

Annual Report 2007



Kentucky Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services

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Acronyms contained in this report and their meanings:

CRP Citizen Review Panels

CFHS Cabinet for Health and Family Services

CPS Child Protective Services

SRA Service Region Administrators

QSR Quality Service Review

CQA Continuous Quality Assessment

DCBS Department for Community Based Services

Web sites:

Kentucky Citizen Review Panels: www.uky.edu/socialwork/trc

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

** All recommendations are in **BOLD** print

** Previous reports have contained the Cabinet’s response to the Citizen Review Panel report as well as the Memo of Agreement between the Cabinet and the CRPs. These were removed this year in order to save space, but may be obtained by emailing Blake Jones at Bljone00@uky.edu

Dear Citizen,

Thank you for taking a moment to read the 2007 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 80 Panel members serving on five regional Panels in Kentucky, representing thousands of volunteer hours.

The Panels' mandate is to evaluate the policies and practices of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services 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.

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 fairness and their dedication to assisting the Cabinet in better protecting Kentucky's children.

This is a public report and may be shared with anyone. It can be accessed electronically at www.uky.edu/socialwork/trc or you may obtain a hard copy by emailing Dr. Blake Jones at Bljone00@uky.edu.

I would like to thank Gayle Yocum, our Frankfort-based liaison for all of her hard work, and the many volunteers for their tireless efforts of behalf of Kentucky's children. I would also like to thank the Cabinet's liaisons who attended each meeting and were an invaluable asset as the Panel members pursued their mission. Finally, many thanks go to the Chairpersons of the Panels: Bryan Fantoni, Sue Hill, Laura Kretzer, and Ladonna Butler. Their leadership has been invaluable.

Blake L. Jones, Ph.D.
Program Coordinator

“Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see”.

~John W. Whitehead, “The Stealing of America”

Eastern Mountain Citizen Review Panel



Laura Kretzer, Chair

*Ron Webb**

Missie Quillen

Jenny Ward

Bonnie Hale

Deborah Clemons

Jean Rosenberg

Rita Whicker

Anita Cantrell

Charlotte Logan

Mandy Stumbo

** DCBS Liaison*

The Eastern Mountain Citizen Review Panel has reviewed and explored the relationship between schools and the Department for Community Based Services, specifically looking at ways to enhance relationships and communication between the organizations. The group targeted Family Resource Youth Services Center Coordinators as natural resources to families with school-age children and, as such, an ideal partner with the Department for Community Based Services within the schools. While the group initially discussed relationships with many different types of community partners, schools and Family Resource and Youth Services Centers were targeted due to the number of at-risk children they served.

Many positive activities have occurred over the past several months, specifically joint meetings in each county between the Family Resource and Youth Services Center Coordinators and Department for Community Based Services Staff. Initially the Service Region Administrator, Susan Howard, met with the Regional Program Managers for the FRYSCs.

One result from these meetings was the sharing of resources to prevent duplication and to fill in gaps. Examples include the FRYSCs providing a contact list by county with resources offered at each site. FRYSCs learned that children not attending school as appropriate may result in loss of benefits through DCBS. Both DCBS staff and FRYSC staff reported increased knowledge of the other system, as well as other community resources (e.g. food banks). DCBS staff reviewed reporting laws.

While each county meeting was individualized, common themes emerged of increasing communication and understanding each other's mandates, resources and limitations. Joint action plans were developed at the end of each meeting to continue the process, again on a county basis to meet local needs. Some groups agreed to meet on an ongoing basis. Participants reported an enhanced sense of team. **Based upon these positive results, the Eastern Mountain Citizen Review Panel strongly recommends a minimum of two joint meetings annually between county Department for Community Based Services offices and their corresponding Family Resource and Youth Service Center coordinators.**

The Eastern Mountain Citizen Review Panel further met with the regional training coordinator for the Department for Community Based Services regarding the possibility of including FRYSC staff in training opportunities due to their joint areas of concern. The regional training coordinator has expressed plans to be able to include FRYSC staff in relevant trainings when fiscally appropriate, first focusing on drug using families and family team meetings. **The Eastern Mountain Citizen Review Panel strongly recommends implementation of this joint training effort.**

As the county directories of FRYSC and their services was identified as a positive outcome of joint meetings, **the Eastern Mountain Citizen Review Panel recommends development of an on-line service directory by region that is regularly updated.**

The Eastern Mountain Citizen Review Panel would highly encourage exploration of this model of joint meetings to include other professional groups integrally involved in the protection of children, including attorneys involved in family court cases, the law enforcement community, mental health, and judges with the same goals of increasing knowledge and communication.

