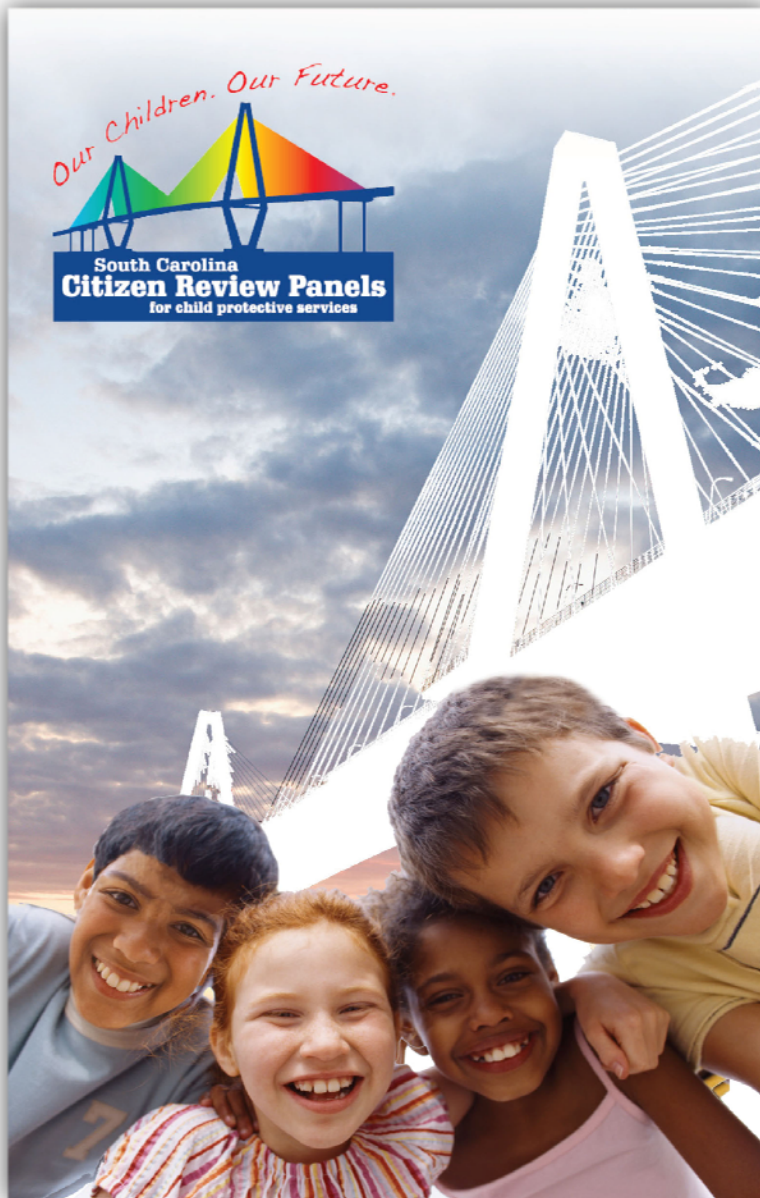


# South Carolina Citizen Review Panel

## 2010 Annual Report



### Panel Chairs

Joyce Dilleshaw, Upstate

Carolyn Dorrell, Midlands

Donna Xenakis, Low Country

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## ACRONYMS USED IN THIS REPORT

CAN: Child Abuse and Neglect

CAPSS: Child and Adult Protective Services System

CAPTA: Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act

CCFS: The Center for Child and Family Studies

COSW: The College of Social Work

CFSR: Child and Family Services Review

CPS: Child Protective Services

CRP: Citizen Review Panel

DSS: The South Carolina Department of Social Services

GAL: Guardian ad Litem

PIP: Program Improvement Plan

SCCRP: South Carolina Citizen Review Panel

USC: The University of South Carolina

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

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**Toll Free Number:** 866-263-3139



## INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader:

Thank you for taking the time to read this report from the South Carolina Citizen Review Panel for Child Protective Services (SCCRP). This panel is comprised of citizen volunteers, as mandated by the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). It is charged with examining the policies, procedures and practices of South Carolina's child protective services system to examine the extent to which the agency is discharging its' child protection obligations. The Panel recommends improvements, as it deems appropriate, as required by law.

