

*Kentucky Citizen Review Panel for
Child Protective Services*



**Annual Report
2011**

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Acronyms contained in this report and their meanings:

<i>CRP</i>	<i>Citizen Review Panels</i>
<i>CFHS</i>	<i>Cabinet for Health and Family Services</i>
<i>CPS</i>	<i>Child Protective Services</i>
<i>SRA</i>	<i>Service Region Administrators</i>
<i>QSR</i>	<i>Quality Service Review</i>
<i>CQA</i>	<i>Continuous Quality Assessment</i>
<i>DCBS</i>	<i>Department for Community Based Services</i>
<i>SOP</i>	<i>Standards of Practice</i>
<i>RNC</i>	<i>Recruitment and Certification</i>
<i>PIP</i>	<i>Program Improvement Plan</i>

Web sites:

Kentucky Citizen Review Panels: <http://www.uky.edu/SocialWork/trc/kycrp.htm>

National Citizen Review Panel Virtual Community: www.uky.edu/socialwork/crp

**** Recommendations are in BOLD**

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for taking a moment to read the 2011 Annual report of Kentucky's Citizen Review Panels. The Panels were formed in 1999 as a result of a federal amendment to the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act. There are over 50 Panel members serving on two regional and one statewide panel, representing hundreds of volunteer hours. The Panels' federal mandate is to evaluate the policies and practices of the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) and to make recommendations for the improvement of child protective services. In turn, the Cabinet is required to respond to the Panels' recommendations—in writing—within three months. This report and the recommendations and responses from previous years can be accessed electronically at <http://www.uky.edu/SocialWork/trc/kycrp.htm>

I would like to emphasize that this report was written by the Citizen Review Panel members themselves. Within their recommendations and rationale, I hope you will see their deep commitment to assisting DCBS in better protecting Kentucky's children. The Panels are part of a larger network of Panels throughout the nation and this national network may be viewed at www.uky.edu/socialwork/crp

I would like to especially thank the capable Chairpersons for each Panel who worked tirelessly to lead their teams in this difficult work: Charlie Baker, Joanna Rodes, and Reverend Vicki Garber. Thanks also to our Frankfort-based liaison, Gayle Yocum, for her many years of supporting the Panels. Finally, thank you to Sandi Kiteck, my graduate student who worked tireless hours on any task that was assigned her, including tracking down what happened to CRP recommendations for the past three years.

This is a public report and may be shared with anyone. We hope that it will become part of the larger conversation about each of our responsibilities in protecting our state's children and serving families. Thank YOU for the many ways that you do this every day.

Blake L. Jones, Ph.D., KY CRP Program Coordinator

"If we don't stand up for children, then we don't stand for much."

~ Marian Wright Edelman

Statewide Citizen Review Panel



Reverend Vicki Garber, Chair

*Gayle Yocum**

Melissa Bowman

Ken Schwendeman

Angela Harris

Kevin Kavanaugh, MD

Kathy Sykes

Geri Willis

Rhonda Simms

Rev. David Jones

Verne Webb

Lisa Gabbard

Kate Hackett

Rhonda Simms

Telly McGaha

**DCBS Liaison*

Introduction:

The Statewide Panel had two major areas of concern this year. One team studied and made recommendations in the area of Case Planning, specifically Family Team Meetings. The second team is engaged in an ongoing study of Child Placement in cases involving the court. This group makes no recommendations this year but has committed to a second year of study and formulation of suggestions and solutions. The Case Planning team sought to analyze the effectiveness of the current model of Family Team Meetings. The desired outcome of the Child Placement team study was to determine the

issues surrounding the perceived gap in services between those adjudicated children whom the courts have placed in the care of the Department of Juvenile Justice and those receiving services from DCBS. In addition to these two areas of study and discernment, in the fall of 2010 the Statewide Panel also helped to sponsor a working conference entitled “What Works in Child Welfare”. The conference was a day- long event which offered opportunities for Continuing Education Units on timely topics provided by quality presenters. The conference was intended for workers and others and also provided question and answer time with Panel members concerning issues pertinent to the work of the panels from the perspective of those who work in the system.

