

**Child Welfare Network  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday April 18, 2013, 7:30-9:30 a.m.  
Las Vegas Country Club, Rotunda Room**

The following individuals attended the Child Welfare Network (CWN) meeting:

Anne-Marie Abruscato	Mojave Adult, Child and Family Services
Kim Amato	Baby's Bounty
Marlyn Buckley	Professionals in Philanthropy
Daniele Dreitzer	The Rape Crisis Center
Michelle Formica	Desert Psychological
Charlene Frost	Nevada PEP
Amanda Haboush	Prevent Child Abuse/NV Inst. for Children's Research & Policy
Peter Howard	SAFY
Gard Jameson	Children's Advocacy Alliance
Cindy Jenks	All About Kidz
Asha Jones	Senator Reid's Office
Ken Lange	Nevada Youth Care Providers
Melody Nelson	CCCC
Howard Olshansky	Boys Town
Mari Parlade	Department of Family Services
Aga Pinkerton	US Senator Reid's Office
Linda Quast	University of Phoenix
James Raffel	Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth
Marina Rit-Bloom	All About Kidz
Jennifer Silverman	LACSN Children's Attorneys Project
Denise Tanata Ashby	Children's Advocacy Alliance
Christina Vela	St. Jude's Ranch
Andre' Wade	DFS
John Wagner	UNLV
Hilary Westrom	Ritter Charitable Trust
Stacey Wedding	Professional in Philanthropy
Emma Winckler	Sojourn Foundation
Garth Winckler	Sojourn Foundation

**Welcome and Introductions**

Denise Tanata Ashby called the meeting to order and extended a thank you to all in attendance. She reviewed the activities for the day and made the appropriate introductions.

**Legislative Update**

Denise provided a handout summary of the Legislative bills that have been presented on the Floor as well as those that died in committee. She then gave a brief synopsis of SB99, SB98, SB97,

AB81, AB348 and SB258. Mari Parlade, Howard Olshansky and Ken Lange added additional comments of specific bills of interest (AB348).

It was then reported that Children's Week at the Legislature was very successful, and a special thanks was given to Amanda Haboush for her contribution to making it so successful. Denise also thanked DFS for incurring the expense for youth to participate, and it was noted that the group from DFS won the contest for bringing the most youth for Children's Week. There were comments indicating that current and former foster youth and legislators were very respectful of each other and that lifetime friendships may have been forged through this event.

### **Building Connections in Child Welfare**

Denise gave a short history of the Building Connections in Child Welfare initiative going back to November of 2011. The purpose of the event was to open lines of communication between DFS and the community. Some common themes heard at the event included changing our system to make it better for families and kids, the importance of best practices, need to strengthen families, transitioning to an outcome driven system, resources and lack thereof in the community, as well as ways to prevent kids from entering or re-entering the system. A small group continued the discussion following the original event, and they have decided to carry forward what was learned at Building Connections and through the Community We Will process.

Mari Parlade expanded on Denise's overview and shared that DFS looked at evidence-based solutions and best practices, following the original Building Connections event, and they decided to focus on the following:

Resources – Connect DFS to community to establish stronger ties. They're creating Community Partnership and Engagement Program (with 3 more staff added in July) for a new department/unit at DFS. DFS is going to spearhead the Building Connections Summit on August 7 or 8. She briefly discussed SIPS (Safety, Intervention and Permanency System), which is an evidence-based enhanced safety model. DFS is asking themselves some of these questions: Are we removing too many kids? Are we returning kids too quickly? Not soon enough? She noted that DFS is working to connect the dots internally (connecting intake, hotline unit, CPS to permanency), so they can wrap around the safety model being used around the state.

She noted that Lisa Ruiz Lee is testifying today so couldn't be here. DFS is ready to connect with the community, so everyone is on the same page.

The DFS intake paperwork is going deeper to understand underlying stories of children in the system, parenting practices in the home, etc. They want the August Summit to get information out to community providers, so that everyone is speaking the same language.

Parlade also distributed the DFS newsletter explaining the Safety Intervention Permanency System (SIPS) and Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI).

Christine Vela and Howard Olshansky gave a presentation on Building Connections from the community partners and service providers perspective, stating that this group intends to collaborate with DFS and take a new lead in implementing a common vision. They affirmed that the DFS system is complex and this group's focus is larger than that of DFS, as it is focused on child welfare statewide, not just Clark County. They noted that these kinds of collaborations and conversations have occurred in communities across the country, and they want to pull from those other experiences to determine how we all want to do this in NV, recognizing our goal is better systems for children and families. Moving forward they will be asking for commitment to the process from all agencies.

