



Ending Child Abuse and Neglect.

CITIZEN CONNECTIONS

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STATE UPDATES

Alaska

Alaska CRP just completed its annual fall meeting for FY2017, which focused on identifying the goals and calendar for the year. The panel identified four goals for FY2017:

1. **Continue to explore Tribal-State relationships.** Alaska is home to more than 220 individual, Federally recognized tribes. Relationships between tribes and the state CPS system have evolved into multi-party, collaborative relationships over the last two decades. Despite many continuing challenges, much progress has been made. Alaska CRP is working towards identifying and helping to resolve some of the outstanding challenges.
2. **Continue to examine the new Administrative Review Process.** Last year, the panel examined this new process but stopped short of clearly identifying the major differences and assessing the potential impact. We intend to complete that task this year.

“If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.”

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MAYA ANGELOU



3. **Review the CPS grievance process.** The Alaska CPS agency instituted a new grievance process in 2013/2014. Over the years since, various constituents have brought forth concerns about the new process. The panel will be reviewing the policy and its implementation.
4. **Prepare a flowchart of the Initial Assessment (IA) process.** IA is the second step in a CPS case, immediately following the screening decision. Having a detailed but understandable flowchart of the process is invaluable for Alaska CRP's review of CPS policies. We successfully prepared a flowchart of the screening process two years ago. We attempted to complete draft flowcharts for all of the other steps last year. This year, the panel will work with senior CPS managers to refine and finalize the flowchart for IA. This is a useful tool for both the panel's review activities, and for public outreach in raising public awareness of CPS policies and practices.

In addition, the work plan identifies a detailed calendar for the year. It includes five site visits, a visit to the Alaska legislature, and hosting the CRP national conference.

Arizona

2016 has been an eventful year for the Arizona Citizen Review Panel (CRP) Program. CRP activities were concentrated on organizing and preparing for the 15th Annual CRP Conference the first half of the year. The 2016 conference was hosted by the Arizona CRPs and the Center for Child Well-Being (CCWB) at Arizona State University, and was held in Glendale, Arizona on June 7-9, 2016. Arizona had record-breaking heat, but this did not impede the success of the conference or the time shared with our CRP friends and child welfare partners! There were approximately 160 attendees and 27 states represented. The Arizona CRP and CCWB want to acknowledge and thank each person who contributed and participated in this event!

In addition to hosting the national conference, the three regional CRPs have continued to develop and strengthen their new infrastructure and evaluation process, which resulted from their strategic planning efforts in 2015. The initial changes included the creation of a vision, mission and values statement. They

“The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope.”

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BARACK OBAMA



also created a logo, tag line, and by-laws to project a more unified and independent identity. In addition, all three regional CRPs recruited Chairpersons to lead and support the new and developing structure.

The CRPs also decided to focus on a specific subject and assess their chosen topic over a longer period of time. This will give them a better understanding of the issue and strengthen their recommendations and impact. Topics of focus include:

- ▶ Parent/child visitation for children (0-3 yrs.) in the foster care system and its impact on child well-being (Southern CRP)
- ▶ Substance Exposed Newborns (Northern CRP)
- ▶ Hotline reports and investigations involving medical neglect or medically complex children (Central CRP)

Finally, ongoing reforms within the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) over the last three years have revealed the need to review and clarify the roles, responsibilities, and purpose of the CRP, CRP Program Coordinator, CRP/DCS Liaison, and other operations. The Chairpersons and DCS Administration participated in a scheduled meeting and determined that it would be beneficial to continue to meet quarterly and strengthen, define, and establish procedures to enhance collaboration and support the CRPs in fulfilling their mandate.



“Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.”