Activities and conclusions:

The Statewide Citizen Review Panel met regularly throughout the year to both work in our teams and to share information between the teams. In addition, each working team, under the direction of their team leader, held numerous phone conversations and face to face meetings.

The Case Planning Team met regularly via teleconference and email. Work included:

- Working from areas of the PIP (shown in exhibit #1), the Case Planning team reviewed the CFSR & PIP.
- The Case Planning team examined the case planning process in surrounding states including Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee, and West Virginia.
- The Case Planning team reviewed a sampling of case plans from one urban and one rural region of our state.
- The Case Planning team held discussions with our CRP liaison, Gayle Yocum, regarding the Family Team Meeting process. The liaison also kept the Case Planning Team updated on DCBS PIP work group with regards to case planning.

The Child Placement Improvement Project (Judicial Group):

This group also met regularly via teleconference and email. In addition, they gathered with a number of stakeholders from DCBS and the Court to begin to gather data to determine the scope and depth of the problem and to develop solutions.

They gathered relevant policy documents and have been working to determine the issues surrounding the perceived gap in services between those adjudicated children whom the courts have placed in the care of the Department of Juvenile Justice and those receiving services from DCBS.

- When a child does not fit into DCBS or DJJ, that is, when they are not committed or probated to an agency, they are probated to the court. The consensus of the stakeholders is that this is where case management fails.

The Case Planning Team Recommends the Following:

- That the Cabinet explore/consider recruiting and training facilitators for all Family Team Meetings to ensure consistency in the case planning process throughout the regions of the state.
- That the Cabinet re-train workers on actively engaging community partners/resources in the Family Team Meeting process.
- That the Cabinet explore possibilities for ways in which the actual case plan (hard copy) can be simplified so that workers don't have to spend so much time on inputting it in TWIST.
- That the Cabinet actively attempt to involve community partners in the Family Team Meeting.
- That the Cabinet regularly and systematically invite area schools to become active members of the Family Team Meeting.

- That the Cabinet have a specific area on the goal list for “Community” which includes the child’s school and academic goals with input of teachers.

Child Placement Improvement Project Recommendations:

- The Team will return to their agencies and continue to gather specific information and data, in particular to determine the number of children in the gap.
- The project will continue into next year and make recommendations for closing the gap.
- If legislative change is required to close the gap, the team is committed to follow up with the legislature.

Miscellaneous Recommendations

- That in order to foster deeper understanding and more effective communications, the chairpersons of the CRPs continue to meet regularly with the leadership of the Cabinet.
- That in order to foster deeper understanding and more effective communications, the CRPs continue to sponsor and host an annual conference for workers in the system with Continuing Education Units available.
- That in order for the work of the Panels to more fully reflect a balance across the state, the individual panels continue to nurture the relationships between the panels through such activities as meetings of the chairpersons and all-panel gatherings.

Exhibit #1/Case Planning Team

<p>1A.3 - Improve the quality and frequency of family team meetings</p>	<p>1A.3.2 Develop and implement regionally specific plans to improve the quality and frequency of family team meetings. EOC: Action plan Family engagement work group worked with Division of Service Regions to provide technical assistance to the regions. Each region will submit a plan designed with their particular barrier and resource in mind.</p>
<p>1C.1 – Evaluate the quality of case planning process</p>	<p>1C.1.2 Revise case planning practice based on recommendations of workgroup and case review mapping (action step 1B.1.1). EOC: SOP revised The Family Engagement and Permanency Planning workgroup worked together and are putting together the new for case planning and concurrent planning.</p>