They announced that they will be holding their next meeting on Sept. 19, 2013, which will be after the DFS Summit so that information from the August meeting can be assimilated into their meeting.

A "Save the Date" will be sent in the near future. Denise reiterated that this must be a community effort and announced that CAA will be recruiting and hiring staff to support these initiatives. Denise handed out a document called Nevada Context Data containing background data for review, noting that we need to identify what outcomes should be as a community and work from that. She also announced that CAA will be holding monthly webinars or phone calls as well as regular workgroups.

### **Funding/Grant Opportunities**

Denise then opened the floor to anyone wishing to discuss grant/funding opportunities that might be successful through collaborative efforts.

Christine Vela shared that a Social Services Collaborative had been formed by UNLV and the Lincy Institute in their effort to partner with the community and look at social service needs. The group meets regularly and is looking at ways to identify areas of concern across Southern Nevada and support these areas through data collection and other means. As the group continues to flesh out how to help alleviate some of our community's social service needs, there may be grant opportunities or other opportunities for agencies in the future.

Amanda Haboush shared that Prevent Child Abuse NV started implementing a youth violence prevention program to span different types of violence. They are looking for funding to get the program and would like to be involved in evaluation aspects of the program rather than the entire program. They're looking for anyone who would be interested in partnering with them on securing this grant.

Garth and Emma Winckler from the Sojourn Foundation are looking for a partner for a Face Forward Grant (information on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)), which takes ex-juvenile offenders, expunges their records, and gives them training. Sojourn would like to be a sub-grantee for it. It is a 39 month/\$1,000,000 grant and includes an evaluation program and \$6000/participant.

Denise announced that CAA will partner with agencies to assist and guide the grant writing process if an agency is in need. She also encouraged agencies to collaborate with DFS. She listed three grants due in the near future: two from the Administration for Children and Families and one from the MGM Resort Foundation.

The MGM Resort Foundation grant application is due April 26, 2013.

There was a bill passed last session requiring the State of Nevada to develop a grants office with a goal to bring more grant funding into the state. This Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management can provide assistance. CWN has invited them to visit and do a presentation at our next meeting, so we can learn more about what they do.

### **News, Announcements & Updates**

John Wagner from UNLV introduced himself as the Director of the Nonprofit and Community Leadership Initiative at UNLV. He announced that there will be a seminar held on May 6, 2013 from 10 a.m.-noon with a goal of providing a broad overview of what UNLV has to offer and how to connect with the correct people. In the meantime, John is the main contact for any questions, comments or concerns. He provided an electronic invitation that will be forwarded to all agencies on the CWN distribution list.

Stacey Wedding promoted Nevada's Big Give and encouraged all registered agencies to help make this fundraising event a success. The goal is to raise \$1,000,000 in a 24 hour period on April 25, 2013.

Daniele Dreitzer, the new Executive Director for The Rape Crisis Center, announced that they will be moving to a new location and holding an Open House on May 22, 2013 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Invites will be sent. Also, April 24, 2013 is Denim Day held to increase awareness of domestic violence victims. Daniele encouraged all to wear their denim on April 24, 2013. She also noted that The Rape Crisis Center wants to expand the Your Space program (making good decisions, protecting against sexual violence, etc.) to 12-18 year olds outside of the school setting, and she asked anyone interested in offering this program to contact her.

Christine Vela spoke about the Child Focus Camp To Belong to be held in June and encouraged participation as volunteers; she also noted that sponsorships are needed. The camp reunites siblings that have been separated in foster care. The new office for Child Focus is located at 2685 S. Rainbow, and they will be holding an Open House that Christina will send information about.

Kim Amato announced that Baby's Bounty is going national with locations in Maryland, New Jersey and Idaho opening in the near future.

Amanda Haboush announced that there will be a Community Resource Fair held on April 20-21 at Tivoli, and there is still vendor space available.

Mari Parlade announced that May is Foster Care Awareness Month and that on June 1 the Las Vegas lights will all turn blue to acknowledge Project We group. In June there will be a Family Reunification Dinner held to celebrate families that have successfully reunited. Please contact Mari if your agency would like to sponsor a family to be honored.

The Legal Aid Center of Nevada will be holding an Open House in the fall of 2013. This agency currently represents 50% of the children that are being adjudicated with a goal of representing every child in the system.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:27 a.m.

**NEXT MEETING TO BE HELD:** June 20, 2013 at the Las Vegas Country Club Rotunda Room from 7:30-9:30 a.m.