Fatherhood Child Welfare Training Workgroup Minutes
Wednesday, September 14, 2011

Attendees:
Tracy Robinson, Executive Director, OCF
Whitney Logan, Staff, OCF
Joan Van Hull, Bureau Chief, Outcome Management, ODJFS,
Glenn Harris, Director, African American Male Initiative (AAMI), Columbus Urban League
Burl Lemon, Executive Director, ForeverDads

Welcome
Mr. Robinson welcomed the Fatherhood Child Welfare Training Workgroup members. He thanked participants for their time and efforts in improving fatherhood in the child welfare system.

Purpose
Mr. Robinson presented the purpose of the workgroup:

The purpose of the Fatherhood Child Welfare Training Workgroup is to develop fatherhood training workshops for child welfare professionals to equip them to engage nonresident fathers and paternal relatives to improve child well being, permanency and stability.

Fatherhood Child Welfare Training Workgroup Objectives:
To establish fatherhood training work group to identify fatherhood training needs for child welfare caseworkers and supervisors.

To fulfill PIP requirements

To develop training curricula and/or training materials

To develop a training plan for implementation

To review evaluation feedback from past fatherhood trainings

Identify potential trainers

Develop a train the trainer workshop

Review or obtain national training modules and training materials

Others developed by workgroup members

PIP: What is PIP?
The primary goal of PIP is for Child Welfare Service Intervention: Families to enhance capacity to provide for their children's needs as a result of improved practices. Ohio's Program Improvement Plan (PIP), developed in response to the Federal Child and Family Services

Review (CFSR) Final Report released April 7, 2009, focuses on achievement of positive outcomes for children and families throughout the continuum of child welfare services. In order to identify which strategies to use to achieve positive outcomes for children and families, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) had to take into account that child welfare services are delivered in a state-supervised county-administered environment. ODJFS is the designated state agency responsible for overseeing the operation of 88 public children services agencies (PCSAs).

Training Topics

Mr. Robinson revisited the suggested fatherhood child welfare trainings topics and requested additional topics and feedback from the list below.

Suggested Fatherhood Child Welfare Trainings Topics

- The history of fatherhood movement in United States
- What is typical or good fatherhood?
- Male Development: Boys to men
- Diligent search- How to Locate Fathers. Focus on skill development and resources
- Communication styles- How do you communicate with men effectively?
- Premature Fathering- How do you prevent young men from fathering a child before emotionally and financially ready to assume the responsibility?
- What does fatherhood mean in respective cultures? Special modules for different ethnicities in order to merge into their cultures. (Cultural competencies-African American, Caucasian, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, etc)
- Father Involvement in different childhood development stages: What do fathers need to know?
- How can fathers create safety for children? Address Detrimental Effects of Danger and Violence in Children's Loves.

An additional training topic included:

- Cross training between child welfare workers and fatherhood programs.
- Fatherhood 101 for Child Welfare Workers and Supervisors
- Child Welfare 101 for Fatherhood professionals: fatherhood professionals want to know, how does a case become a case? When can fathers gain involvement at the earliest stages?

Mr. Lemon affirmed the exact topics and issues were raised in the Muskingum County Ohio County Fatherhood Initiative.

Mr. Robinson suggested looking into national curriculums and certifications that can solidify this work, gain a national perspective and technical assistance. Recommendations of Dr. Jeffery M. Johnson, National Partnership for Community Leadership (NPCL) and the American Humane Society were seen as good potential trainings with good credentials. Mr. Robinson is familiar with their trainings and will send workgroup members material on each.

As mentioned in the prior teleconference Ms. Bennett recommended using the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) workshop template to develop new workshops. The OCWTP workshop template format would make the newly created workshops ready for submission to regional training

centers and would prevent duplicate trainings. Mr. Robinson stated that we will use the template format so the curriculum can be easily submitted and approved.

Review Evaluations
Mr. Robinson highlighted comments of evaluations from Child Welfare Workers. Please see most frequent comments below:

- Include fathers in training
- Expand training to full day
- Determine if the father is willing
- Avoid negative stereotypes
- Less judgmental
- Identify specific tools for diligent search efforts
- Include fathers in team meetings and case plan implementation

Please see evaluation handout for more details.

Miscellaneous
Mr. Lemon identifies the Children Services and its environment "stigma" as an immediate barrier. Mr. Lemon believes the Child Support office is more inclined to engage fathers and has a friendly environment for fathers. Mr. Lemon doubts fathers can receive services with an open case.

Mrs. Van Hull stated case workers are suppose link services with a plan to remove barriers. If a child is removed from their home the father and relatives are to be contacted immediately.

Mr. Harris agrees with Mr. Lemon and feels unwelcomed at Children Services. He stated the agencies are not father friendly and maternal grand parents are contacted as the next guardian in line to care for the child rather than the father.

Mr. Robinson recommended equipping child welfare workers with skills to recognize the importance of fathers and effectively communicate with them is essential. Mr. Robinson suggested conducting the Father Friendly Check-Up with a county prior to implementing training will provide data as a benchmark for the training.

Mr. Lemon stated that Children Services have the highest authority of the decisions for a child "in the system." Mr. Lemon believes Child Support has changed its culture and approaches. Children Services can do the same.

Mrs. Van Hull suggested reading through the Administrative Code Rules to review wording and angles that may need to be evaluated when carrying out practices in the child welfare system.

Next Meeting: Date: September 28, 2011 Time; 12:00pm-1:00pm Conference Call