It is important to note that the SCCRP works collaboratively with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS), the agency charged with child protection responsibility. The state director assigns a designee to meet with the SCCRP chairs at regularly scheduled times during the year to discuss recommendations and to share information. The purpose of the collaboration is to ensure that members are informed about internal projects that might affect how and where SCCRP members spend their efforts. It also informs the department about SCCRP issues and concerns in advance of the annual report. This in turn allows DSS to respond to recommendations before they are actually printed in the annual report.

This past year, Jocelyn Goodwin served as the SCCRP liaison on behalf of Dr. Kathleen Hayes, the previous state director. Jocelyn ensured that SCCRP concerns and questions were responded to promptly. With her assistance and "can do" attitude, the group worked cooperatively and was able to address a number of concerns in an expeditious manner. The SCCRP commends Jocelyn for her efforts and thanks her for her service. This year, Jocelyn retired from her position as Assistant Director for Child Protective Services. The SCCRP wishes her the best in her future endeavors.

Please find enclosed the SCCRP summary report containing the activities and recommendations for 2010.

Lastly, I would like to thank Joyce Dilleshaw, Upstate Panel Chair; Carolyn Dorrell, Midlands Panel Chair; Donna Xenakis, Lowcountry Panel Chair; and all the SCCRP volunteers and county DSS SCCRP liaisons for countless hours of work on behalf of South Carolina's abused and neglected children.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Wilson Worrell, MPA  
SC Citizen Review Panel Coordinator



## SOUTH CAROLINA CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL COMPOSITION 2010:

### LOWCOUNTRY

1. **Donna Xenakis, Chair**, Parents Anonymous® of South Carolina, Inc.
2. Kathryn "Jill" Aquino, (DSS Families First liaison)
3. Lisa Steele Baker, Moncks Corner Police Department
4. Robert Brimmer, (Berkeley County DSS liaison)
5. Margaret Cochran, Charleston County School District
6. David Diana , Palmetto Behavioral Health
7. Carole Grunsky, Berkeley County Sheriff's Office
8. Rev. George Haltiwanger, First Baptist Church, Moncks Corner
9. Mary Lane, Retired Child Care Worker
10. Martha Jo McGlothlin, Retired Principal
11. Frank Oakley, (Charleston County DSS liaison)
12. Jodi Rosenberg, Roper Hospital
13. Dianne Sumpter, Child Care Worker

### MIDLANDS

1. **Carolyn Dorrell, Chair**, The Nurturing Center
2. Keisha Adams, SC State Child Death Review Board
3. Lela Allen-Haines, Richland County CASA
4. Mary Jo Burgess, The Children's Law Center
5. Diana Cannon, Guardian ad Litem
6. Stephen Clyburn, SC Foster Care Review Board
7. Hattie Greene, The Center for Child and Family Studies
8. Paige Greene, Richland County CASA
9. Alecia Klauk, Citizen Volunteer
10. Kimberly Little, Richland Legislative Delegation
11. Ernest McClerkin, (Richland County DSS)
12. Randy Scott, Columbia City Police Department
13. Deirdre Stogdill, Citizen Volunteer
14. Jenne Wietecha, Palmetto Health Baptist

### UPSTATE

1. **Joyce Dilleshaw, CRP Chair**, Cornerstone
2. Jack Cauley, Connie Maxwell Children's Home
3. Michael Gaskin, Greenwood County First Steps
4. Alice Hodges, Meg's House
5. Robin Kubler, (Greenwood DSS)
6. Tacey Perillo, Beckman Mental Health



7. Angela Pruitt, Abbeville County First Steps
8. Carolyn O. Robinson, Retired Speech Pathologist
9. Charlotte Smith, (Greenwood DSS)
10. Stacie Smith, Greenwood Abbeville Guardian Ad Litem Program
11. Steve Strom, (Spartanburg DSS)

## SUMMARY OF PANEL ACTIVITIES

During 2010, the panels held regularly scheduled meetings. The Lowcountry Citizen Review Panel (CRP) met monthly and the Midlands and Upstate CRP's held bimonthly meetings. The groups' work was facilitated and supported by a Panel Coordinator with access to research and training staff from The Center for Child and Family Studies (CCFS). Kiona Washington, Research Associate was the primary staff researcher assigned to work with the SCCRP this year.

