

Commission for Child Care
September 26th, 2008
Roth's West Salem Conference Center

Attendees: Randy Fishfader, Rosetta Wangerin, Gary Taylor, Katie Larive, Deborah Murray, Lynne England, Cheryl Reece, Nina Roll,

Guests: Dawn Norris, Pam Deardorff, Tom Olsen, Kitty Lake, Beth Unverzagt, Teresa Stevenson, Merrily McCabe, Rhonda Prodzinski, Sonja Svenson, Kathleen Hynes, Kim Cardona, Marian McDonald, Autumn David, Shanna Aldis, Sam Skillen, Bobbie Weber, Mark Anderson, Marilyn Kenally, Heidi McGowan, Diana Stotz

Introductions

Minutes

Motion: Rosetta requested a motion to accept the June Minutes. So moved by Randy. Second by Lynne – motion passed

Calendar

It was proposed that we meet on Nov. 21st rather than the day after Thanksgiving. Attendees agreed to the change.

Other Business:

Criminal History Clean Box – Rep. Flores has dropped the bill and it is in legislative council. The idea is to avoid duplicate criminal history check, process and payment which would allow workers to apply to a criminal history list and it will save people from having to reapply for different roles. CCD would run the criminal history checks quarterly on everyone in the data base. You pay one fee and can work in multiple environments such as foster care, child care facility or schools. It doesn't mean if you have a background with an offense that you can't work but you would have to apply through the host agency you wish to work with in order to determine if you meet their specific criteria. This may require everyone to be fingerprinted the first time they are enrolled in the system.

The issue surfaced in the Pendleton forum about making the criminal history check easier and less expensive for counties on the border. Tom said they are in conversation with Region X about how to streamline this between states. He said this is part of a larger discussion that is including training and other issues.

Governor's Report – The RFP for the Governor's report will be out by October 1st and there is a need for a couple of Commissioner's who are willing to review and score the proposals from contractors. Rosetta said she is hoping to include an interim report this biennium into the RFP which has been included in the Commission budget. Rosetta asked for Commissioners to consider volunteering reading the proposals around the 1st week of November. Nina and Lynne volunteered.

Action: Teresa will coordinate readers/scorers for the RFP

Pendleton Forum – Reviewed the summary from the forum and discussed the general response to proposed concept that would require exempt care providers to have a criminal history background check on all staff and to notify parents whether or not the program is licensed through the Child Care Division. The general response was that forum attendees would like to see more regulation than proposed. It was discussed that there is a cost to licensing or increased regulation and it could impact availability of child care.

Beth noted that she met with Jeanne Johnson – the R&R Director of 6 counties – and the tribal child care facility director on the day following the community forum, and they made a commitment to work together to provide after school programs.

59 school districts currently have a 4 day school day, primarily due to finances and high cost of transportation. Loss of federal timber funds was a catalyst for this decision. This impacts the time school age children need care.

On-Line Survey – Reviewed the summary of the online survey and noted the highlights. The survey was conducted from July 15 thru September 21 with 238 people responding. Some of the highlights were:

What is working well:

1. Availability of healthy meals/snacks (48.7%)
2. School based onsite care (39.9%)
3. Collaboration works (39.1%)

What is not working well:

1. Lack of funding for school age programs (59.2%)
2. Some areas have no after school care (58.8%)
3. Parents unaware of difference between licensed and exempt (52.5%)

How should the definition of exempt care change:

1. All exempt and licensed programs should be required to have criminal background checks for staff (89.9%).
2. Licensure definition should consider the level of responsibility the program has for the child. (51.0%)

Gary noted that there is likely a lack of input from programs such as camps because they don't see themselves as part of school age child care. The Commission has worked to communicate through entities that would reach exempt programs but programs don't often see themselves as after school or child care.

Nina noted a study that discusses that children do better on math scores when in a supervised or structured environment vs. non-supervised.

The commission noted that the forum input and survey results should be included in the Governor's Report.

