

CALIFORNIA CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS PROCESS OF REVIEW

Developed by Strategies Training and Technical Assistance Center
and California Office of Child Abuse Prevention¹

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Citizen Review Panel Process Development:

1. Vision, mission and scope of work:
 - a. Vision (samples):
 - i. “Every child in XXXX County will live in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families and strong communities.” (adapted from CWS Stakeholders Group-May 2002)
 - b. Mission (sample):
 - i. “The mission of the XXXX County Citizen Review Panel is to assess the child welfare system in XXXX County and make informed recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well being of XXXX County children and their families.”
2. Ground rules and norms;
3. Description of panel member’s role;
4. Composition of panel:
 - a. Recruitment/selection of panel members (OCAP recommendation – 15 member maximum)
 - b. Does it reflect the community?
 - c. Does it reflect the ethnicity of local CWS consumers?
5. Safeguards to ensure confidentiality;
6. Formalization of panel structure (e.g. by-laws, panel member term limits, election or appointment of chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary);
7. Decision-making process:
 - a. Consensus
 - b. Vote (Who is eligible to vote?)
8. Identification of strengths and challenges to the review process;
9. Coordination of CRP activities with other collaborative groups in the community to avoid duplication of efforts.
10. Identify training needs of panel members; develop and implement training plan.

Priority Outcome Review Process:

1. Identify priority outcome(s) from California’s Child Welfare Services IVB Plan.
2. Review current situation in the county related to the priority and the Child Welfare System (CWS):
 - a. Review existing national, state and local CWS standards, policies and procedures related to the outcome (e.g. review written materials, local CWS social worker presents overview of system related to priority outcome area being reviewed);

- b. Identify current county efforts related to the outcome: what works and what are the challenges.
3. Identify sources of information related to the outcome:
 - a. Internal to the Child Welfare System:
 - Case file reviews
 - Relevant local policies and procedures related to the priority outcome (including county CWS manual of policies/procedures)
 - County data management system
 - Quality assurance system
 - Stakeholders' interviews (e.g. for "practice" information)
 - Focus groups (e.g. parents previously in the system, CWS workers or supervisors, mandated reporters)
 - CWS consumer surveys
 - Public input on outcome issues (e.g. community forum, focus group including broad community representation, soliciting written feedback via letters, email)
 - Longitudinal data
 - Social Work Core Competency information
 - b. External to the Child Welfare System (Identifying opportunities, barriers and challenges among system providers):
 - Children and Families Commission reports, focus group outcomes, needs assessments
 - Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Advisory Committee reports
 - Child Care Planning Council reports (e.g. Crisis Nursery availability)
 - Pertinent data related to well being of children and families (e.g. local child death rates, etc.)
4. Develop questions to be addressed during the course of review related to priority outcome area. See attached "Pertinent Questions for Citizen Review Panel Members to Explore Specific to their Priority Outcome Area" for examples of questions.
5. Select and review pertinent sources of information.
6. Identify and review state, local and national "promising practices" information related to the outcome and the Child Welfare System:
 - Periodic updates available through Strategies CRP website with linkages to California's clearinghouse on promising practices from the 4 Stakeholders work groups (available summer 2003)
 - Other pertinent links (e.g. CWS redesign website, Annie E. Casey Foundation Family to Family Program)
 - Review CWS Social Worker Core Competencies, if applicable
 - Review federal and state standards regarding CWS practice
 - Review CWS Redesign reports

7. Develop recommendations to CWS and other agencies/organizations regarding the selected outcome:
 - a. Provide clear statement of outcome indicators;
 - b. Provide timeline for implementation, if appropriate.
8. Develop a regular, formal communication process between the CRP and CWS to ensure feedback throughout the process regarding implementation of the CRP recommendations;
 - a. Send reports to Office of Child Abuse Prevention
9. Review implementation of recommendations, e.g.:
 - a. Semi annual or annual reports on implementation progress to CRP;
 - b. Assistance to CWS in overcoming barriers and challenges to implementation;
 - c. Advocacy assistance, if necessary, on implementation of recommendations.
10. Develop a plan for release of CRP report to the public (e.g. may include a public relations/media information strategy).
11. Choose the next priority outcome and repeat the process.

¹ Strategies wishes to acknowledge the contributions and assistance from local CRP site coordinators, California's Citizen Review Panel members, and other state Citizen Review Panel materials in the preparation of this document.