Panel chairs participated in bi-monthly CRP administrative meetings with DSS representatives. The Citizen Review Panel Administrative Group members include the panel chairs, the panel coordinator, Jocelyn Goodwin and Jeanne Hanna, Kershaw County Director. Ms. Hanna is the groups' liaison to the counties. This group has discussed many of the issues and concerns addressed in this document and in most cases a resolution is in progress.

The SCCRP also held bimonthly panel chair meetings designed to facilitate communication and coordination between and amongst the panels. The South Carolina Citizen Review Panel (SCCRP) was represented at the National Citizen Review Panel Conference in Kentucky by two members each from the Upstate and Midlands CRP. Three members attended from the Lowcountry CRP. Some members' car pooled and shared rooms to reduce costs and to allow for more participation. Michael Gaskin, Jack Cauley, Carolyn Dorrell, Diana Cannon, Martha Jo McGlothlin, Mary Lane and George Haltiwanger are the members who represented South Carolina at the national conference. Carolyn Dorrell, Midlands CRP Chair, participated as part of a national panel that presented on the topic, "What Works: A Presentation of our CRP Projects for 2009-2010." Her presentation was well received and sparked an interest in a National Education and Health Passport for all children in foster care. A national passport will be one of the topics discussed at the Tenth Annual National Citizen Review Panel Conference.

A SCCRP Retreat was held for all members on October 28, 2010 in Columbia. A summary of that event is included later in this report.

Members revised the SCCRP informational brochure. The brochure's cover is shown on the title page of this report. Its content is in the appendix. Members also volunteered to host the 2010 Tenth Annual National Citizen Review Panel Conference. The group formed a planning committee which consisted of representation from various states around the country. The event is scheduled for May 18-20 in historic Charleston, South Carolina.



Two SCCRP members Carolyn Dorrell and Steven Clyburn participated on the South Carolina Department of Social Services Outsourcing Study Committee formed in response to Proviso 26.26.

Proviso 26.26 instructed DSS to determine the feasibility of child welfare outsourcing initiatives with input from public and private partners and to present recommendations to the Governor, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee no later than January 31, 2011. Carolyn Dorrell served as co-chair with Jocelyn Goodwin of the Child Protective Services Subcommittee.

## PANEL CHAIR'S REPORT

Recommendations are underlined and in bold.

### 2010 LOWCOUNTRY CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL-**DONNA XENAKIS, PANEL CHAIR**

The Lowcountry Citizens Review Panel recommends that DSS, by July 1, 2012 develop a policy and procedure to share and release confidential information to collaborating agencies, such as hospitals, DJJ, and schools to promote cooperation and safe plans for children determined to be at risk. This shared information will be provided to hospital case managers, social workers and agency case managers by the DSS worker. This recommendation was created due to difficulty in the hospital setting with obtaining safety plans and recommendations for discharge of newborn children. The safety plan could only previously have been released by a parent, which in many cases caused problems for ensuring the safety of the child/children served by community agencies.

The Lowcountry Citizens Review Panel recommends that DSS by July 1, 2012, develop training consistent with the SC Mandated Reporter statute which requires reporting specifically by the person receiving the report. It is recommended that DSS County Directors coordinate the delivery of mandated reporter training for school personnel with the local school districts in their area, ensuring that mandated reporters get a quality, consistent training in each county.

The Lowcountry Citizens Review Panel recommends that by July 1, 2012, DSS work in cooperation with Family Court Judges to support the existing Fatherhood Initiatives in three counties where the programs are well established. Additionally, it is recommended that a space be added on the treatment plan in order for DSS to refer all known non-custodial parents.