Last year, the Big Sandy Citizen Review Panel held a focus group with members of the legal community, which identified misconceptions and many negative perceptions of interactions with the Cabinet. With both the legal community and a portion of the educational community having questions about the Cabinet, the Eastern Mountain Citizen Review Panel encourages DCBS to consider how to outreach both to professionals and to the general public in a pro-active manner. Examples would include offering continuing legal education to attorneys, having booths at conferences and public events at state and local levels, and releasing positive stories to the media not during times of crisis. The Panel recognizes that staff time, at the local level in particular, is necessary and vital to address strengthening these types of partnerships.

Ultimately, children can only benefit from adults working together on their behalf.

Northeastern Citizen Review Panel



Sue Hill, Chair

Shari Stafford

Rhonda Sims

Sue Hill

Joyce Vance

Trudi Bravard

Douglas Jones

Jackie Sue Wright

Cheryl Love

*Jackie Johnson**

Melissa James

Marilyn Slone

Scott Osborne

Kay Doughman

**DCBS Liasion*

The Northeastern Citizen Review Panel chose to work on two separate sub-committees this: Child Fatality Review and “Workers Investigating” Methamphetamine cases. The reports are below:

Investigation of Methamphetamine Cases

“We informally talked to 18 workers. There were no consistent answers. The following are the questions broken down with the answers:

1. Five reported they had received no training, 13 stated they had. All but two felt that more training was needed with more in depth focus and needed clarification on realistic policy and procedures. Several stated that they did not have time to bring back their clothing because all reports have to be generated within the hour. A few others reported that the policy is not feasible. Rowan County had much concern since there have been two meth busts there recently.

2. With regards to training, 10 responded that it was somewhat adequate, 4 responded totally inadequate and 3 responded with a 1 (totally inadequate). One responded said she rated the training a 7. She thought it was excellent.

3. On their level of comfort in dealing with these types of cases: We had 3 who said very comfortable, 9 somewhat comfortable and 6 not comfortable at all.

4. When asked if they were provided the necessary tools to do their job with regard to methamphetamine cases, everyone said no.

5. Everyone said “no” when asked if they knew their safety worker

6. Suggestions for training/equipment. Everyone stated they would like the training to be closer to their office and that trainings should be more intense, not just the basics. Any equipment is needed (i.e., masks, paper suits, water, towels and portable showers). Registration time and travel to trainings is prohibitive. Training should be more accessible to workers. They need clarification on who transports the children. They need meth kits, sheets for the cars, drug screening for children and parents and access to state transportation since they have to share cars with other offices. A first Aid Kit and safety kit “won't get it”. **We recommend that the cabinet should require yearly updated trainings, and not just from the law enforcement branch.** The hospital and physicians were not ready for a Rowan Co. recent meth case.

7. **There should be a requirement to take law enforcement on visits with suspected meth involvement. Workers should be given a digital camera and a cell phone that works.** More and better involvement with law enforcement, pharmacists and mental health with inter-disciplinary trainings is needed. The workers asked for lists of possible trainings, refresher courses, protocol updates. One worker said that there was no established protocol with a local hospital and they had to involve the CEO for intervention during our crisis.”

Child Fatality Review Team

Activities were conducted per investigation and interviews by Shari Stafford, Joyce Vance and Rhonda Sims with various coroners and individuals within the counties served by the panel. The recommendations below are a result of the findings of these investigations and interviews and the current regulatory standards.

We found that not all counties were doing the same, regarding the time frame or format for these meetings following a child fatality. Also, it would be nice if a healthcare professional was part of the team and not just the law enforcement, family services, and the coroner.

Recommendations:

- 1. All counties across KY need to be following the same timeline and format in regards to the required meeting following a child fatality.**
- 2. More representation should be included on each counties Child Fatality team such as the addition of a healthcare professional (i.e. MD or SANE nurse).**
- 3. Documentation be the same for all counties and documentation submission to Frankfort should be no less than 1 week following either the investigation and/or autopsy.**
- 4. The leadership role for the Child Fatality team in each county should be under the direction of a healthcare professional along with the county coroner; this should be a dual role.**
- 5. Someone at Central Office of DCBS should be responsible to insure that the mandated Child Fatality meetings are taking place and that the proper**

documentation has been submitted with signatures from all the parties in attendance at the meetings.

