

Minutes
 Winchester Department of Social Services
 Advisory Board Meeting
 Thursday, November 20, 2014

Members Present: Betty Curtis, Eden Freeman, Rex Marshall; Nathaniel Prezzy, Karen Shipp, Kathy Tagnesi, Patrick Wingfield

Members Absent: Marie Imoh, Les Taylor, Tricia Stiles

Staff/Guests: Amber Dopkowski (WDSS Director), Georjean Coco (WDSS Asst. Director), Cindy Cooper (WDSS Benefits Supervisor), Vicki Whitmore (WDSS Benefits Supervisor), Jaimi Lineberg (WDSS Family Service Supervisor), Sarah Wingfield (WDSS Family Service Supervisor), Nancy Valentine (WDSS Finance Supervisor), Connie Greer (WDSS Fiscal Assistant)

RECAP OF BOARD VOTES:

Motions:

Motion to Adopt Minutes of September 25, 2014 Advisory Board Meeting

Motion to adopt Community Partner Award Nomination Form for 2015

Motion to adjourn Advisory Board Meeting

Action:

1st: Kathy Tagnesi

2nd: Betty Curtis

1st Kathy Tagnesi

2nd Eden Freeman

1st: Kathy Tagnesi

2nd: Betty Curtis

Status:

Approved

Unanimously

Approved

Unanimously

Approved

Unanimously

Item	Discussion	Action
Call to Order/Approval of Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting was called to order at 4:25 pm by Nathaniel Prezzy, Chair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Tagnesi motioned to approve the September 25, 2014 Meeting Minutes; Ms. Curtis seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.
Announcements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virginia Social Services Commissioner Margaret Shultz visited Winchester Department of Social Services on October 21, 2014. The Commissioner's visit went well, and she was impressed with the WDSS team. • Community Action Substance Abuse Summit on November 18 was well attended by community leaders. A local website dedicated to addiction supports and resources has been established at www.RoadToRecovery.info. • Annual Advisory Board training is being scheduled for March 2015 Advisory Board Meeting.
Staff Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Team Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family Services Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Lineberg provided an update of the Family Services Team since the beginning

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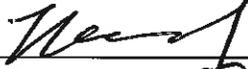
Item	Discussion	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child Protective Services Team ○ Benefits Team ○ Self-Sufficiency Team ○ Administrative/Finance Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Ms. Wingfield reported there were currently thirty-one family assessments. The two Mandated Reporter trainings in October were well-received by the community. Trainings continue with the Winchester police department.</i> ● <i>Ms. Whitmore reported that the Benefits Team has a new employee in the background check process, and is still looking for a part-time human services assistant. Working with VACMS is getting better; aged/blind are coming on to the system soon. The Team is getting caught up with outstanding reviews. The average case load is 325-350 cases/worker. A slight increase in SNAP and TANF benefits is forthcoming.</i> ● <i>Ms. Coco reported that the Self-Sufficiency Team is now fully staffed. The Fraud Investigator is settling in. The team deals with VIEW, childcare, and fraud investigation. There are forty-two VIEW cases and forty-three childcare cases, with thirty cases waitlisted. There will be a slight increase in TANF/VIEW benefits.</i> ● <i>Ms. Valentine reported that interviews are underway for part-time office assistant. A new drop box for clients is being utilized and is very well received by the clients. The front desk staff is receiving additional training on the CommonHelp portal. Ms. Valentine also reported that program budgets are currently being reviewed to determine if additional funds need to be requested from the Commonwealth.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social Services Staffing Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The Family Services Specialist I has started, as well as the Self-</i>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Services Special Accounts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food Pantry ○ Heater Fund ○ McCrory Fund 	<p><i>Sufficiency Specialist. Opening for a part-time Human Services Assistant is posted and interviews underway for a part-time Office Associate.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Current Balance \$142.25</i> • <i>Current Balance \$49.94; 25 heaters available</i> • <i>Current Balance \$198,271.48</i>
Committee Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR Committee Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adoption Awareness month is November 2014. Ms. Lineberg reported that an Adoption Awareness event was not scheduled due to the extremely intense caseload of the last few months. Would like to try next year to plan an event, with volunteers from the Advisory Board to assist with an adoption reception or similar type event.</i>
Old Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Care Holiday Giving • Community Partner Awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ms. Coco specified how local businesses and organizations that work with Social Services provide Christmas gifts and stockings for children in foster care and at-risk families in the community. See attachment for details. Ms. Lineberg will contact interested Board Members to help distribute/collect gifts.</i> • <i>Ms. Dopkowski presented the nomination form for WDSS staff members to nominate the next Community Partner awards for the January Advisory Board meeting. Ms. Tagnesi motioned to accept the nomination form for the Community Partner Award for 2015; Ms. Freeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.</i>
New Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Services Annual Report • Advisory Board Member Term Expirations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ms. Coco reported that she is beginning to compile the report.</i> • <i>Mr. Prezzy, Ms. Curtis, and Ms. Tagnesi were advised that their terms</i>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption Awareness Month • Dispelling the Myths of Social Services 	<p><i>are due to expire March 31, 2015. Each was asked to consider a second term.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ms. Lineberg presented a compelling talk on adoption. See attachment.</i> • <i>Each member of the management team took turns addressing some frequent misconceptions regarding Social Services. See attachment for details.</i>
<p>Date and Location of Next Meeting/Adjournment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next Social Service Advisory Board meeting will be Thursday, January 22, 2015, 4:00 pm in the DSS Board Room. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ms. Tagnesi motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 pm. Ms. Curtis seconded; the motion passed unanimously.</i>



