

VDSS and Virginia Tribes Roundtable

June 7, 2018

Meeting Minutes

Present:

Carl Ayers (Director, Division of Family Services DFS)

Em Parente (Assistant Director, DFS)

Nancy Fowler (Office of Family Violence, DFS)

Keisha Williams (Prevention/Resource Family Program Manager, DFS)

Jewel Wynn (Tribal Liaison, DFS)

Shannon Hartung (CPS Program Manager, DFS)

Morgan Nelson (QAA Program Manager, DFS)

Ben Maura (CQI Project Manager, DFS)

Brenda Sampe (Special Projects Project Manager, DFS)

Chartoya Newton (Benefit Programs, VDSS)

Doris Ann Austin (Eastern Chickahominy Tribe)

Lindsey Johnson (Chickahominy)

Martha Adkins (Chickahominy)

Chief Mark Custalow (Mattaponi Tribe)

Yvonne Epps-Giddings (Nottoway Tribe)

DA talked about what happened in the past when children removed from homes, cultural impact; ICWA; CA talked about how as a system we struggle with relative placements

CA explained the process of approving foster homes: barriers, families don't want to share relative names, distrust of the system, problems with approval (very restrictive - less flexible)

YG going through the foster parent process - even though not federally recognized; would be available for a child from another tribe; process would make people suspicious - to keep process from invading the privacy of the prospective foster parent; some strategy to explain this to folks and about the assessment process; also the feeling that the gov't is in your business; can see why folks are apprehensive about the process; didn't feel judgement; thought it was a thorough process; ES flexible w/the training (started less than 3 months)

NICWA Conference Update - JW: meet with other Native American tribes; peer support session in Nebraska; keeping children in the household; trauma sessions, explaining child welfare process; books; suicide within tribes - some examples

YG says she was overwhelmed @ the conference - if we do right by all children, we'll do

DA every tribe has they own membership requirements

Child didn't have "quantum" to meet tribal requirements issue discussed

CA national conference question; JW ideas: recommends task force (rep from tribal community, rep from legal, rep from state or LDSS, rep from a licensed professional re: Mental Health diagnosis, medication management), used as a preventative measure. Having colleges go to tribes re: Child Welfare stipend so people in community have the social work background; maybe send task force to national conference?

Regional events - 2-3 days (next one in Denver)

How can we work collaboratively to preserve traditions and heritage - to keep family connections, importance of storytelling w/elders; dance

YG - in Surry this weekend is pow wow; not for entertainment, having spiritual connections; how to attend respectfully? Just come and don't fear it

Usually a brochure is available at pow wow - tells you what/when to do something, very spiritual, try to make it a learning experience; 9/28 and 9/29 pow wow occurring; used to have cultural events that comes and go; not feasible to do on an ongoing basis; important for kids to learn the history

YG - re-establishing language, do beading, market 1st Sat of every month;

JW - asked if willing to share w/LDSS (Southampton DSS) - YG willing to have contact w/LDSS

Chief Custalow - events, some need an invite, on a reservation, fellowship to get to know people, then invites happen

Church to church in August "homecoming" - weekly revival (another way for tribes to stay in touch, meeting this week to get a contact person for Mattaponi)

EP - Location - rotate to make it more convenient for tribal members; interested in meeting in tribal offices/communities; want to be available for what they need as well

Diligent Recruitment: EP - work towards children can be placed in families as opposed to congregate care (least restrictive setting). 1st choice relatives, 2nd pool of homes who can meet a diverse range of needs/backgrounds; identify native families - to make a match; policy requires LDSS to reach out to tribes when child comes into care; possibly placement option; described the process (group would like information about fostering – Em will follow-up with electronic brochure)

YG - No ads specific on family that looks Native American around recruitment (Idea)

NF - Family Violence Prevention Services Act - grants, state and federal tribes are able to apply for term opportunities - population specific - what would they look like? To native victims, children, perpetrators etc. What are your unique needs/experiences would be, envision what you would like from the funds. Long-term basis - barriers that exist to receive grant funding; still challenging for state grants - what assistance? What would it take to build that capacity. Would love to have voice at VA underserved populations meetings

Tribal members - Would like to stick with what localities offer re: domestic sexual violence

SN - ethnicity self-reporting - Native American is an option; is that data available? Spoke to who benefits are available; how to apply and some eligibility requirements; if LDSS cannot come out of community, VDSS can send someone; pamphlets available; screening tool on CommonHelp for various programs

Designated tribal members contact: emails and phone numbers - no mail! JW uses text sometimes some cannot get good internet; emails work too for other folks; small staff so no new people to add at time

YG asked about human trafficking funds

NEXT STEPS: Em will send Fostering information; if meeting in December Meeting, needs to be before 12/15! Will coordinate with Carl for date; Doris Austin with Eastern Chickahominy w/ about hosting next meeting