



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES
COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE
COA Accredited Agency**

Matthew G Bevin
Governor

275 E. Main Street, 3W-A
Frankfort, Kentucky 40621
502-564-3703
502-564-6907 (Fax)
www.chfs.ky.gov

Vickie Yates Brown Glisson
Secretary

September 30, 2017

David Byerman, Director
Legislative Research
Commission 700 Capital
Avenue, Room 300
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Mr. Byerman:

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) has enclosed its response to the most recent Kentucky Citizen Review Panel's annual report.

The Kentucky's Citizen Review Panel is a volunteer organization. Its existence and annual report are components of an eligibility requirement for Kentucky's continued receipt of federal funds under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which was most recently reauthorized in 2010. CAPTA also requires the state child welfare agency to submit a public response. Both the annual report and response are submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Gretchen Marshall, Assistant Director for the DCBS, Division of Protection and Permanency, at 502-564-6852.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Adria Johnson".

Adria Johnson
Commissioner

Enclosure





**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES
COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE
COA Accredited Agency**

Matthew G Bevin
Governor

275 E. Main Street, 3W-A
Frankfort, Kentucky 40621
502-564-3703
502-564-6907 (Fax)
www.chfs.ky.gov

Vickie Yates Brown Glisson
Secretary

September 30, 2017

The Honorable Matthew G. Bevin
700 Capitol Avenue, Suite 100
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Governor Bevin:

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) has enclosed its response to the most recent Kentucky Citizen Review Panel's annual report.

The Kentucky's Citizen Review Panel is a volunteer organization. Its existence and annual report are components of an eligibility requirement for Kentucky's continued receipt of federal funds under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which was most recently reauthorized in 2010. CAPTA also requires the state child welfare agency to submit a public response. Both the annual report and response are submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Gretchen Marshall, Assistant Director for the DCBS, Division of Protection and Permanency, at 502-564-6852.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Adria Johnson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Adria Johnson
Commissioner

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

RESPONSE TO CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL ANNUAL
REPORT

SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
SUMMARY of KENTUCKY CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS.....	3
RESPONSE to PANEL ACTIVITIES FOR 2017	3
SUMMARY of the JEFFERSON PANEL	5
RESPONSES to the JEFFERSON PANEL	5
SUMMARY of the SOUTHERN BLUEGRASS	7
RESPONSES to the SOUTHERN BLUEGRASS.....	7
RESPONSES to the STATEWIDE PANEL	8

INTRODUCTION

As required the by Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, Kentucky maintains three citizen review panels (CRP), comprised of volunteers from around the state, who review aspects of the state's child welfare system and submit an annual report to the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Their report is also submitted to the Commissioner of the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) and the state's Legislative Research Commission (LRC). The report is submitted in July each year.

At this time, DCBS is submitting its required response to LRC. A copy of this response will also be provided to the ACF as part of its next Title IV-B annual report.

SUMMARY of KENTUCKY CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS

In state fiscal year (SFY) 2017, the University of Kentucky Training Resource Center (UK TRC) convened a small CRP advisory group to develop a plan for a Kentucky CRP expansion. A feasibility study was conducted in the winter of 2016-2017, which resulted in the development of a proposal to embark upon expansion beginning in fiscal year 2017-2018. This expansion will include redeveloping CRPs in Jefferson, Southern Bluegrass, Two Rivers, Eastern Mountain, and The Lakes Service Regions.

During the expansion, UK TRC and DCBS will continue to operate in coordination as set forth by the recently updated signed memorandum of understanding (MOU).

This year CRP chairs were invited to the Children and Families Service Review (CFSR) debrief at Kentucky State University in February 2017. Chairs were able to hear first-hand the results of Kentucky's federal review, as well as participate in breakout sessions that identified themes for potential performance improvement planning (PIP). Participation provided chairs with the unique opportunity to learn how Kentucky performed during the review and areas of needed improvement. This allowed chairs to gain insightful information that guided their panels' work for the remainder of the year as well as future project planning.

RESPONSE to PANEL ACTIVITIES FOR SFY 2017

The expansion of Citizen Review Panels to three additional regions and restructuring Jefferson and Southern Bluegrass better ensure equal and regionally relevant representation. Each region is unique and faces individual challenges. While they may share common themes of poverty, lack of education, domestic violence, and substance abuse; community assets and resources can differ greatly. A local panel can serve with individualized specialty. The cabinet wants to ensure that panel member's time and efforts given to serving are relevant and respectful to participants.

DCBS is committed to fulfilling its obligations set forth in the MOU and supporting the panels and their mission.

SUMMARY of the JEFFERSON PANEL

In SFY 2017, the Jefferson identified two areas of focus: establishment of a CRP composed of local college students and exploration of the court process. Shortly after choosing to explore court processes, CRP members learned that the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) was in the midst of a review of Jefferson County Family Courts. Jefferson CRP members offered their assistance and support to AOC in their efforts; however, AOC did not reach out to panel members. At the time of the annual report, the status of AOC's review is unknown to the panel.

The Jefferson CRP worked to establish a student CRP this fiscal year. Bachelor and Master level students from Spalding University, the University of Louisville, Indiana University–Southeast, and Bellarmine were recruited for membership. Their areas of study included, but were not limited to, schools of social work, psychology, medicine, and law. After submitting applications and attending an informational session on March 30, 2017, the student CRP was established. They continued to meet monthly throughout the end of the fiscal year orientating themselves to the process and purpose of CRPs.