 Signature

 Date

Attachments: Winchester Department of Social Services Advisory Board Meeting November 20, 2014 Presentation
 Community Partner Nomination Form



Announcements

- Commissioner Margaret Schultz's Visit
- Community Action Substance Abuse Summit
- www.RoadToRecovery.info –a community website dedicated to addiction supports and resources
- Annual Advisory Board Training March 2015 Meeting

Management Team Report

- Family Services Team—Jaimi Lineberg
- Child Protective Services Team—Sarah Wingfield
- Benefit Programs Team—Cindy Cooper & Vicki Whitmore
- Self-Sufficiency Team—Georjean Coco
- Administration Team—Nancy Valentine

Social Services Staffing Report

- Family Services Specialist I—Welcome Tavan Mair!
- Self Sufficiency Specialist—Welcome Wendy Welty!
- PT Human Services Assistant—Posted
- PT Office Associate—Interviewing
- Family Service Specialist- in process of posting

Special Accounts

- Social Services Food Pantry- \$142,250.00 balance (cash and grocery cards)
- Social Services Heater Fund--\$49,94 fund balance; 25 heaters available
- McCrory Fund--\$198,271.48

Board Activities

- Public Relations Committee
 - Adoption Awareness Month November 2014—Jaimi Lineberg

Old Business

- Foster Care Holiday Giving—Georjean Coco
- Community Partner Awards—Amber Dopkowski

Holiday Giving

- Timbrook Food and Toy Drive—35 Families
- First Bank—20 children
- Posh Pets—Stockings for 34 children
- Elks Lodge—\$100 Shopping Spree for 10 children
- Froggie's Closet & Piccadilly Brew Pub—Holiday party and Angel Tree
- First Baptist Church—Stockings for all children in foster care

New Business

- Social Services Annual Report Status—Georjean Coco
- Advisory Board Member Term Expirations—Amber Dopkowski
- Adoption Awareness Month Presentation—Jaimi Lineberg
- Dispelling the Myths of Social Services—DSS Management Team

Adoption Awareness 2014

Jaimi Lineberg
Family Services Supervisor

Adoption Awareness Month

November is National Adoption Awareness Month!