Judicial Group Working Chart

<p>Status Offenders Committed to the CHFS/DCBS: Committed to DCBS are an unreasonable amount of children with status offenses, children’s whose safety is not at risk nor are they at risk of removal.</p>				
	Plans	Responsibility	Timeline	Notes
<p>1.</p>	<p>Data Request: number of children with status offense committed to the Cabinet by county without substantiation: by age, by gender, by race, by sibling, by previous CAN report, by previous CAN substantiation, by previous CAN placement, by placement type.</p>	<p>Jim Grace and Gayle Yocum</p>	<p>12/31/10</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>Engage departments of Juvenile Justice, Education, Public Advocacy, and AOC (with DCBS) to gather data of youth ‘mis-placed’ in their services, i.e., those children not meeting the</p>	<p>Ken is gathering partners from each of the named departments.</p>	<p>11/2010 to 12/2010</p>	<p>This would be preliminary discussions, and then full meetings with the data available from each partner.</p>

	criteria for their services.			
3.	Request from DCBS regions (the field), the last 10 cases in their region (9 regions total, 90 cases), cases of children inappropriately adjudicated to the Cabinet (child abuse/neglect not substantiated).	Gayle Yocum	1/31/2011	We need to determine the specifics needed for this, otherwise we could end up with huge files, and very little direction. For instance, of children adjudicated to DCBS, their age, gender, race, county of child; adjudication reason; court reports (letters from workers, forms from courts); last 2 CQAs (redacted, and if available)
4.	Create a review tool that builds toward an understanding of this qualitative review – to identify conditions that trigger this, i.e., county, referral source, court type (family/district), etc.)		1/31/2011	I could try this, but my guess is DCBS has a tool that would help us begin this process
5.	Conduct a review of the 10 cases/region of children inappropriately adjudicated (child abuse/neglect not substantiated)	CRP, first; then MDW	2/28/2011	
6.	Review DCBS data, as well as the data from above departments.	CRP workgroup and MDW	4/30/2011	

Jefferson Citizen Review Panel



Charlie Baker, Chair

*Laura Johnson**

Bryan Fantoni

Yvonne Woods

Shari Christoff

Jay Miller

Phillis Thompson

Tina Foster

Barbara Carter

Deonya Muhammad

Cynthia Curtsinger

Rebecca Johnson

Crystal Collins-Camargo

Lori Ackerson

**DCBS Liaison*

Preamble:

Initially, our Panel struggled and faced some challenges:

1. Our attendance was not as consistent as needed to maintain focus.
2. We continued to be concerned regarding the value the Department placed on our Recommendations.
3. Given the severity of the budget situation, focusing our attention solely on front-line concerns seemed to limit the potential of a Panel with many members who had extensive experience with the system.

During the course of the year, we developed some insights that could be of ongoing benefit to future Panels:

4. The Minutes should reflect both those members in attendance AND those members absent. Consideration should be given to a policy of removing Panel members who fail to attend three consecutive meetings.
5. The work of Ms. Yocum to compile a thorough review of how the Department had responded to our Recommendations over time proved to be very helpful. Consideration should be given to updating this each year and including it in orientation of new Panel members.
6. In addition to a Recommendation relating to client contact, this year the Panel focused attention on the Supervisory and Management levels of the Department. Consideration should be given to continue this dual focus in future years.
7. The Panel should give some attention to a redesign of the Orientation of new Panel members, possibly even extending to potential members. Since Dr. Jones already has considerable responsibility, consideration should be given to involving current Panel members for assistance in this effort.

Recommendations

- ***The Panel recommends that a rotating team of Supervisors meet with Intake on a Quarterly basis to discuss and improve criteria and data collected via hot line calls***

In light of the experience of furlough days and declining resource, the Panel requests a clarification from Central Office regarding the means of calculation of “caseload size” as this is reported to the Legislature and the Governor.

The Panel believes that any such calculation should consider vacancies, new worker training and approved leave. This would reinforce our belief that Teams who conduct CPS Investigations, like the State Police, should be exempt from furloughs. AND that every effort must be made to provide these Teams with adequate resources and sufficient manpower to protect Kentucky's vulnerable children. Members of every Panel could be politically and personally helpful in advocating for these Teams if given this information.

