Child Safety in Substitute Care Independent Review

DHS Internal Resource Committee

Purpose: The DHS Internal Resource Committee is a temporary working body convened to provide resources and information to DHS Director Clyde Saiki, the project manager overseeing the independent review, and the independent reviewer. The committee acts as a sounding board for the review process from the perspective of DHS employees and as advisors for immediate and long-term improvements towards keeping children safe in substitute care. Additionally, the committee will greatly assist us with needed communication activities.

Location: "The 550" (formally known as PUC building)
550 Capitol St NE, 2nd floor conference room

AGENDA- Tuesday April 5, 2016
8:30 am to noon

8:30 – 9:00	Welcome • Introductions • Walk through agenda	Melissa
9:00 – 9:30	Update on Independent Review Public Knowledge provided an update on the Independent Review and an orientation to the draft Regulatory System Maps	Melissa Stacey
9:45 – 11:15	Small Groups – *Identifying system strengths and gaps against regulatory maps* Meeting participants were asked to break out in to one of three groups (Response to Allegations of Abuse or Neglect, Licensing & Oversight of Providers, or Training and Support for Providers) based on their area of expertise. Once in the breakout groups participants walked through the regulatory map(s) in order to answer the following questions: • Where within the map do we need to focus our independent review inquiry in order to keep kids safe? • Why is this area a priority? What is the gap? • What is working well and why? During the discussion of these questions participants brainstormed and prioritized areas for further independent inquiry focus. The outcome of the small breakout groups was an improved understanding of each map and the identification of strengths and gaps between standards and practice	Leslie Ann Amy Shannon
11:15 – 11:55	Large Group – Report back to the large group/crosschecking sources (summaries from the small group discussions) *NOTE: The summaries below are the input and opinions provided by multiple DHS staff during discussion. All statements will be evaluated and validated before information is used for the independent review.*	Leslie Ann

Response to Allegations of Abuse:

- There is a bifurcated process between the way Child Welfare and OAAPI respond to and gather information. Child Welfare has the Oregon Safety Model versus the basic investigation process of OAAPI.
- There are no separate processes for out of home care assessments and licensed home assessments.
- There are inconsistent expectations for Law Enforcement Agencies regarding response to Child Welfare versus OAAPI investigations/assessments.
- The informal reporting process between Child Welfare and OAAPI causes gaps in information being shared. There are unclear expectations regarding what information is being communicated.
- Information around provider reporting expectations is unclear. Screening decisions are weighted towards the provider/license holder. A lack of resources and staff can hamper the timeliness of agency reaction to allegations.
- There has been an increase of allegations against providers, and placement resources are declining.

Things that are going well:

- Safety is everyone's responsibility
- Child Welfare's pre-staffing and post-staffing process
- Because of this review the communication between Child Welfare and OAAPI has improved.

Licensing and Oversight of Providers:

- DHS temporary certification of foster homes and the prolonged criminal history exception process. We are placing children in homes under a safety plan and then the certification gets stopped/prolonged during the criminal history process. Workers are faced with difficult options: Get an exception, if they don't get an exception the child has to be moved, or lower the certification bar. We need to be consistent across the state on this matter.
- Private Child Caring Agencies: we need to clarify and define the financial viability review process. We are losing agencies due to their inability to maintain financial health.
- DHS does not have control over the staff qualifications and the training they receive when a program is licensed. We do not know or review their training curriculums, quality of training, or certification training.
- Staff turnover everywhere is leading/feeding into consistency of skill levels of provider staff and consistency of quality of care in licensed care.
- Background checks are inconsistent due to the types of information DHS is allowed to share regarding the personal child welfare history of applicants.

What is working well:

- SAFE Home study is working well
- Relative placements continue to grow
- Flexibility within certification requirements for relative placements is positive.

	Training and Support of Providers: Provider training/consistency: • Provider training is inconsistent across the state, including a gap in the skill set of trainers. • There is currently not a culture of continuous learning at DHS. • Smaller counties may lack the resources that larger counties have to deliver thorough and consistent training. Staff Support and Accountability: • Supervisors lack the means to track what trainings staff have attended. • There is a systemic culture at DHS that continuous learning is not a priority. • There are no supports in place to translate policy training into practice for certification staff. • There is a general lack of equity and diversity among providers. Oversight of Licensed Child Caring Agency Training • Lack of coordination of accountability and oversight, we (DHS) do not have control over their training mechanisms. Things that are going well: • Training for DHS employees/staff is abundant. • The Foster Care Bill of Rights is empowering. (It was also noted that DHS does not provide youth with training on how to be a foster child and advocate for themselves). • There is currently a significant and comprehensive review of training available to staff and providers underway.	
11:55-noon	Next Steps/Wrap Up • Ideas for next meeting Public Knowledge will continue to gather information and compile. Scheduling of May meeting. Members will send ideas to Melissa re: sources of information and any corrections to summary documents.	Melissa

Members: Representatives from the Office of the Chief Operating Officer, the Office of Licensing and Regulatory Oversight, the Director's Office-Tribal Affairs, the Director's Office-Multicultural and Service Equity Office, the Office of Abuse Prevention and Investigation, the Governor's Advocacy Office, the Director's Office-Administration, Developmental Disability Residential, Business Intelligence, Human Resources- Classification and Recruitment, and the following offices of Child Welfare- Safety, Federal Compliance, Well Being, District 14, and Innovation.