Every November, the Commonwealth of Virginia highlights adoption to increase public awareness and participation in the adoption process, particularly for those in permanent foster care. National Adoption Day is celebrated on the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

What is Adoption?

Adoption is the transfer of parental rights from one person or couple to another person or couple. It is a permanent and legal process, which means adoptive parents have the same rights and responsibilities as biological parents.

Why is Adoption Important?

- To reduce the length of time children remain in the foster care system and to achieve permanency.
- Children in foster care often have difficult lives, and the longer they wait for adoption, the higher the possibility of future problems. Virginia continues to work to improve its rate of adoption through outreach programs and family incentives.
- Although there are many types of adoption -- public agency placements, private adoptions, kinship adoptions, and stepparent adoptions -- **one of the most pressing issues facing states today is adoption of children in foster care.** Turbulence and uncertainty during childhood due to an extended stay in foster care can have lasting consequences.

FAQs

Who are the children in foster care?

Many children are placed in foster care because they were abused, neglected, or abandoned by their families. Some children wait alone in foster care, while others wait with siblings. The average age of a child in foster care is 8, but children range from infants to teenagers. Virtually every race, ethnic group, and socioeconomic category is represented.

While in foster care, these children may live temporarily with extended family members, with a foster family, or in a group home. Meanwhile, Family Services Specialists help their birth families. If a family's problems can't be resolved, the agency with custody of the child goes to court and legally terminates parental rights. From that point on, Family Services specialists try to find a safe and loving adoptive family for the child.

FAQ Cont'd

Are there any age restrictions to adopt?

There are no age restrictions in Virginia for individuals wishing to adopt.

I am single. Can I adopt a child?

Yes, a single individual can adopt in Virginia.

FAQs Cont'd

What types of adoption are available?

There are four main types of adoption:

1. Adopting a child from the U.S. foster care system
2. Adopting an infant in the United States
3. Adopting a child from another country
4. Adopting a stepchild or stepchildren

Dave Thomas Foundation

www.DaveThomasFoundation.org

Mission:

- The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption's mission is to dramatically increase the number of adoptions of waiting children from North America's foster care systems.

DTF Values:

- Every child deserves to live in a safe, loving and permanent family.
- Every child is adoptable

Adoption Video- Say Yes!!

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Winchester Social Services Update

- Currently WDSS has no children who are awaiting an adoptive family
- Successfully completed adoptions for 6 children in last 3 months
- Pursuing termination of parental rights for 6 children through the Court process

For More Information

Check out the following websites for further information and to view children that are available for adoption.
Virginia Department of Social Services Website:

• AdoptUSKids, A project of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

Further Information

For further information or questions please contact or request others to contact Winchester Social Services and speak with Jaimi Lineberg, Family Services Supervisor at 540-686-4823 or email

Dispelling the Myths of Social Services

Child Welfare

Myth	Truth
The primary response to child abuse and neglect is to take the children out of their home and place them in foster care.	Removal is rare and only done when the child is in imminent danger and there are no alternatives less drastic.

Child Welfare

Myth	Truth
Only bad people abuse their children.	Not all abusers are intentionally harming their children. Many have been victims of abuse themselves, and don't know any other way to parent. Others may be struggling with mental health issues or substance abuse problems.

Child Welfare

Myth	Truth
Child abuse doesn't happen in "good" families.	Child abuse doesn't only happen in poor families or bad neighborhoods. It crosses all racial, economic, and cultural lines.

Child Welfare

Myth	Truth
Child Protective Services investigates families but has no services to help them.	Ongoing services are available regardless of income. Different funding sources are explored including insurance, Comprehensive Service Act, Block Grant, and Safe and Stable Family funding.

Foster Care

Myth	Truth
Children enter foster care because they committed a crime.	This belief is held by 50% of Americans, but actually, children enter foster care through no fault of their own. They are victims of neglect, abandonment, or abuse.

