

Missouri's Citizens Review Panels are comprised from three different groups: Task Force on Children's Justice; Child Fatality Review Program (CFRP); and Child Abuse/Neglect Review Board (CANRB). Web-links to the annual reports from the respective groups, as available, have been listed below. Additionally, information on the State's responses to the panels as required by section 106(c) of CAPTA is included.

TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S JUSTICE

The Task Force was established by the Children's Division with a Mission to Benefit and enhance children's lives by recommending improvement of child abuse and neglect laws, policies, programs, professional education and public awareness, and to provide funding to support these recommendations. With the purpose of utilizing the Task Force to the fullest extent possible, the group was reorganized with newly appointed members in December, 2004. Between December, 2004 and August, 2005, the Task Force became knowledgeable of the child protection system, and recently completed an intensive strategic planning process to develop a strategic direction and identify priorities for the Task Force. A copy of the Strategic Plan is attached. Additionally, four action teams formed out of the strategic planning process. The action teams are now actively working to achieve change in four strategic areas, including: Adequate, stable and flexible funding; Improved and expanded services; Staff development and positive work environment; and Positive public image and public support.

Additionally, the Office of the Child Advocate independently reviews individual cases involved with the Children's Division, stemming from complaints filed by clients as well as private or public entities. Persons filing complaints may remain anonymous as well. The Child Advocate then makes recommendations to the Children's Division out of the independent reviews. Recognizing common interests, the Child Advocate actively participated in the Strategic Planning Process with the Task Force, and many of the recommendations that are included in the Child Advocate's annual report were incorporated into the Strategic Action Agenda. Information regarding the Office of the Child Advocate can be found at: <http://www.oca.mo.gov/index.shtm>; and the annual report may be located at: http://www.oca.mo.gov/pdf/Annual_Report.pdf.

The Children's Division actively provides support to the Task Force, through coordinating and facilitating meetings, and providing clerical assistance.

CHILD FATALITY REVIEW PROGRAM STATE PANEL (CFRP)

As required pursuant to RSMo 210.195, a state child fatality review panel was formed, meeting at a minimum bi-annually to provide oversight and make recommendations to the department of social services, state technical assistance team. In this oversight role, the panel is encouraged to identify systemic problems and bring concerns to the attention of the State Technical Assistance Team. Additionally, local Child Fatality Review Teams meet routinely, to review individual cases as deemed necessary. The composition of the

Child Fatality Review Program State Panel mirrors that of the county panels: each multidisciplinary profession is represented by a recognized leader in the respective discipline. Information about this process can be located at:

<http://www.dss.mo.gov/stat/sp.htm>.

Statistics are gathered, and a trends analysis is completed by the State Technical Assistance Team, regarding the fatalities and information provided by the State and Local Child Fatality Review Panels. The annual reports can be found at:

<http://www.dss.mo.gov/re/cfrar.htm>.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT REVIEW BOARD (CANRB)

RSMo 210.153 required the development of the Child Abuse and Neglect Review Board. This review board provides an independent review of child abuse and neglect determinations in instances in which the alleged perpetrator is aggrieved by the decision of the children's division. The board consists of nine members, who shall be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate, and includes members from varying disciplines.

The following persons participate in a child abuse and neglect review board review: Appropriate children's division staff and legal counsel for the department; The alleged perpetrator, who may be represented pro se or be represented by legal counsel. The alleged perpetrator's presence is not required for the review to be conducted. The alleged perpetrator may submit a written statement for the board's consideration in lieu of personal appearance; and witnesses providing information on behalf of the child, the alleged perpetrator or the department. Witnesses shall only be allowed to attend that portion of the review in which they are presenting information; and the victim(s) and his/her representative or witness.

There is an informal process that routinely occurs with the Child Abuse/Neglect Review Board in making recommendations on an on-going basis as issues arise to the Children's Division based on their findings. No annual report is available at this time. Recommendations that were provided for 2004-2005 included: The need for better documentation, including interviewing collaterals, gathering information on the child's behavioral history, and paying attention to time lines in child custody disputes (looking at when allegations were made vs. when modifications were filed etc).