The Lowcountry Citizens Review Panel recommends that by July 1, 2012, DSS update their web site according to the recommended changes listed in order to make the web site more user friendly, making information easier to find, specifically:



1. Add a tab for mandatory reporters that includes a list of mandated reporters, their legal requirements and the consequences of not reporting, how and to whom to report, and to add a link to child abuse and neglect information.
2. Add a tab for child abuse and neglect information to include what is child abuse and neglect, listing the 4 types/sub types of child abuse and neglect, when to report and whom to report to.
3. Display hotlines prominently, include a banner box exclusively for child abuse and neglect (CAN) {shift client fraud and financial information to another box with its own banner}, and attach a graphic image in box that is a direct link to child abuse and neglect information.
4. Spell out primary caregivers vs. other suspected perpetrators and to whom the report is made in both cases.
5. Ensure that the site can be translated to other languages.
6. Make website compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act so it can be used by people with disabilities.

These changes are recommended in order to make the web site user friendly, ensuring that information is easy to access, understand, and apply. The panel feels that there are too many clicks to get to critical places.

Respectfully recommended by Lowcountry Citizen's Review Panel.  
Donna Xenakis, Chair

#### MIDLANDS CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL- **CAROLYN DORRELL, PANEL CHAIR**

The Midlands Citizens Review Panel has had a busy year! Following the successful negotiation of the Memorandum of Understanding with DSS and the USC Center for Child and Family Services (CCFS), Panel members experienced the benefits of clearer role definitions and the improved climate of mutual respect. Monthly administrative meetings with key DSS staff were productive, resulting in progress toward the key concerns of Panel members, as well as more open discussions with less defensiveness. And, leadership changes at CCFS resulted in better support and utilization of their resources.

The Midlands CRP members have focused their attention and activities during 2010 on one continuing project, the Education and Health Passport, and one new project, the Fatherhood project.

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#### SC EDUCATION AND HEALTH PASSPORT FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

The SC Education and Health Passport has been included in recommendations from the Midlands CRP for the past several years.



We are aware of the progress that is being made, even in these most difficult times for DSS, including the revisions and re-formatting that has been accomplished. This new Passport was approved through the necessary official channels and has been rolled out for implementation. Some training on the use of the Passport has been conducted and more is planned for foster parents and for county staff. References to the use of the Passport have been included in the most recent Program Improvement Plan. These steps are certainly to be applauded.

The Midlands CRP began this whole project in response to the stories from members' experiences – stories indicating that important information about foster children was not available to foster parents and, in the case of older foster youth, not available to them. Sometimes this information bordered on life-saving information, as the child who has an asthma attack after being placed in a foster home. Or, in the case of a high school foster youth, he did not know anything about his father – not even a name – yet that information turned out to be buried in DSS records.

The SC Education and Health Passport is a concrete example of how the DSS caseworker and the foster parent keep the records needed by that child about his/her life while in the custody of the State of South Carolina! This record must contain the most important health and educational records needed in the future by that child! It is imperative that all foster children have that record; it is non-negotiable. There still exist internal barriers to the universal use of the Passport, as reported in one meeting, “that is not our job!”

More work needs to be done; it cannot be ‘just talked about.’

The Midlands Panel is asking for a continuing report on the work of the agency to bring about the universal use of the SC Education and Health Passport for all Children in Care.

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## FATHERHOOD PROJECT

### Background

During the SC CRP 2009 Fall Retreat, Midlands Panel members brainstormed potential topics for new projects. It was by overwhelming vote that the issues surrounding the lack of involvement of fathers in the lives of children involved in the child welfare system must be addressed. Members drew on anecdotal stories from their professional experiences to illustrate the scope and depth of the problems and opportunities of engaging fathers, especially ‘willing’ fathers in the lives of their children.



“Court hearings are delayed because a father shows up at the last minute,” says a guardian ad litem.

“Laws – the whole legal system – favor the mother,” says a CASA administrator.

“Fathers don’t show up at hearings for fear of being arrested, especially if they are delinquent in child support payments,” says the director of a father engagement program.