6. The various individuals who are on the Child Fatality team should be compensated by the state (Frankfort) for their travel time and any additional expenses (with submission of receipts) that they may have incurred while in the process of fulfilling their role on the team.

The Lakes Citizen Review Panel



Ladonna Butler, Chairperson

*Peggy Meriedeth**

Sonia Holmes

Gloria Olney

Ralph Prince

Cheryl Dodd

Kim Brand

Wendy Lay

Kathy Wilson

Linda Johnson

Dr. Peggy Pittman-Munke

Cindy Grahm

Ronald Pullen

Julie Copeland

Thomas Monroe

Theresa Shell

Dianne Glasscock

Evie Paschall

Jean Shipley

Stephanie Hooper

Maria Huntley

*Renee Buckingham**

*Sherry Litchfield**

*Kristi Griffey**

** DCBS Liaisons*

The panel focused time and energy to recruit new members to the panel this year. Our target was to secure members from the Pennyrile area to serve on the newly formed Lakes Citizen Review Panel. This merger also warranted a continued orientation and education process to assist new members who were assimilated to the panel.

A light breakfast was provided to all social work offices during Social Work Month. The Panel used this opportunity to introduce ourselves and offer support to all

the DCBS staff in the Lakes Region. We also provided a useful tool to aid social workers in helping children aging out of foster care.

Advocacy efforts continue within our communities and with state representatives in support of the DCBS and the children we serve.

The Citizens Review Panel wishes to compliment the DCBS on the transitional living plan and wants to recommend continued support of the plan and ongoing education of all staff on the use of the plan.

The panel would like to recommend a position be added to assist the Independent Living Coordinator and the vital role he plays in the lives of foster children. The job duties of this position encompass so much more than the personal contacts that are essential to the success of these fragile youth. In the next six months alone this region will have 86 youth between the ages of 18 and 21. Of these thirteen have a medical or physical disability and twenty-one have a mental or emotional disability. The continuing growth of the population that is aging out warrants that a position should be added. Furthermore, the Lakes Region is a large and rural area which would be difficult for only one person to cover.

Current policy states that children aging out of foster care have six months to recommit: the recommendation is to extend this to a 12 month period to allow more time for this decision which has the potential to significantly impact their future. The panel will take an active role in contacting our legislators to impact the outcome of this piece of legislation. In order to be effective advocates it is imperative that DCBS establish ongoing communication regarding this issue with the Citizen's Review Panel.

The number of committed children who are not suitable for academic or technical training is increasing. We understand that current statistics do not take into account past foster children who were ineligible for aging out services due to their inability to participate in currently approved educational programs. The CRP would recommend that the Cabinet review existing policy, taking into account the unique needs of these adolescents. Policy should be revised by expanding the criteria of acceptable educational components beyond those carrying academic credit or certification. Resources need to be identified and/or developed locally that would enable these adolescents to qualify to extend their commitment by utilizing alternative means of education. An example would be on the job training accessible regionally.

Jefferson Citizen Review Panel



Bryan Fantoni, Chair

*Laura Johnson**

Carla Tyree Curry

Bonnie Swicegood

Dwala Griffin

Becky Lewis

Mary Lou Cambron

Barbara Dempsey

Sheila Nelson

Joanna Young

Constance Ard

Phillis Thompson

Barbara Carter

Dr. Ann Swank

Marjie Miller

Kate Miller

**DCBS Liaison*

On behalf of the Jefferson County Citizen’s Review Panel, I am pleased to present this End-of-year report which provides both a summary of the panel’s activities and the panel’s well-researched recommendations for presentation to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the State Legislature. As a unified panel, the Jefferson CRP heard from a number of guest speakers from the Cabinet, who discussed various on-going and newly proposed programs and areas of development within the Cabinet. Further the panel participate in the

study relating to the “effectiveness” of the CRP’s and heard from Dr. Huebner concerning the on-going study relating to racial disproportionality in the provision of services by the Cabinet. The Panel also submitted a Letter to the Editor in support of the “Boni Bill” which was published in the Courier-Journal. As areas of focus this year, the Jefferson CRP divided into three sub-committees which researched and reviewed the following general areas: Case Closure; Child Sexual Abuse Investigation; and Racial Disproportionality. The activities and recommendations of each sub-committee are further compiled below.