Parent Orientation Group

- *Based on DCBS' focus on family engagement due to the most recent CFSR findings and the statewide and Jefferson County Program Improvement Plans, the panel reviewed the Parent Orientation Program in Jefferson County within the context of other similar programs offered nationally ranging from an online video to a five-day educational session. Clearly this is an initiative requiring relatively minimal resources and significant potential impact for engaging families.*

a) Adequately staff facilitation of this program, while continuing to integrate it with similar initiatives such as the Parent Advocate Program.

b) Engage community partners such as Family Resource Centers and Neighborhood Places to market the program and serve as locations for the orientation to be held so that implementation is closer to the community and more likely to promote family attendance.

b) Revise the brochure ensuring that the language is at a level that is understandable to the majority of family members and emphasizes more effectively the true benefit of participating in this brief educational session.

c) In addition to distributing the brochure with the letter regarding investigation findings which may negatively impact families' likelihood of considering it, make marketing materials available in other, less-intimidating locations to encourage families to take advantage of the opportunity, such as FRYSCs, Neighborhood Places and other community agencies, in the offices of attorneys typically appointed to represent parents, etc.

Southern Bluegrass Citizen Review Panel



Joanna Rodes, Chairperson

Jennifer Brown

Carol Stiles

Cynthia Kay

Joellen Banks

** DCBS Liaisons*

*Mary Carpenter**

Becky Crawford

Angela Cleveland-Holecek

Larry Johnson

Introduction

This year's topic for the Southern Bluegrass CRP related to the question of *what supports are available to in-home cases?* At the conclusion of our meetings for the year, the panel made the decision that the information gathered provided a strong foundation for further work on this project. For this reason, this report outlines observations and questions for discussion rather than specific recommendations to the Department. We look forward to our August retreat, which will give us an opportunity to decide about the possibility of devoting another year to this topic

Activities

In order to familiarize ourselves with in-home cases and the many programs and resources available to these families, the panel reviewed program criteria and descriptions of in-home services, learned from guest speakers with expertise in Kinship Care, Family Team Meetings, Community Collaboration for Children and Family Preservation. Finally, the panel conducted two focus groups – one made up of 4 CPS workers and the other with 4 CPS supervisors.

Both focus groups were conducted by surveying workers and supervisors about their knowledge of supports available to their in-home cases, as well as their overall experience with in-home programs, such as Family Preservation.

Observations

The panel reviewed feedback from the focus groups and made the following observations based on common themes in responses.

- Supports
 - Families who have supports (school connections, mental health provider connections, etc.) seems to have the best outcomes.
- Collaboration
 - Working effectively with community partners is important. CPS workers and supervisors commented that collaboration is often difficult given hectic work schedules. Family Team Meetings are not consistently and effectively utilized for these cases. Existing supports (school counselors, therapists, etc.) for these families are often not made aware of an open DCBS case and/or plan.

- In-Home Services
 - In-home programs are helpful in supporting families and assisting the CPS worker in managing cases. In-home programs sometimes have waiting lists, Medicaid requirements or restrictions on serving these cases (domestic violence, substance abuse in the home, etc.), creating barriers for families. The universal referral form has simplified the referral process.
- Communication
 - Frequent contact between the in-home provider and CPS worker is important in effectively managing cases. CPS workers commented that weekly contact from in-home service professionals produces valuable information and creates an effective and collaborative relationship between providers. Email is likely the most feasible way to communicate at this frequency and works well for CPS workers. Not all in-home providers regularly update the CPS workers, which is problematic.

Future Questions

The panel and DCBS may consider the following questions as we move forward with policy review and practice.

- How do we address the ongoing problem of effective collaboration and communication?
- How can CPS workers engage community partners and supports at the start of a case?
- How effective are Family Team Meetings in strengthening both supports and collaborative relationships for in-home cases?
- What are the CPS workers' perceptions about the effects of their own influence/interventions upon the outcome of in-home cases?