, 2020, Rachel Klistai, Recorder