Disproportionality Sub-Committee

Activities:

The sub-committee reviewed information from Dr. Ruth Huebner related to Kentucky Cabinet's work on the disproportionality issue as well as training information provided by Delanor Manson. There were some national reports on the issue that were reviewed as well. In addition, the sub-committee reviewed adoption program details provided by the Cabinet. The sub-committee also invited Dr. Ruth Huebner to speak at one of our CRP meetings.

Recommendations:

- 1. We recommend a public relations campaign by the Cabinet, Community Supporters in conjunction with media partners on the benefits of Adoption highlighting:**
 - a. Cost of Adoption;**
 - b. Definition of Adequate Income (a requirement);**
 - c. Cabinet Support of families after Adoption;**
 - d. Financial Support by the Cabinet with emphasis on the Passport to Adoption Program: Medical, Education**

African American children are disproportionately represented in the child protective service system.

Recommendations:

2. The Jefferson CRP supports the work of the Cabinet to address this fact and recommend the following actions to assist in this work.

- **Alliance of Social Workers, First Responders and Community Partners to address issues reveal through the research.**
- **Disseminate the research**
- **Continue Communications with Partners**
- **Provide Continuing Cultural Education for Workers**
- **Use CRPs to Educate the Community**

Child Sex Abuse Investigations

Activities:

The Child Sex Abuse Investigation sub-committee met with CPS workers and supervisors assigned to the Crimes Against Children Unit (CACU), as well as workers who have investigated child sex abuse allegations for the Cabinet in the past or do not currently work directly with CACU. Further, the sub-committee met with members the command staff of CACU and CACU Detectives to receive input into the work and support CPS provides to CACU on sex abuse cases. The Sub-committee also reviewed relevant Kentucky Revised Statutes, Kentucky Administrative Regulations, and the Cabinet's S.O.P. as they each relate to the investigations of sex abuse allegations.

The Jefferson CRP has determined that police officers investigating and prosecuting physical and sexual abuse in conjunction with CPS are not being

provided updated worker lists and most importantly, update phone listings for workers.

Recommendation:

CPS should provide updated worker lists and phone lists to local law enforcement on, at a minimum, a quarterly basis by distributing lists through division commanders.

The Jefferson CRP has determined that there exists concerns with non-investigative workers opening investigations on families (i.e. on-going worker is charged with opening investigation on family they have been servicing) when they are not properly equipped or trained to provide both the investigative element and services element to the family.

Recommendation:

- 1. CPS should consider mandating that ALL investigations into new allegations be controlled and handled by an investigative worker.**
- 2. CPS should hire additional investigative social workers and enough supervisors to adequately supervise staff.**

The Jefferson CRP has identified a continuing problem with worker turnover and has concluded that this continuing problem is jeopardizing the welfare and safety of children and families being serviced by CPS.

Recommendation:

- 1. CPS should seek to address worker concerns promptly.**

- 2. Identify areas within the Jefferson County with disproportionately high turnover and target the retention of workers accordingly**
- 3. Provide tools, training and financial incentive to retain staff.**

The Jefferson CRP has determined that CPS worker, not stationed or working directly with the Crimes Against Children Unit, are investigating sexual and physical abuse cases. The Jefferson CRP maintains that those workers assigned to CACU have specialized knowledge as to the investigation of abuse allegations and close relationships with CACU detectives with whom they work on a daily basis. It is the opinion of the Jefferson CRP that all investigations regarding child sexual or physical abuse should be handled exclusively by CPS workers assigned to CACU.

Recommendation:

- 1. CPS should mandate that all sex or physical abuse investigations be handled by CPS workers assigned to CACU.**
- 2. CPS should hire additional investigative social workers and enough supervisors to adequately supervise staff.**

The Jefferson CRP has identified an issue relating to CPS workers photographing physical injuries on children. Specifically, in order for a photograph to be viable evidence in Court. It must include a scale marker

alongside the injury, the injury must be discernable, and the photograph must be clearly documented as to time, location, and people involved. .