Exempt school age recommendations –

Heidi reminded commissioners that the Child Care Division asked the Commission for assistance in the definition of exempt school age care. To that end, a workgroup was put together to lay out recommendations based on the input from the forums as well as the online survey. The grid has been presented at other Commission meetings, as well as at the forum in Pendleton and was reviewed at this time for further input and possible changes.

Marian noted as a parent that she is pleased that at least we will recommend requiring a criminal history check. She asked if the commission had heard anything about how this will be received. Heidi noted that we have heard clearly the desire from the public that child care programs have criminal history checks on people who work with children.

There still is some grey if an exempt tracked program establishes an agreement with parents that children are required to stay or not leave a program. This moves a program more into needing to be licensed.

Attendees asked if there is any way to weight criteria such as time - or should there be a ratio or age criteria?

The Commission wants to achieve a safe place for kids to go instead of home alone or to unsafe places so this is a way to create a floor for building on.

Sam suggested creating a one-pager of highly recommended strategies for quality such as ratio. The tracking data base will create a way to communicate this and other information with exempt programs.

Rosetta asked what would happen if programs go an extra level and ask parents to provide emergency contact info that includes who can't pick up a child. Kitty responded that it is premature to answer but the goal is not to push providers into being licensed. Heidi added that as a member of the workgroup she would advocate for programs to be able to notify and protect children because it is good common sense for kids.

Sam asked if Boys and Girls Club have been engaged. Some have attended the forums but not at a high level. Sam said he would work to encourage participation. Gary will talk with exempt programs in southern Oregon. Heidi will send Sam, Gary and the Commission the draft of the grid as a dated document for use in communicating with exempt programs in their areas.

Sam wanted to commend the commission and the workgroup because they held to their original statement from the beginning that this is a process for input and not a way to push through a preconceived agenda – and he stated that it is clear from the document presented that this has truly been the case.

Professional Development Research – Bobbie Weber

The Oregon Community Foundation asked Bobbie to do a literature review to inform their investments in early childhood fund from John and Betty Grey. There were four distinct content areas:

1. Professional development – what impact does it have on teacher behavior, program quality and outcomes.
2. Articulation – has it been found for practices that enable providers to move smoothly through training such as community training to community college. What are the models?
3. What does research tell us about scholarship, compensation and retention?
4. What's going on in Oregon and how could the scholarship fund integrate what it's doing with other things going on in Oregon.

Professional Development is defined as education; training and relationship based which encompasses mentoring, coaching, staffed family child care networks.

Education – studies have shown for 30 years a bachelors degree was better to result in better outcomes for children. In 2007 two major studies concluded we don't know that the bachelor's degree is best. The association that has been found between a bachelor and positive outcomes is still true. The new research is raising the question 'were the bachelors the cause?' The new research controls for other variables which produces inconsistencies in the data. The research is saying that there is more going on then just a bachelor's degree. The teacher's ability to be effective is never the teacher by themselves, good things go together and so do bad things. There is not a silver bullet to produce results. The positive associations are there but it is more complicated.

Training – data was from 2007 and 2008 and much has not even been published yet. Timing for this report is great. Does training matter? Yes...but. Not the training we're doing. It does not change behavior or improve child outcomes. Short term workshops or attending an hour here and there won't, but training that is intensive, ongoing and focused changes behavior. If you really want to change behavior you go to relationship based development (RBD). The characteristics of RBD includes highly qualified mentors who gets training on what they are doing, receives ongoing support, has a reasonable manageable caseload, and has a very clear focus. These characteristics are effective in helping people not only change attitudes and increase knowledge but add the ability to change what they do. Coach/mentor observes behavior, gives advice, observes behavior, observes – it is the practicum model that is job embedded and happens over a fixed period of time. A study noted an intensive approach that worked with family child care and centers for 20 days on-site with providers which showed dramatic results of change. This is a significant investment.