After a quarterly meeting with Commissioner Johnson during which worker appreciation was discussed, the panel decided to assemble "goody bags". The bags contained items, limited to less than \$10 in value, that were delivered to frontline workers in Jefferson County to show that their efforts are appreciated.

RESPONSES to the JEFFERSON PANEL

The agency is appreciative that Jefferson worked diligently to pursue areas of need that add value to the agency. The establishment of a student CRP and distributing worker appreciation bags are two activities that can add value to workers and the agency. The agency appreciates the creative development in forming a student CRP, as the youth voice is not one that garners the most attention. The agency would like to see a former foster youth or youth on extended commitment as a member of this panel. The focus of the panel's work and research can be accentuated with their participation. The agency looks forward to the work of the student CRP and the panel's perspective on child protective services.

As stated during quarterly meetings, worker retention and engagement is one of the many priorities of the agency. The agency appreciates the effort of the Jefferson panel in compiling "goody bags" and distributing them among frontline staff in the region.

Collaborating with AOC to examine the court process in Jefferson family court is a relevant effort and would have been an effective use of the CRP members' time. The court system is large and complex, and the agency would encourage the panel to continue to look at ways to reach out to AOC in an attempt to

gather a better understanding of the issues in Jefferson County family court. The court process is a tantamount process in the life of a CPS case, especially when children are in out-of-home care. Working together with the courts to achieve permanency in a timely manner continues to be priority and tenet of the agency.

SUMMARY of the SOUTHERN BLUEGRASS

In SFY 2017, the Southern Bluegrass panel participated in many training sessions, had representation on a local kinship care workgroup, and continued to present their mini conference, "Conversation on Collaboration". This year the conversation concerned trauma-informed care. Presenters included a trauma-informed therapist, school administrator from the Providence School, and a youth on extended commitment. The presenters allowed the audience to look at how trauma affects individuals and families, and how we can alter our reactions and interactions to be conscious of trauma to reduce further traumatization and foster success. As in previous years, regional nominations were accepted, and certificates were presented to workers who were recognized for their commitment to the families they serve. Twenty-five workers were nominated, and five were chosen to receive awards, which consisted of gift cards to Chik Fil A and a hanging flower basket.

The chair of Southern Bluegrass also participated in the CFSR debrief and PIP breakout sessions. She utilized this information to guide the work of the panel as well as future goal planning.

RESPONSES to the SOUTHERN BLUEGRASS

The agency is pleased to learn panel members were able to attend and participate in the CFSR debrief and hopes meaningful opportunities are identified for panel members' engagement in the year to come.

DCBS continues to hear accolades about the "Conversation on Collaboration" and is glad that the panel continues to present this conference. Identifying regionally relevant topics with local professionals provides attendees an opportunity to network and learn new approaches to service delivery.

As stated in the previous section, worker appreciation and recognition are meaningful activities, and the agency is glad such focuses continue. In exit interviews of staff leaving the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, recognition and appreciation are regularly identified as lacking. The efforts of the panel to recognize a job well done help address the deficit. The issues facing the agency's workforce are complex. CRP is a partner in that effort, and the partnership is greatly appreciated not only by the staff recognized, but also by DCBS leadership.

SUMMARY of the STATEWIDE PANEL

The panel began this year's work by asking if panel members were capable of following the federally mandated statute of evaluating a 120 county-wide system that affects tens of thousands of children each year. Panel members discussed that tackling a few topics each year at any depth would fully expend the panel's resources. They also recognized that they are tasked with a broader examination than just a few issues and are calling for an evaluation as well. This year the statewide panel defined the issue as follows: Is the Statewide Citizen Review Panel able to handle the mandate imposed upon it – a more extensive evaluation of the child protection system – or is this task an “unfunded mandate” – a task too big for the panel to handle?

Planning for expansion of CRPs to additional regions in the next year, with a goal of regional representation in each of the nine DCBS service regions, was identified as a starting point in meeting the mandate set forth.

The statewide panel also utilized part of the 2016 statewide worker survey, surrounding worker recognition and retention in planning future activities and the annual “What Works in Child Welfare”. Worker recognition was a primary focus of the conference. Understanding the importance of recognition the panel secured Commissioner Johnson's presence and willingness to read nominations and present workers with their certificates and gift bags. This year the panel asked for nominations from all nine-DCBS service regions; however, only seven regions submitted nominations. One worker from those seven regions was chosen to receive an award for their service to their families. The importance of retention and morale within protection and permanency, educational neglect and truancy prevention and family engagement, children exposed to batterers, evidence-based strategies to empower families, and West Virginia's school notification program by law enforcement, “Handle with Care”, were the topics presented during the one-day conference.

RESPONSES to the STATEWIDE PANEL

DCBS appreciates the statewide panel's efforts to ensure equal representation across the state by expanding CRPs and to meet the federal mandate to evaluate the child welfare system. The expansion of CRPs to all nine-service regions must include key stakeholders in each community. DCBS looks forward to this growth and continuing to collaborate with CRP to ensure its mandate is met.

DCBS appreciates the panel's commitment to continuing the “What Works in Child Welfare” conference and presenting topics that are relevant to its current workforce.