“Fathers, when identified, should be included in decision-making, case planning, and provided the same services as the mother,” says a former caseworker.

“I was never included and told specifically that I would have to pay for a lawyer,” says a father whose own father was the best option of a placement for the child in foster care.

“I never knew I had a father, until recently, my new caseworker found an old DSS record with his name on it,” says a 16-year-old foster child, who had been in the state system since he was a young child.

These stories, and many others like them, point to the complexity of the issue, from the whole ‘system’ to the individual impacted life of one child.

Panel members used the outline provided by Dr. Blake Jones, which helped clarify our plans, including tasks, timelines, and specific work assignments. (A copy of this document is included in Appendix C.)

### **Activities**

A comprehensive search was conducted by CCFS research staff, which resulted in an overview presentation for Panel members on best practices, relevant national and local South Carolina organizations and websites, research studies and results, and case studies from other states. (A copy of this document is included in Appendix C.)

Discussions that followed among members in response to the information session centered on 1) benefits of father involvement to child’s development, 2) barriers to locating fathers, 3) opportunities for father involvement, 4) need for case worker training, and 5) need for more data on current status of father involvement.

Information from other states, some inside and some outside the region, was particularly helpful: North Carolina, Virginia, New Mexico, Iowa, and Washington.



Of special interest was the experience of the Minnesota Citizens Review Panel, which made specific recommendations on “Involving Fathers in Child Protection Cases” to the Minnesota Department of Human Services in their 2009 Annual Report. These reports will be helpful resources to SC DSS as the SC CRP recommendations are carried out.

Members also reviewed South Carolina statutes and DSS policy. This review confirmed some members’ beliefs, that in statute and policy, for the most part South Carolina gets high marks. It is in the ‘practice’ that a gap exists here. The 2010 CRP recommendations are designed to address these gaps.

A visit to a local fatherhood program in Greenwood/Abbeville counties further informed Panel members with first-hand data collected through observation of a group session and interviews with individual fathers participating in the program.

A review of the 2009 CFSR report and the SC DSS Program Improvement Plan showed that issues related to father involvement in child welfare cases have been examined. We anticipate that work toward our recommendations will be seen as supporting the DSS response to the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR).

All of these activities served to strengthen the Panel members’ commitment to the need to increase the involvement of fathers in the child welfare system. For us, this commitment means more than a policy in a manual, more than an initial training session, more than a checked box saying a search was conducted for an absent father. It means commitment to ‘systemic’ change from how caseworkers engage fathers who are present in treatment cases to evidence of ‘diligent’ search for absent fathers in foster care and adoption cases, including addressing barriers to the use of People Locator Search engines available on the Internet. It means active search for paternal grandparents and other extended paternal family members as possible placements, inclusion in treatment plans and family group conferencing.

Finally, the Panel members recognize that, because of our bi-monthly contact with DSS staff, our 2010 recommendations have already been in our conversations and some changes have already begun. We, therefore, look forward to the response to our report.

### **Recommendations**

The Midlands Citizen Review Panel recommends that the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) develop formal written policies and procedures to identify, contact and involve fathers by July 1, 2012. The procedures developed should include a check list for caseworkers that defines and outlines how to conduct a thorough diligent search.



The Midlands Citizen Review Panel recommends that DSS develop an online intranet/internet accessible Fatherhood Resource Guide that is linked to the Responsible Parties Registry by July 1, 2012. The guide shall include legal and advocacy information for fathers to assist them with the child protective services process and contact information for Fatherhood programs available throughout the state.

The Midlands Citizen Review Panel recommends that DSS develop both informal and formal training mechanisms to ensure that workers are knowledgeable about the importance of involving non-custodial fathers in child welfare cases by July 1, 2012. The formal training shall be included as part of Child Welfare Basic Training for all caseworkers and shall contain an evaluation of workers ongoing knowledge and adherence to DSS policy.