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AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Georgia

Georgia’s CAPTA Panels recently held their annual all panel retreat. More than 45 members were in attendance. The annual event provides an opportunity for learning, networking, and inter- and intra-panel planning for the coming year. This year’s retreat started with a refresher session on CAPTA to help focus the rest of day’s activities on the CAPTA mandate for CRPs. Three of Georgia’s panel members who attended the national CRP conference in Phoenix then shared highlights from their experience with members at the retreat. Chair of the CJA Task Force, who was able to attend the annual CJA grantee meeting in Washington, DC, in August, also provided an overview of her experience. All reported gaining new insights into some of the successes achieved or challenges faced by panels in other states. Each were able identify new opportunities to explore or potential collaborations to pursue.

Additional general sessions at the retreat included the creation of a template for developing panel recommendations and providing input on the development of a new state CAPTA plan.

Although each of the three panels had begun their planning for the coming year during the summer as it wrapped up its current year activities, time was set aside at the retreat to finalize action steps, assign tasks, develop a timeline, and set deadlines. This will include:

- ▶ Evaluating current foster parent training
- ▶ Examining policy and practice on foster and relative caregiver supports
- ▶ Improving the identification of neglect in investigations
- ▶ Developing mandated reporter training requirements, training approval processes, and trainer qualifications
- ▶ Improving the investigation at the scene of a child fatality
- ▶ Evaluating the impact of substance and alcohol abuse on child fatalities

CAPTA Panel members have also been invited to participate in the development of the state’s new CAPTA Plan.

Idaho

Citizen Review Panels have been very busy in the state of Idaho. Members have been involved in activities such as: Permanency Placement Selections; Case Reviews; reviewing data around the immunization of children in foster care; researching the use of psychotropic medications among youth in care; researching the fidelity of our background check system in Idaho; attending the Annual Foster Care Conference held on one of the Reservations; visiting behavioral health agencies to better understand how they interact with child welfare and to identify opportunities for collaboration; and reviewing the Department's efforts to respond to and adhere to the recent legislative changes. Finally, panel members have been educating themselves on changes around lowering the age of youth served in the Independent Living Program from 15 to 14, learning about foster parent options for PRIDE, focusing on how to best recruit and retain quality foster parents, and educating themselves on the Foster Care Legislative Interim Committee and the Office of Performance Evaluation study that is currently underway. The CRP also recommended that a multidisciplinary team (i.e., including representatives from MDHHS, schools, court, mental health, and public health) study repeated neglect cases (typically related to hygiene and safety concerns in the home) to determine what underlying circumstances may exist and explore alternatives for serving these families.

Kansas

Kansas CRP continues to be active in its work to prevent child abuse/neglect. The panel has recently renewed and increased grant amounts for four grantees to continue and enhance the work they do statewide. The grantees are: (1) Finding Words Kansas; (2) the CASA program; (3) Child Advocacy Centers; and (4) Kansas Children's Service League. Each of these agencies has a proven track record of working with Kansas children and other agencies to prevent child abuse and to improve the child welfare system in the state. The panel is also taking an active role in the PIP process as Kansas works to finalize this process.

Kentucky

In August, the Kentucky Citizen Review Panels participated in their annual retreat, a one-day event held at Laws Lodge on the grounds of the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. During the retreat, each panel completed its strategic planning and scheduled upcoming meetings for the fiscal year. They also received Advocacy 101 training from Kentucky Youth Advocates. During this event, new and current panel members were oriented on the history and purpose of Citizen Review Panels as well as the importance of confidentiality. Each member present reviewed and signed the revised Confidentiality Agreement.



“Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve... You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



“A noble leader answers not to the trumpet calls of self-promotion, but to the hushed whispers of necessity.”

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MOLLIE MARTI

New Jersey

The New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect (NJTFCAN), in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF), hosted a statewide multidisciplinary Skill Building Conference on September 9, 2016. This sold-out event furthered the knowledge and development of more than 200 child protection professionals, including professionals in child welfare, law enforcement, social work, education, daycare, mental health, medicine, juvenile

justice, domestic violence, law guardians, and court appointed special advocate volunteers.