Recommendation:

- 1. CPS should mandate training of all CPS workers, or at a minimum all investigative workers, involved with abuse allegations as to how to photographic injuries.**
- 2. This training should encompass the proper method for taking photographs of differing injuries; the necessary and proper documentation of such photographs; the preservation of the photographs as evidence; the proper use of scale markers in photographs; the proper use of cameras to capture viable pictures of injuries.**

The Jefferson CRP has identified an issue with the internal policy/statutory requirement that CPS make contact with families of Sex Abuse within one hour of a report being taken by CPS or law enforcement. This time frame is in fact unrealistic, at times unnecessary (delayed disclosure where the child is either no longer a child or is no longer in danger of being victimized by the alleged perpetrator), and in fact could jeopardize the safety of the victim. Further the Jefferson CRP has determined that strict compliance with this mandate may serve to jeopardize law enforcement's investigation. If this requirement is internal then changes need to be made in the following areas. If this requirement is base on a statutory requirement, the same recommendations apply with the caveat that CPS should be moving to make the required changes to applicable statutes.

Recommendation:

1. **CPS should seek to initiate changes in the relevant policy/statutes to:**
 - a. **eliminate the blanket one hour requirement for all sex abuse allegations.**
 - b. **to allow an investigative worker and law enforcement personnel to jointly review all reports of sex abuse within one hour of their reporting to determine if the child is in immediate danger such to require immediate contact or CPS intervention.**
 - c. **contact and intervention shall be done in as reasonable a time as necessary but never with a delay such to endanger the safety or welfare of a child.**

2. **CPS should investigate their own policies and procedures which may seek to punish workers who fail to meet the statutorily mandated timeframe in situations where there is no danger or imminent threat to the victim.**

There is a concern that no one in the community is addressing issue of children (under age 12) perpetrating sexual abuse against another child. CPS

identifies these cases as Family In Need of Services (FINSA) but if the parents do not want services, there are no repercussions. Neither perpetrators nor victims are required to get treatment. The police will not investigate and the cabinet will not hold parents accountable for getting proper treatment for their children.

Recommendations:

- 1. Cases should be open on all families involved and should not be considered FINSA cases.**
- 2. Cases should be opened as on-going cases until both perpetrator and victims and their families have received proper treatment.**

Case Closure Sub-Committee

Activities:

The Case Closure working team was concerned by observations of families re-entering the child welfare system due to possible misunderstandings at the time the case was closed, as well as child fatalities of children previously involved with child protective services. We have heard from different staff in the ongoing teams that they feel like they are not doing social work but instead meeting deadlines with paperwork. Paperwork has increased so workers don't have the time to do the thorough follow-up that some cases need. We were also interested in statistics that were kept on what kind of cases re-entered the system. This information was not available.

The Case Closure Sub-committee

- met with two supervisors (one investigative, one ongoing) to get an understanding about how the case closure procedures works for them
- met with individual workers

- had Marsha Roberts-Blethen (SRAA and creator of Jefferson County case closure team) speak about case closure procedures
- reviewed checklist of case closure procedure used in Jefferson County.

Based on positive feedback from social workers and supervisors, we found that the Jefferson County case closure team is effective in helping DCBS workers close cases to completion and move on to new cases. However, workers expressed a need for expansion or replication of this team to reduce the workload for ongoing teams.

Recommendations:

We recommend DCBS create additional positions, or another case closure team to reduce the workload for ongoing teams within Jefferson County and to help ensure that all cases are closed in a thorough and timely manner. We would like to see these positions and/or team formed by Fall of 2007.

A mechanism needs to be developed by the Fall of 2007 to track cases that re-enter the system. This needs to capture why cases re-enter the system so ongoing teams can begin to focus on the issues that impacts a possible increase in their workload.

Southern Bluegrass Citizen Review Panel



Jennifer Brown

Nancy Shinn

Heather Schill

Eileen O'Malley

Pam Black

Brandon Rayford

Cynthia Kay

Ellen Burke

Ryan Koch

*Kristen Krebs**

Roseanne O'Connor

Darlene Thomas

Kathleen Cleary

Melanie Tyner-Wilson

Terry Goldfarb

** DCBS Liaison*

The Southern Bluegrass Citizen Review Panel was formed in January of 2007 and had its first meeting on March 2, 2007. The Panel has used the first part of the year to focus on issues which impact the Southern Bluegrass region. A variety of guest speakers have visited with the Panel, including Commissioner Mark Washington, Bruce Linder, Jim Grace, Dr. Ruth Huebner, and Debbie Acker. The Panel has learned about many of the programs being implemented by the Cabinet, including the Child and Family Services Review, new drug and alcohol treatment initiatives, and a special medical training of workers involved in investigating the physical signs of child abuse.

The Panel will meet on August 17, 2007 in Berea to plan their activities for 2007-08.