CSN Agenda

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Meeting ID: 817 8011 2542
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16699006833,,81780112542#,0#,292904# US (San Jose)
Meeting ID: 817 8011 2542
Passcode: 292904
November 4, 2020
1:15 – 3:00 p.m.

General:
• Introductions:
  i. Welcome Robert Reyes – Probation
• Announcements and Board “Round Table”
• Additions to the Agenda
• Public Comment

Action Items:
• Approval of August 5, 2020 Minutes

Information/Discussion items:
• CASA Presentation – Teresa Tardiff
• Child Abuse Prevention Plan/ACEs Aware Network – Lisa Fraser

Standing Agenda Items:
• High-Needs Shelter Care – Jim Roberts
• Priority: Homeless Services for Children and Families – Laurel Weir
• SLO County CSEC Collaborative – Linda Belch
• Child Advocacy Center of SLO County – Lisa Fraser

Future Agenda Items:
• FFPSA Power-Point Presentation – Jim Roberts

Next Meeting:
February 3, 2021
Via Zoom teleconference
1:15 – 3:00 p.m.
Minutes
November 4, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 P.M., via video conference, followed by introductions.

Announcements:
Welcome and congratulations to Robert Reyes as the newly promoted Chief of Probation.

Additions:
None

Public Comments:
None

Action Items:
1. Approval of CSN August 5, 2020 Minutes
   - Motion: Jim Roberts
   - Second: Biz Steinberg
   - Abstain: Ian Parkinson
   - Motion Passed: Unanimous

Presentation: CASA Presentation (attached) – Teresa Tardiff
CASA is an acronym for Court Appointed Special Advocate, whose main objective is to provide advocates for abused and neglected children within the court system. The trained volunteers have the same goal for each child growing-up in the Foster Care system; to flourish in a safe, nurturing, and permanent home. The volunteer will become very familiar with the child(ren) to which they’re appointed, in order to effectively advocate fact-based recommendations. Volunteers must commit to at least one year of service to CASA, complete a background check, finish 35 hrs. of training, and comply to all State and County laws. Once sworn-in, they will have access to the child’s records, will be able to investigate their history, environment, and relationship needs, in addition to being able to facilitate resources, services, and speak on the best interest of the child(ren). For complete information, please see the attached PowerPoint presentation.
Information/Discussion Items: Child Abuse Prevention Plan/ACEs Aware Network – Lisa Fraser
The OCAP team continues to meet with Linda Belch and Belinda Benassi, as well as consultants, regarding efforts to reorganize since the disruption of COVID-19. OCAP is researching ways to build a prevention system that is culturally sensitive and closes gaps in services. Concerns include how to monitor families moving within the system, identifying the barriers to entry, access, and services, and how to map the process. Regarding ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences): Funding has been awarded to our region and ACEs is currently assessing how medical providers might screen for ACEs, then researching the following:
   a. Where do physicians send their patients?
   b. How to go beyond simply writing a prescription?
   c. How screenings would become part of a medical assessment?
   d. Assuring the resources follow the patient’s medical journey.
Lisa is part of a regional effort organized by the KIDS Network of Santa Barbara, focusing on creating a medical provider community and implementing improved connections.

Standing Agenda Item: High-Needs Shelter Care – Jim Roberts
Due to COVID-19 restrictions, there are no significant findings to report other than continued discussions at the State level. Jim would like to meet with Devin, Linda, and Robert, to examine how to effectively use AB2944 funding, in order to form creative and interventive programs.

Standing Agenda Item: Homeless Services for Children and Families – Laurel Weir
During this pandemic, Homeless Shelters are providing a motel and two trailers for those who become symptomatic or test positive for COVID-19. One trailer is located at ECHO, the second is at CAPSLO, where individuals or families will remain in isolation until Public Health deems they’re no longer contagious. In addition, Domestic Violence Facilities are keeping their own isolation unit(s) available. Unfortunately, due to State distancing guidelines, these facilities are not able to accommodate a larger population. A funding proposal will be requested for the Homeless Assistance and Prevention (HAP) Grant, which has 8% set aside to serve homeless youth. HSC will be seeking applications from programs that serve that faction.