Foster Care

Myth	Truth
Foster Care is the best alternative.	There are serious risks associated with out of home placement. Children who age out of foster care are more likely to be incarcerated, experience homelessness, mental illness, isolation, and poverty.

Foster Care

Myth	Truth
Placing children in congregate care has little to no impact on children long term.	Research shows that long term outcomes for children placed in congregate care are worse than children placed in a family home setting.

Adult Protective Services

Myth	Truth
Adult Protective Services has the same authority to remove and place adults as does Child Protective Services.	Adult Protective Services does not have the same authorities as Child Protective Services and has an obligation to support the adult's right to self determination.

Benefit Programs

Myth: You can "get rich" on welfare.

Truth: To receive TANF (cash assistance), a household must meet financial and non-financial requirements. The grant is based on household size. Most TANF Households can't even meet their rent with this payment.

Maximum grant amounts are:	
HH1	\$173.00/month
HH2	\$257.00/month
HH3	\$320.00/month
HH4	\$386.00/month
HH5	\$457.00/month

Benefit Programs

Myth	Truth
Undocumented immigrants get benefits from Social Services.	Anyone who is not a US citizen must provide proof of legal presence. When confirmed, you must then meet additional criteria to be determined an eligible immigrant.

Benefit Programs

Myth	Truth
You can't receive benefits if you work.	All benefit programs have income based eligibility. If your household gross income is less than the max. allowed for the household size, you can receive benefits.

Benefit Programs

Myth	Truth
SNAP benefits can be used to purchase things other than food.	SNAP benefits are to purchase any food or food product that is for human consumption. SNAP benefits can be used to buy seeds and plants for a garden that will provide food for the household. It cannot purchase: already prepared hot food, food to eat at store's premises, pet food, soap, paper products, alcohol, tobacco, or to pay a grocery bill/tab for food on credit.

Benefit Programs

Myth	Truth
Any low income household or person can get Medicaid.	Medicaid is an assistance program which pays medical service providers for services rendered to eligible needy individuals. An individual's need for medical care, the state of health, or coverage by private health insurance have no effect on eligibility. In Virginia, you must meet financial and non-financial requirements as well as meet a category or covered group to receive Medicaid.

Benefit Programs

Myth	Truth
If you save all your life, you will have enough to cover nursing home care, should you need it.	The associated costs with Nursing Home or Assisted Living Care is very expensive. You may have to spend all your savings and liquidate resources to pay your cost of Long Term Care.

Social Service Funding

Myth	Truth
Local governments end up paying the entire bill for services provided to the public.	In FY14, admin. expenditures were split at 45.02% Federal, 18.71% State, and 36.27% Local. Service program funding have their own local share, all combined is about 5%. Many benefit programs have no local share—SNAP, TANF, Energy Assistance, Child Care.

Next Meeting

Winchester Social Services Advisory Board

January 22, 2015, 4pm

Winchester Social Services
24 Baker Street
Winchester, VA 22601
Boardroom



Department of Social Services
24 Baker Street
Winchester, VA 22601

Telephone: (540) 662-3807
General FAX: (540) 662-3279
Benefits FAX: (540) 662-3054
Website: www.winchesterva.gov

Advisory Board Community Partner Award Nomination Form

The Community Partner Award is the Winchester Department of Social Services Advisory Board's yearly recognition of an individual, group, organization or agency for their community service and collaboration with the Winchester Department of Social Services to improve the lives of the citizens of the City of Winchester.

Name of Nominee (Individual, Organization, or Agency):

Nominee's Address:

Nominated by: _____ Date: _____

Specific Examples of ways this Nominee has collaborated with the Winchester Department of Social Services to improve the lives of the citizens of the City of Winchester:

Nominations should be delivered to Amber Dopkowski by January 9, 2015.

"Mission: To be a financially sound City providing top quality municipal services while focusing on the customer and engaging our community."