SCAT Meeting Minutes for December 5, 2013

Members Present:

Judge Sanchez, Pat Jacobs CASA, Kim Johnson SCR, Jim Craven DCFS, Brittany Hawkins DCFS, Luann Gab DCFS, Sherrie Henderson PWP, Raenesha Green 5th Street Renaissance, Tracy Vinson DCFS, Jill Lautermann DCFS, Arrika Newingham DCFS, LaTasha Roberson LCFS, LaMonica Pruitt AOIC, Sandra Davis DCFS, Erin Predmore FSC, Ali Orr ASA, Shanelle Letcher RYF

1. Brief Discussion on New Cover Sheets for Court Reports
   1. The Cover Sheets are helpful and well-liked.
2. Brittany Hawkins leads discussion on Court Report Template
   1. Latasha suggests putting the docket number on every page, which will help with the scanning process in the clerk’s office
      1. Judge Sanchez explains how the scanning process in the Clerk’s office works.
   2. Erin suggests looking into being able to email reports, realizing there will be some confidentiality issues to address.
   3. Judge Sanchez would like the court reports to include more detail on why visitations between parents and children are missed as well as if make-up visits were held.
      1. Caseworkers also need to be mindful of how that is presented in their reports.
   4. Brittany would like letters from providers verifying parents’ compliance or non-compliance included with the court reports.
      1. Erin brings up the reason caseworkers compile all the information in the reports, is to cut back on paperwork
         1. Judge Sanchez suggests those letters be available to the ASA’s and if an issue arises the ASA’s can present those letters to the Court.
   5. Tracy would like more detail on the child’s placement and their school records.
      1. Judge Sanchez agrees and would like an accurate unbiased depiction on the child’s placement and their school behavior, homework, and grades.
   6. LaTasha recommends including the Adjudication, Disposition, Goal Change, and Right to Place dates under Reason for Involvement.
      1. Prior history with DCFS is okay to include as well if caseworker believes the information is important.
         1. Codes need to be spelled out though!
   7. Separate visitation categories under both the parents and children are good way to show different reactions to the visitations, how each person reacts and how the others respond.
   8. Important to include in reports how the parents are responding to and cooperating with their caseworker.
   9. Erin suggests we try this outline and see how it works for a few months and then receive feedback from the judges and attorneys.
   10. Luann questions what should be included under the Workers Assessment section, more opinion or more fact from the caseworker.
       1. This will be something the supervisors and caseworkers will need to discuss before submitting their reports but do want caseworkers assessment of how case is progressing.
   11. A rating system of parents’ progress may not be appropriate but a prognosis on the parents progress towards the goal is a very important aspect of the reports.
3. Court Report Tracking Progress
   1. Tabled until Deanna can be present
4. Community Education
   1. DCFS Legal interested in setting up a training for Judges on the Juvenile Court Act, DCFS procedures, and explanations of the legal screening process and team meetings.
   2. LaMonica Pruitt from AOIC explains what trainings are available currently for Judges in Juvenile Law.
   3. Judge Sanchez discusses the conference judges are required to attend every two years and how juvenile law is included.
   4. Conferences need to be planned months in advance because it is difficult for judges in family law to cancel cases that have been scheduled months in advance.
   5. Sandra believes disproportionality needs to be addressed.
      1. Addressing or attempting to one step at a time.
         1. Starting with permanency for children
      2. Large group discussion.
5. Next SCAT Meeting is January 23, 2014