

## **MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 3, 2009 CHILD WELFARE NETWORK MEETING**

The following individuals attended the Child Welfare Network (CWN) meeting at the Las Vegas Country Club:

Anne-Marie Abruscato, Mojave Adult Child & Family Service  
Mary Jo Ball, Nevada Community Foundation  
Jennifer Bevacqua, Olive Crest  
Gian Brosco, Esq., Nevada Community Foundation  
Martha Carter, Child Focus  
Chanda Cook, Nevada Public Education Foundation  
Adrienne Cox, Adrienne Cox Consulting  
Daniele Dreitzer, HopeLink  
Sharon Feeney, The Adoption Exchange  
Aubrey Gandi, Child Focus/St. Jude's Ranch  
Jackie Harris, Bridge Counseling  
Nathaniel House, Child Focus  
Toby Hyman, Department of Health and Human Services/Grants Management Unit  
Gard Jameson, Children's Advocacy Alliance  
Flora Jackson, Applied Business Strategies  
Michelle Keiserman, LSW  
Tom Morton, Clark County Department of Family Services  
Cyndy Ortiz Gustafson, Strategic Progress, LLC  
Sheila Parks, Clark County  
Mujahid Ramadan, 100 Black Men, Workforce Connections  
Norton Roitman, Psychiatrist  
Dianne Steel, Clark County Family Court  
TJ Rosenberg, Nevada PEP  
Denise Tanata-Ashby, Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy  
Karen Taycher, Nevada PEP  
Tom Waite, Boys Town  
Stacey Wedding, Professionals in Philanthropy, LLC  
Hilary Westrom, Ritter Charitable Trust  
Richard Yao, Nevada State College

### **Welcome**

Stacey Wedding welcomed everyone, and thanked them for coming. Attendees introduced themselves. Stacey introduced Cyndy Ortiz-Gustafson, the consultant hired to facilitate and coordinate Community We Will, a community engagement campaign to explore the possibilities for children and families in Southern Nevada.

### **Update and Focus Group Session for Community We Will**

Cyndy Ortiz-Gustafson gave an update on progress over the past several months on The *Community We Will* campaign, which has been funded by Annie E. Casey Family Programs. She explained what is unique about Nevada, national best practices, and compared the business case to be developed for *The Community We Will* to the successful Southern Nevada Regional Homeless Plan.

The focus of the *Community We Will* work is based on three key strategies:

- 1) Engaging a broad, diverse and deep coalition of community members in identifying and developing a shared vision for child and family welfare in our community;
- 2) Developing the business case and detailed plan anchored in best practice to achieve that vision; and
- 3) Rallying and mobilizing the resources needed to sustain the work.

The next steps of the project are to conduct focus groups of a minimum of 200 people. To date, Cyndy has facilitated focus groups with 75 people. Cyndy used the framework for her focus groups to facilitate a discussion with the CWN as follows:

**1. What does a strong, successful child network look like?**

- Families helped in their homes
- Prevention services and resources
- Working and connected infrastructure
- Minimal impact on children
- Preparing aging out youth
- Accessible to youth and parents
- Parents acknowledged
- Help families through stressors
- 24 hour warmline to provide support and resources
- Accurate individualized needs assessments
- Clear lines of advocacy
- Exploring disparity among minorities
- System that is helpful and not punitive
- Better integration of theory, approaches and application
- Support existing initiatives/highlight existing assets
- Customized approach for families

**2. What assets do we already have?**

- “Can do” attitude
- Great programs in community
- Wrap-around and family child teams
- Wealth
- Reallocation of funds
- Statewide online resource map (NV Public Education Foundation resource map)
- Shifting paradigm with donors wanting a Return On Investment
- Demographics (we know where ghetto is)
- “Into the World” Life Book
- Kinship Resource Guide
- Existing regional models
- Relatable (due to economic crisis)
- Partners (higher ed, etc.)
- Community is ready for engagement
- Model court facility and access to national info.
- The Lincy Institute
- Many connections with national work (i.e., National League of Cities)
- Statistics

### **3. What is needed besides \$\$\$?**

- Coordinated political will
- Measurable outcomes
- Public awareness and buy-in
- Outrage
- Solutions and high esteem (how to approach community)
- Broader diversity of stakeholders
- Enlightened self interest

Cyndy urged the group to keep informed of this project through the website at [www.thecommunitywewill.org](http://www.thecommunitywewill.org).

### **Priority Setting**

Stacey Wedding led the discussion concerning the 2011 legislative session and the possible special session in October or November. Based on the challenge to actively engage CWN members in the 2009 session, it was acknowledged that the CWN has room for improvement in the 2011 legislative session goals. The group agreed that they should address the goals not met in 2009 as a starting point for this year's priorities.

It was also acknowledged that it appeared that federal funding opportunities were being missed because some basic foundation pieces in Clark County were missing. CWN will invite The Lincy Institute to the table to explore a potential partnership to ensure federal funding is accessed locally.

The group discussed the need for professionals in all child welfare organizations in Clark County to reach out as a whole regarding the possible further cuts to child welfare programs by standing up at public meetings and having their voices heard.

### **Next Steps**

- If legislators are called into special session to discuss funding cuts in the area of child welfare, the CWN shall provide a template letter that CWN members can use to customize to their needs and send to legislators in their district.
- A grassroots effort among clients needs to be initiated.
- A media effort needs to be developed and implemented.

It was agreed that the group should begin moving forward now with the 2011 legislative session, figuring out what resources are necessary in order to be successful in that campaign.

Stacey will e-mail everyone the legislative priorities sheet for review and completion, or attendees may complete it and give to Stacey at the end of today's meeting.

### **Resources needed for 2011 Session**

Stacey Wedding led the discussion to determine what resources the CWN needs to ensure its success in the 2011 legislative session.

CWN members shared the following ideas:

- Someone to monitor the bill(s) constantly
- Educate people on the bill before they testify
- Develop grassroots network of CWN members and clients to testify
- Time, mainly staff time, and a way to identify key people to mobilize
- Talking points for key speakers
- Working with other groups so we provide a regional picture
- The need to break this down into small pieces
- Even greater organization of the effort NOW – someone to manage us
- Avoid last minute requests of CWN members, if possible
- Someone thinking about this every day, while coordinating the group
- Identification of strategic people resources that will pick up the phone and call
- “System” to educate CWN members on an ongoing basis ( i.e., emails and multiple ways to touch)

Stacey summarized the resource needs into three broad areas:

- Staffing
- Education
- Communication

CWN members agreed these three areas were important, and there was group consensus that the education and communication needs could be met if there was a person coordinating all of these efforts. Gard Jameson alluded that there might be someone able to fill that role in the future, and he'll share more with us at a later date.

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

Adriene Cox announced that the Kinship Resource Guide is now available for relatives raising kids. A copy of the guide is attached to these minutes and will appear on the CWN website.

100 Black Men received a United Way grant working with children 0-5 providing education resources.

CWN members confirmed they would like to invite lobbyists to the November meeting and invite the Committee on Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare to the January meeting. If anyone has suggestions about lobbyists that we might include at the November CWN meeting or at future meetings, please send Stacey Wedding the contact information at [swedding@profinphil.com](mailto:swedding@profinphil.com).

### **Next Meetings**

The next two meetings of the CWN will take place at the Las Vegas Country Club on:

Thursday, November 12, 2009 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, January 21, 2010, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.\*

*\*Please note that the CWN meeting was originally scheduled for January 7, 2010, but the Las Vegas Country Club was not available on that day/time, so the meeting has been re-scheduled to Thursday, January 21, 2010, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.*