UPSTATE CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL-**JOYCE DILLES**HAW, PANEL CHAIR

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## KINSHIP CARE

### **Background**

In the CRP 2009 Annual Report, DSS was commended for its effort to begin work on the panel's recommendation that an informational brochure be developed for dissemination to individuals who accept placement of a child rather than have the child go into foster-care. The panel was presented with a draft of that brochure in 2010 but found its format to be less than useful due to its length and verbiage.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that DSS, with the help of the Upstate CRP, develop and disseminate to DSS Human Service staff, law enforcement agencies, families and other partners an English and Spanish version of an informational brochure written in a simple question and answer format to include resources that may be available to families that accept placement of relative children by July 1, 2012.

### **Recommendation**

The panel acknowledges that DSS is making great strides in providing resources for kinship care providers through the Kinship Navigator Project and recommends that the first year data and its analysis be shared with all three CRPs.



## CLERGY PREPARATION OF MANDATORY REPORTING

### Background

In 2009 the panel developed a survey to assess clergy understanding of reporting laws, their level of training, and their preferred method of receiving training. The survey queried 1) how well informed were clergy regarding their status as mandated reporters; 2) how skilled they perceived themselves to be in identifying and reporting CAN, and 3) how DSS might reach out to this important population to increase both their understanding and active involvement.

### Activities

In 2010, the Upstate panel distributed 160 surveys to clergy and received thirty surveys back. The results indicated that clergy would like more information about their reporting responsibilities. After examining the Children's Law Center curricula for clergy and speaking with the training coordinator Mary Everhart, the panel coordinated a mandated reporter training for clergy in conjunction with an existing training event with Little River Congress of Christian Churches (an African-American Baptist Association).

### Recommendation

The panel recommends that DSS target clergy in their efforts to train mandated reporters by partnering with the three state CRPs and that this be accomplished by DSS providing a trainer that panels can utilize in coordinating local, regional, or state training in conjunction with existing training venues for various clergy organizations no less than three times annually.

## 2010 FALL RETREAT SUMMARY

This year the South Carolina Citizen Review Panel held a retreat on October 28, 2010, at the Clarion Hotel in Columbia. Members were joined by Dr. Kathleen Hayes, DSS Director, Dr. Cynthia Flynn, Interim Associate Director for The Center for Child and Family Studies, and other dignitaries from DSS. The Keynote speaker for the event was Troy Strother with Parents Anonymous® of South Carolina, Inc. The theme was "Fathers Make a Difference" keeping in line with the work and interests of the panel around Father Engagement. Below is a summary of the event:

### GUEST SPEAKERS

Caroline Davis, The Center for Child and Family Studies, USC (CCFS)  
Troy Strother, Parents Anonymous® of South Carolina, Inc.  
Dr. Kathleen Hayes, State Director, SCDSS



Naomi Torfin, Children Come First  
Kathryn Kendrick, SCDSS  
Pat Patrick, SC Families First

**REPRESENTING THE LOW COUNTRY SCCRP:**

Donna Xenakis\*  
Carole Grunski  
Martha Jo McGlothlin  
George Haltiwanger  
Mary Lane  
Jodi Rosenberg  
Kathryn "Jill" Aquino

**REPRESENTING THE MIDLANDS SCCRP**

Carolyn Dorrell\*  
Keisha Adams  
Mary Jo Burgess  
Stephen Clyburn  
Hattie Greene  
Lela Allen-Haines  
Diana Cannon  
Paige Greene  
Alecia Klauk

**REPRESENTING THE UPSTATE SCCRP**

Joyce Dilleshaw\*  
Jack Cauley  
Michael Gaskin  
Letecia Flores  
Angela Pruitt  
Carolyn Robinson

**REPRESENTING THE SC DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Kathryn Jill Aquino, Families First Project  
Jocelyn Goodwin, SCDSS State Office Liaison to the CRP  
Christine Graham  
Jenne Hanna, SCCRP DSS Liaison  
Robin Kubler, Upstate CRP Liaison  
Marilyn Matheus  
Carolyn Orf, Assistant Director Foster Care and Adoptions  
Nancy Purvis, Deputy Director Community Services  
Ernest McClerklin, Midlands CRP Liaison