Standing Agenda Item: SLO County CSEC Collaborative – Linda Belch
There are no new cases to report and current CSEC cases are stable. Overall, referrals have been down due to COVID-19, however, when children returned to school, an uptick was noted with mandated reporters.
Program updates:
   1. CDSS will be releasing an ACIN tool-kit guide on labor trafficking:
   2. Webinar: Building Pathways to Education and Employment Opportunities for Survivors of Trafficking is scheduled for November 19, from 10:00-11:30 (a flier will be sent to participants).

Standing Agenda Item: Child Advocacy Center of SLO County – Lisa Fraser
Lisa is proud to announce The Center for Family Strengthening received an award from the Cal OES Office, with funding from the Victims of Crime Act. The Child Advocacy Center’s purpose is to have professionals work together, minimizing trauma to the child by limiting the number of interviews, then connecting the child and family with essential services. Because of these needs, a 10-minute video will be created for newly hired Law Enforcement and Social Services professionals to better understand the process of referring into a C.A.I.T., and to know why it’s important for families to have a forensic medical exam. Additionally, there is now a full-time CAC family advocate, Rosio Hernandez, who will be an integral part of the C.A.I.T. interviews, as well as the forensic medical examinations, following-up with families to make sure there are no gaps in services.

Finally, Lisa wanted to share the newly adapted CAC logo and brand for easy and immediate identification.
Additional item: AB2083 – Linda Belch
AB2083 was initiated in December of 2019, requiring counties to create a MOU for a collaborative system of care, assuring Foster Children move seamlessly through our system, and to establish parameters for the Executive Team. The deadline has been extended to March 2021, with a draft slated for review from the County Council in December 2020. The AB2083 Steering Committee consists of various community leaders, with the understanding that CSN will act as Executive leadership, providing input when matters can’t be resolved within the Steering Committee. The AB2083 committee plan to meet a month prior to the CSN quarterly meetings, in order to provide updates at the CSN meetings.

Round Table:
-Biz Steinberg:
  CAPSLO recently held a conference for the Medical Assisted Treatment Facility being built adjacent to 40 Prado. The County will choose a provider to be an additional addiction resource for the community.
  Liberty Tattoo Removal was stalled due to limited hospital availability, treatments are planned to resume in January at the Arroyo Grande clinic, where all 5 dermatologists will provide their services. Early Care and Education Programs continue to grow and are subsidizing 800 families with childcare.

-Anne Robin:
  The Prevention and Early Intervention Unit received a grant to place more clinicians and family advocates at middle schools to provide on-site services as needed.

-Lisa Fraser:
  The UndocuSupport Initiative has been in-place for many months, assuring those who are undocumented receive financial support from various agencies, such as the Community Foundation Disaster Assistance Fund, as well as the CA Immigrant Resilience Fund.

Future Agenda Items:
FFPSA presentation by Jim Roberts

Next Meeting:
February 3, 2021

Adjournment:
2:29 PM
Teresa Tardiff
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CASA Mission Statement

CASA of San Luis Obispo County advocates for the best interests of abused and neglected children within the court system. CASA recruits, trains and supervises volunteers who advocate for this vulnerable population with the goal of ensuring that each and every child grows up in a safe, nurturing and permanent home.
Best Interests

TO DETERMINE THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD:

- The CASA volunteer should know the children he or she is appointed to advocate for well enough to form fact based recommendations to the court that address the child’s needs, and know appropriate resources to meet those needs.

- The CASA volunteer also informs the court of the child’s wishes, whether not those wishes are, in the opinion of the CASA volunteer, in the child’s best interest.
What is CASA?

- CASA is an acronym for Court Appointed Special Advocates.
- A Seattle judge was concerned over making decisions about abused and neglected children without sufficient information. He conceived the idea of using trained community volunteers to speak for the best interests of these children in court. It was so successful that soon judges across the country began utilizing citizen advocates.
Program Governance

CASA programs must comply and adhere to all state and county laws. CASA programs must also meet all standards as set forth by National CASA. Program requirements for CASA programs are governed by:

- California Rule of Court 5.655
- San Luis Obispo County Court Rule 12.10
- Welfare & Institutions Code Section 100-109
- National CASA Standards
- National CASA Code of Ethics
Screening and Training