In accordance with DCF and NJTFCAN’s 2014-2017 Three Year Assessment, educating professionals and the public about child maltreatment is essential to improving investigation, evaluation, and treatment outcomes. NJTFCAN’s Protection Committee developed the conference content to permit a comprehensive examination and discussion of child abuse images, such as sexually exploitive images or child pornography, in four topic sessions:

- ▶ **Session One - *Child Abuse Images and the Law***
Presenters:
Special Agent Kevin Matthews, FBI
Assistant U.S. Attorney Danielle Walsman
- ▶ **Session Two - *The Path of Child Sex Abuse Images: From Victimization to Restitution***
Presenter:
Shelley Allwang, Supervisor, CVIP, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
- ▶ **Session Three – *What Child Welfare Professionals Need to Know and Do***
Presenter:
Dr. Sharon Cooper, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Department of Pediatrics
- ▶ **Session Four – Panel: *Safe Guarding Kids: What You Need to Know and Do***
Moderator:
Dr. Sharon Cooper, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Department of Pediatrics
Presenters:
Special Agent Kevin Matthews, FBI
Shelley Allwang, Supervisor, CVIP, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

For more information on the 2016 Skill Building Conference, contact NJTFCAN at DCF.NJTASKFORCECHILDABUSE@dcf.state.nj.us.

Oregon

Oregon's CRPs have moved into two new counties for the 2016-17 year, while continuing to work in Multnomah, Oregon's most populous county. Since 2012, the CRPs have been in eight different counties across Oregon. This year, two counties are focusing

on improving early engagement with families involved in the child welfare system. Early engagement with families is a critical component of reducing the length of time that children spend in foster care. The CRPs are conducting a global assessment of strengths and needs in those counties to identify the strategies and services that will lead to earlier engagement by families and shorter lengths of time spent in care for children. The third CRP in Multnomah County is focused on improving the comprehensive transition planning for older youth in foster care. The current comprehensive transition planning for youth age 14 and older in foster care is not leading to successful adulthood for the majority of youth aging out of the foster care system. By conducting an in-depth analysis of current comprehensive transition plans and pinpointing ways in which those plans can be improved, the CRP will make recommendations that will improve outcomes for youth who age out of care.

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania CRPs held their All Panel Meeting on October 11-12 to discuss their work and recommendations for the year then report out to the Office of Children, Youth, and Families (OCYF). The panels also heard from OCYF on what is currently happening within child welfare in Pennsylvania and received an update on the status of their previous recommendations. County children and youth administrators from the panels' regions joined staff from OCYF in providing feedback for the panels to consider prior to finalizing their recommendations. The panels will wrap up their work with a final meeting for each panel in November, and then will submit their reports and recommendations to OCYF for review in December. The panels plan to continue their current work around issues related to older youth and caseworker retention and recruitment into next year.

Washington

Washington's statewide citizen review panel is currently working on several distinct areas and on general day-to-day issues that arise throughout the year. Currently, the focus of the work has been concentrated on: recruitment and retention of Children's Administration front line social workers; reviewing

the results of the second evaluation of the CPS alternative response system, FAR (Family Assessment Response); and monitoring the work being done on the state's visitation system, data, barriers, and policies.

Wyoming

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel (WYCRP) recently participated in the state's Department of Family Service Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) to gather information related to the outcome areas of safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families. We are also coordinating with the agency to develop a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) that outlines the agency's goals, interventions, and plan for measurement. WYCRP's focus in the next few months will be around foster care recruitment and training of foster care parents. In addition, DFS is in support of CRP facilitating stakeholder meetings as WYCRP will be a neutral party that can help identify problems and develop solutions.



Save the Date

National Citizen Review Panel Conference
Anchorage, Alaska
May 10–12, 2017

*Citizen Participation in Child Protection:
Common Goals, Many Paths*

www.cantasd.org/crpconference