

CPAC Permanency Options Meeting 6-9-15

- Present: Gwen, Lauren, Frank and Kelly
- Educate families who care for foster care youth on permanency options—Kelly
 - At this point, this task is still ongoing. The presentation was given to the Foster Care recognition event. Kelly has gone to Children and Families First to present, and is going to Pressley Ridge. Kelly and Bobby are also going to assist CASA Attorneys Jen Kline and Elizabeth Souck in July. This presentation was video-taped, then was lost for some reason, so there is no more video. Kelly will contact a law firm in Wilmington to have it as a setting to video the next training.
- APPLA Kids: there are currently 23 kids under the age of 16 who currently have APPLA as a goal.
 - We as an entire group need to further explore permanency options. Gwen suggested to further finance kinship care funding. The goal of the new legislation is NOT to just change the goal to guardianship until the youth turns 16, then change to APPLA. That's not the point of the legislation. For any non-relative or relative caring for a youth, all families could qualify for TANF regardless of one's income. There is a big focus on finances and what resources are available for anyone caring for someone else's child. \$201 for first child, \$270 for second child, etc. (Basically \$69 per child per month). Plus, Medicaid is also a benefit that the family would receive. Adoption would be allowed quite a bit more money as an adoption subsidy. Kelly shared a case that she has involving a 14 year old girl who isn't sure she wants to be adopted. She doesn't want her father's rights terminated, but she's too young for APPLA. Kelly suggested a combined goal of guardianship/TPR adoption, thought here isn't an identified guardian or adoptive resource.
 - In August, there might be a federal CIP person to come share on how they planned to see the new legislation implemented, also share on how other states might be implementing the new laws. Kelly might edit down the training and adjust it to reflect all new federal legislation. The editing it down will be specifically for mental health professionals.
 - Tool on Financial supports—see below from Frank
- Financial Assistance—Frank
 - Frank submitted a compiled document with all resources. Frank is a part of the APPLA workgroup so he can relay information back to them based on what they wanted us to do. All website link back to DHSS main website and then can be navigated from there. Our recommendation is to not increase any websites and just leave our cheat sheet the way it is. Frank will relay this information to the APPLA workgroup at their meeting in September.
- Education of Mental Health Professionals—Kelly
 - Working with another group to reach out to adoptive families to find out what kids need. Training will be combined as 45-60 minutes. Kelly talks about post-adoptive resources but will be more focused and direct on what services are available. Kelly will explain why legal permanency is important. It does seem that a lot of mental health professionals don't understand permanency and don't necessarily work towards permanency. At this point, this might be considered finished, at least by September.

- Bonding Assessments—Kelly
 - Not a lot of people who can do them. Dr. Z does it in Sussex. Dr. Ted Wilson does it in Kent. Allison Randall does it in New Castle. The APPLA group wants to increase the quality and quantity of bonding assessments. Part of the issue might be trying to get a solid format down; what questions do we want them to answer? Kelly is meeting with Allison tomorrow so they can discuss then (6/10/15). Kelly wants to know what tools they use and what set up/format is used by Allison in NCC. Then, the other issue is testifying in court. If Dr. Z and Dr. Wilson will be testifying, should we have them do it the same way, or follow a certain format? They are really expensive and DFS is spending a lot of money on it so don't we want quality work that can be followed and testified to in court? When should a bonding assessment be done? What is the point of a bonding assessment? Do they always need to be so "full blown" in speaking to everyone related to the child? Is there a way that the bonding assessment can be limited and therefore not cost so much?

- Frank did bring up an issue about the APPLA kids, but that's just today. He's working with Janice on this. There are 23 kids in the whole state. He does have one case where three kids have been with the foster family for 8 years and are doing great. There is another case where the youth is a perpetrator so he can't go home because his victims live in the home, so there isn't much wiggle room to find a house for him for some permanency.

- Next Meeting: none scheduled, we'll wait until after the CPAC Permanency Committee meeting on July 10th, 2015.