- CASA recruits volunteers from all sectors of the community.
- Volunteers must commit to at least a year.
- Volunteers are fingerprinted and a complete background check is done, as well as an extensive interview and references checked. CACI, DOJ and FBI, registries and local law enforcement.
- Volunteers must complete 35 hours of training and 12 hours of continuing education per year.
Swearing-In

- Once CASA volunteers complete their training they are sworn-in by the Judge as Officers of the Court.
- As Officers of the Court the volunteer will have access to all records relative to the child’s case. Access to these records will help volunteers in their assessment of the child’s needs.
Referral
Assignment of a CASA Volunteer

- CASA of SLO is assigned every dependency case at detention.
- Cases are prioritized by CASA staff.
- Consideration for assignment to a volunteer is given to requests by the child, the Judge, attorneys, or social workers.
CASA Volunteer Role

■ Spend time with the Child
■ Investigation: history, environment, relationships, needs
■ Facilitation: resources and services
■ Advocacy: speak up for the child
■ Monitoring: are the orders of the court and the case plan being carried out.
Support

- Every CASA volunteer is assigned to an Advocate Supervisor who provides hands-on training, guidance, and support for the entire time the volunteer is assigned to a child.
What CASA Volunteers Do

- Meet with the child and caregivers. We request that CASA volunteers contact their CASA child at least once per week whenever possible.
- The volunteer becomes a consistent adult mentor and role model.
And CASA volunteers:

- Investigate and research information about the child’s situation.
- Speak to everyone involved in the child’s life.
- Prepares a report with information for the parties and the court and recommendations appropriate to the hearing.
CASA Court Report

Includes:

- Placement history of the child.
- Summary of CASA involvement
- Facts and background of the case.
- Medical and dental history.
- Current medical and dental needs.
- Developmental, educational and behavioral concerns.
- Conclusions and recommendations.
CASA Volunteers Attend:

- TDM Meetings
- Wraparound Meetings
- TBS Meetings
- CFT Meetings
- Treatment Team Meetings
- IEP Meetings
- Martha’s Place Assessments
- All regularly scheduled Court dates
- Any meetings that may impact the lives of their assigned child.
Contact with the Social Worker
CASA Volunteers Speak Regularly with SW and FCNI

Regarding:

- Supervisors will reach out to ask questions prior to assigning a case to an advocate.
- Initial meeting with SW and advocate to discuss the case.
- Child’s Needs
- Parent Compliance with Case Plan
- Any Special Issues
- Recommendations
CASA Needs to be Notified

- When a child is going to be moved.
- When a child needs an educational representative.
- When anything important happens in the child’s life.
- Prior to filing of a W & I Code 241.1 joint assessment report.
- Whenever the law requires all parties to the case receive notification.
Mentor Program

- Serving former/current foster youth 18-24
- Referrals from FCNi, CWS, and Probation
- Provides guidance on life skills, career and education planning, and money management.
- Meeting with mentee once a month
- Mentee has to want to be matched with a mentor.
Infant and Toddler Advocacy

- Children between 0-5 are the most vulnerable to abuse and neglect.
- This is a crucial time in their brain development and early intervention can make a huge difference.
- Specific training on the unique needs of young children in foster care is provided for infant/toddler advocates.
- The advocate monitors the child’s health, development, services, and advocates for permanent placement in a timely manner.
Victim Compensation

- All children in the dependency system are considered victim’s of crime under the Victim’s of Crime Act (VOCA)

- Medi-Cal typically picks up all expenses for children in dependency. FCNI and CWS also have funding to cover some expenses.

- If Medi-Cal does not accept coverage, Victim Compensation funds can be utilized.

- At Martha’s Place there was a waiting list of 6 months to get occupational therapy. Qualifying court dependents for compensation enabled them to see private therapists, eliminating the wait list. For children under 3 this is a crucial time developmentally and 6 months is a long wait.

- Since March of 2019, CASA has been submitting California Victim Compensation applications on behalf of all children in dependency.

- Total Victim Comp applications filed by CASA as of 10/1/2020: 491
CASA Statistics
In San Luis Obispo County

- Currently serving 193 children and young adults
- 142 Volunteer Advocates
- 195 Children are waiting for a CASA volunteer.
- 5 Trainings a year
- Funding for the program comes from grants, fundraisers, and donations.
CASA...
A Powerful Voice in a Child’s Life®

ANY QUESTIONS?