

Department of Human Services

2015 House Committee on Human Services & Housing Oregon Foster Care System

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Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Recruitment
- Licensing or Certification
- Training
- Placements
- Monitoring and Support
- Moving Forward



Introduction

What makes a good foster care system?

- A large pool of foster parents available for placements
- Evidence based home study tools
- An adequate rate of reimbursement of costs associated with fostering
- Matching process for placements
- On going and crisis supports accessible in real time
- Respite and daycare access
- Strong child advocates
- Well defined lines of communication with the Department

Recruitment – Public/Private Partnership

- Best method of obtaining new foster parents is through established foster parents
- Certification Staff
- Relative Search
- Partnership with community organizations
- GRACE grant: 5 year grant to recruit and support general applicant, targeted and child specific homes

Certification

- SAFE Home Study: structured study process
- Criminal records check. FBI check required if family has lived outside Oregon in last 5 years.
- Child Welfare records check
- Four references provided by the family
- Completion of Foundations training
- Emergency Certification is possible if circumstances require.

Training

- Wide variety of trainings and training delivery needed to accommodate different learning styles.
- Basics
 - Orientation
 - Foundations Training
 - Required additional 30 hours every two years
- Multiple options for accessing: on line, in person, reading, support groups, lending library.

Placements

- Foster parent states preference for certain child characteristics such as gender, age and behavioral issues. Certifier helps foster parent with realistic expectations and identification of skill sets needed.
- Preference for type of placement, such as emergency shelter or more plan full placement.
- Matching preferred when there are sufficient available foster resources.

Monitoring and Support

- Certifier provides support and additional contact with family and children in the home.
- Caseworkers assigned to specific children required to visit the child in and outside the home.
- Children have court appointed attorneys and some cases have CASAs appointed.
- There are a variety of supports on the local level such as support groups and mentoring by experienced foster parents.
- Caseworker is required to provide the foster parent a contact number for after hours access.
- Home is recertified every two years.

When an allegation is received

- Screener determines whether this is an allegation of abuse or neglect
- Assigned to CPS worker if it meets the threshold of an allegation of abuse or neglect.
- Allegations that don't meet the threshold are sent to certifiers to discuss with the foster parent.
- Districts have processes in place to staff with management and other workers with children in the home any allegation or concern.
- There is continued tracking and analysis of allegations through Central Office sensitive issue memo process and through the Quarterly Business Review.

Moving Forward

- Create an oversight workgroup with a diverse membership, to monitor the Department's improvement progress and provide input and direction.
- Continue consultation with Casey Family Programs and the SAFE Consortium to determine areas needing improvement and identification of evidence based practices.
- Implement best practices in areas needing improvement.
- Continue quality assurance through analysis of the dynamics of allegations and founded allegations to adjust practice.
- There is a workgroup currently meeting to look at the provision of behavioral rehabilitation services and adjust those services to better meet children's needs.

Resources

The following links access foster care system rule and policy

2014 Child Welfare Data Book

<http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/child-abuse/Documents/2014%20Data%20Book.pdf>

Oregon Child Welfare Data Set

https://rom.socwel.ku.edu/Oregon_Public/MyHome.aspx

Foster Care Rates

<http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/fosterparent/Pages/rates.aspx>

Department Responsibilities During Screening and Assessment of a Child Abuse or Neglect Report Involving the Home of a Department Certified Foster Parent or Relative Caregiver

http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/manual_1/i-b223.pdf

Department of Human Services

www.oregon.gov/dhs

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