

# **Central Point – Southern Oregon Foster Care Town Hall Meeting Notes**

November 11, 2015

Last night's Town Hall Meeting was a spring board for foster parents and other citizens to share their concerns.

Many foster parents expressed a desire to be more of an active voice on behalf of the children they care for daily. Other highlights from last night include:

- FP being considered as part of the team and not the 3rd wheel
- Agency Responsiveness with regard to caseworker follow-up
- More benchmarks in a case to change direction, to establish permanency quicker
- Policy concern allowing child, especially very young, to visit out of state 30 days
- Increase awareness of available resources to FP (clothing, medical, mental health)
- Centralized location of available resources
- Increase availability of trainings providing childcare
- Help with Negotiating Adoption Assistance
- Increase awareness of legislative decisions affecting FP
- Improve efficiency in distribution of resources to local FPA
- Parents rights vs children's rights while children live in limbo, constantly losing not just their family, but schools, community, etc, while parents go in and out of treatment

## **Jackson County Foster Parent Association President Sharon Bowling**

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Below are the issues brought up in the meeting 11/10/15 of ways to improve our foster care system.

Representative Stark asked that I focus on solutions that were suggested not problems.

1. To rally for more support of our local foster parent association.
2. To do NEW follow up studies on kids after permanency and into adult hood to assess quality of life, mental status ect.
3. Expand training for foster parents and case workers to insure accuracy in the systems policies. To make sure all involved are well informed and working together.
4. Encourage the need for children to have a voice, be heard and considered in what they feel is best for their lives.
5. Make parent/family visits available on Saturdays to lessen the burden on the children trying to do school work, sports ect. And do visits during the week.

6. Encourage the department to allow current care takers to be heard and be a part of the decision making process for the children.
7. Someone to allocate timely response when foster parents call into to the department. Possibly the need to hire assistance and or secretaries just to do call back and or email response within a 24 hour period.
8. To enforce the department for accountability, accuracy in case planning by keeping 1 or 2 case workers per child only throughout the case.
9. Encouraged more community involvement via casa training, foster parent training and how we can come together as a community for our children in our system.
10. Offer more mental health opportunities for children.
11. Have a foster parent 411 where fp can call for advice, help or just support.
12. Allocate funds for more resources to insure all is being done to keep families together and alleviate the number of children entering into the system.
13. Hire Lobiest

**Notes from Denise Loraditch – Foster Mother – Stark Constituent**