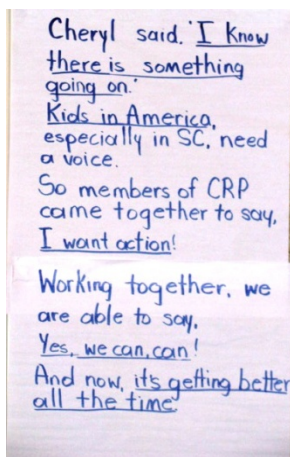


Kathleen McLean-Titus, Policy Manager  
Charlotte Smith, Upstate CRP Liaison  
Steve Strom, Upstate CRP Liaison

### REPRESENTING THE CENTER FOR CHILD AND FAMILY STUDIES

Dr. Cynthia Flynn, Interim Associate Director  
Judy Bauer, Administrative Assistant  
Sara Howe, Fiscal Assistant  
Sheila Lilly, Administrative Assistant  
Gabe Madden, Graphic Artist, Photographer  
Suzanne Sutphin, Research Professor  
Kiona Washington, Research Associate  
Cheryl Worrell, CRP Program Coordinator

The SCCRP chairs, Joyce Dilleshaw, Carolyn Dorrell, and Donna Xenakis greeted and welcomed the membership. Hattie Greene, with the Midlands CRP opened the Fall Retreat with an icebreaker designed to get participants comfortable with one another and to get them energized for the day. Her successful activity involved participants choosing song titles to come up with an advertisement about the SCCRP. It entailed members working collaboratively to come up with an idea and presenting it to the group. See sample below:



Caroline Davis with The Center for Child and Family Studies delivered a presentation on SMART Objectives. This concept was discussed in relationship to the SCCRP 2010 DSS Recommendations. Members worked in small groups with Caroline's assistance to write their recommendations so that they met the SMART objective which meant the recommendations were written so that they were specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic with a timeframe for completion.



Dr. Kathleen Hayes, State Director for SCDSS greeted the guests and provided an update on the state of the DSS budget. She spoke about current and impending budget cuts and the effects those cuts have had on the agency. She spoke about achievements and accomplishments the agency is making despite the obstacles and challenges that it faces. She also said that she values the relationship that SCDSS has with the SCCRP and credited the group with focusing the department on issues and concerns that help improve the agency and the services provided to children in foster care. She spoke about the Passport and the Clergy Mandated Reporter Project as examples of collaboration and efforts to make improvement. She recognized Jocelyn Goodwin and Cheryl Worrell for their work with the SCCRP.

Carolyn Dorrell, Midland's CRP chair presented the first annual SCCRP Person of the Year award to Dr. Kathleen Hayes. Carolyn spoke about Dr. Hayes' ability to lead in tough times and thanked her for her collaboration with the SCCRP. Dr. Hayes was presented with flowers, a plaque and a cake. This presentation was a surprise to Dr. Hayes and she was deeply moved and grateful to the membership for recognizing her with this honor.



Troy Strother with Parents Anonymous® of South Carolina, Inc delivered a motivational speech entitled: Fathers Make a Difference. His humorous accounting of his experience as a son and father emphasized a father's importance in the lives of their children. His presentation was well received by the audience.

Naomi Torfin, with Children Come First, spoke about laws passed as a result of efforts by her organization.

Kathryn Kendrick with SCDSS presented on the Connecting for Kids Kinship Care grant project that is designed to find and support family members who take in children who can no longer stay in their homes. She explained that the project utilizes volunteers and guardians ad litem staff to search for family connections.



The program also utilizes Kinship Care Navigators who help caregivers locate community resources and other support services. The program is a pilot that began in select counties October 1, 2009 and ends September 30, 2012. The Center for Child and Family Studies is evaluating the effectiveness of the project.

Pat Patrick spoke about the South Carolina Families First Family Group Conferencing project. A family oriented voluntary group decision making process to plan for the care of children in foster care. The group is led by a neutral party and includes family members, community members and professionals chosen by the family to develop a care giving plan.



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL BROCHURE REVISED CONTENT

#### South Carolina Citizen Review Panels

(Cover is shown on the title page of this report.)