Bobbie thinks training requirements are at the minimum floor of what we should be targeting. The characteristics of the minimal requirements don't have much to do with changing behavior. Deborah noted that this is critical information for the philanthropic community.

Bobbie noted that out of all the things research says we can change, the most important is the caregiver child relationship. If you're going to focus on one place, research is clear that we need to know how to interact with children and build strong caregiver/child relationships. This one seems to stand out. Some people think you are born with it but we all learned it and were not born with it.

Bobbie said it's time to take a look at the mentoring program to assess how much it would cost to move it closer to what the literature pieces recommended. Focused mentoring includes a content area. The difference between mentoring and coaching is that a mentor is general and a coach is focused.

Articulation – you want training hours that translate into college credit. Instead of training requirements being just hours of training, make it an approved course which can be translated into college credits. This may be a model we want to look at.

The classes providers want to take are professional technical classes that don't carry credit hours. Providers are interested in learning about children and families and there are a limited number of classes that universities have that meet those needs.

Bobbie thinks there are opportunities about what we can do. Tennessee has done some exciting things and is looking at this from a big picture. A high level committee that took this one could make a real difference to get agreement between universities and colleges. Work would pay off in this area. Tom noted that the Higher Education Act may have some funding for this.

Scholarship, Compensation and Retention – most have combined these strategies. There are many models which are similar to Oregon Cares that are stipends associated with the level of training. Some go to the facility and they adopt the pay scale which is how the state of Washington and the military handle it. Washington identified it would cost 20 million to go statewide. It did not have as big of an impact on other models. Once in place the people they hired in had higher levels of education than those who were already in place. The evaluation produced the results they set out to do. Lynn Kagen said there are three things that matter, training, education and compensation and compensation matters the most. As a by-product Bobbie created a list of items or decisions a state would need to create to a compensation initiative.

Paper will be available by early October and will be emailed to Commissioners.

Email the Commissioners the invitation to the Researchers Rountable, October 2nd.

Local Commission on Children and Families: Marilyn Kennaly, Diana Stotz

Diana Stotz – Washington County: Receive \$220,000 per year and have been supporting child care for 20 years. Great Start in 1989 and early on supported the local R&R to expand training for child care providers to improve quality.

The 3 year funding cycle will be supporting the R&R to expand training opportunities, mentoring support and incentives for providers to work their way up the professional development ladder. They will do some work with early literacy jointly funded with Great Start. In Washington county, a study discovered about half of entering kindergarteners don't know how books work. They are doing outreach to culturally diverse providers partnering with Immigration and Refugee (IRCO) and the local R&R. They will also continue to underwrite the cost of Directors attending the Director's Certificate and assess the cost to adapt this for Family Child Care. Historically, they have coordinated with other counties to coordinate translation of Building Blocks training so it supports their work at the local level and contributes to the state system. In addition, they support the mental health consultation project.

Marilyn Kennaly – Yamhill County: Receives \$35,000 - \$38,000 per year. A focus area is access to child care and supporting trainings. See handout. Want to work with Chemeketa and understands the John and Betty Grey are under-utilized and would like to work to see what can be done with those dollars.

Rosetta thanked Diana and Marilyn for coming and stated that this is a landmark to hear from the local counties and expressed that learning what is happening at the local level is meaningful and helps to understand what providers are facing.

R&R Advisory Update – Mark Anderson

There have not been any new changes since last June. Mark is receiving final input from the analysis committee and will forward the final report to the Commission. Mark noted that through this process it has become clear that the R&R Advisory Committee needs to play a much larger role because it is advisory to the Child Care Division regarding the statewide R&R system. The R&R Advisory Committee is a subcommittee of the Commission and we are looking at statute and identifying what is the role of this committee. It will be reported back to the Commission in October/November.

Will the Commission be given a timeline of what needs to occur in the next year or two? There are many unknowns.

It was noted how Mark has led the analysis committee through a difficult task and has done it well. Mark reflected that people may get tired of hearing him say “it is the people who are doing the work” and he has worked diligently to include their input in the process.