#### Who We Are

Federal law requires Citizen Review Panels in each state to evaluate the extent to which state and local child protection agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities. In South Carolina, the child protective services system at the Department of Social Services is assessed by three separate panels. The Upstate Panel meets in Greenwood, the Midlands Panel meets in Columbia, and the Lowcountry Panel meets in Charleston. Members from each area meet as a group and may choose to work on issues with their group or collectively with other panel members in the state.

South Carolina Citizen Review Panels embrace the expertise of people from all areas of the community. Being a panel member is a way for the public to help improve the well-being of South Carolina's children and families. Panel members may have professional qualifications, personal experience with the child protective services system, or the natural interest of a concerned citizen. Everyone has something to offer.

South Carolina Citizen Review Panels' efforts are supported by program staff at The Center for Child and Family Studies, College of Social Work, University of South Carolina.

#### What We Do

Panel members review the policies, procedures, and practices of the child protective services system and prepare, on an annual basis, a report containing a summary of the activities of the panel and recommendations to improve the system. This report is provided to the South Carolina Department of Social Services and the public. These recommendations help improve the system and make a difference in the lives of children who are abused or neglected. South Carolina Citizen Review Panels offer volunteers an effective way to share in the community's responsibility to protect some of our most vulnerable citizens—the children of South Carolina.

#### How You Can Help

Be part of the solution...

The safety and well-being of the children of South Carolina are everyone's responsibility. You can help by volunteering your time and talent. We seek the strengths and different perspectives offered by persons with varying racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. We desire a panel that broadly represents the people in our state. Our only qualification is a desire to improve the lives of children. Membership on the South Carolina Citizen Review Panels is voluntary. Panels are required to meet at least once a quarter—most Panels meet bimonthly. Members may also meet with fellow committee members between full panel meetings to work on the projects selected for the year. Annual retreat and conference opportunities may be provided for members to encourage and inspire professional development.



“If we don’t stand up for children, then we don’t stand for much.”

--Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children’s Defense Fund

#### Contact Information

To communicate with South Carolina Citizen Review Panels, please phone (toll-free) 1-866-263-3139. You can also email us at [sccrp@sc.edu](mailto:sccrp@sc.edu).

Visit our website at <http://sccrp.sc.edu/>.

South Carolina Citizen Review Panels  
The Center for Child and Family Studies  
College of Social Work  
University of South Carolina  
Columbia, SC 29208



## APPENDIX B: LETTER TO DR. JIM REX, SC STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



April 28, 2010

Dr. Jim Rex, SC State Superintendent of Education  
Rutledge Building  
10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 1006  
1429 Senate Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Dr. Rex:

Congress was able to mandate the creation of Citizen Review Panels thanks to the funding from the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 1996, with amendments in 2003. The state of South Carolina has three such panels located in the Upstate, the Midlands, and the Lowcountry.

Our South Carolina panels are comprised of volunteer citizens who are authorized by law to examine the policies, procedures and practices of the State and local service agencies. We are responsible for evaluating the extent to which agencies are ensuring the protection of children by effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities.

One of the major concerns of our Lowcountry Citizen Review Panel is learning that *some* of our South Carolina schools are in direct violation of federal and state mandatory laws regarding reporting child abuse. As you well know, all school teachers, counselors, assistant principals, and principals are required by law to report any *reasonable suspicion* and/or *proof* of child abuse or neglect *directly* to DSS or law enforcement. Since beginning our research we are disappointed to find that some of our schools throughout the state are still employing the hierarchical system when it comes to suspecting or reporting child abuse. Teachers are expected to convey the abuse through their school's "pecking order" to the counselor, assistant principal and/or principal so that they may discuss the validity of the suspicions. This method of reporting not only delays the allegations being properly investigated, but, jeopardizes the safety and welfare of the child, and is furthermore against the law.

Several of the school district websites literally and publically articulate their policy and procedure for reporting child abuse within their school. Greenville County and Richland County District One are just two examples of such blatant ill-regard of the law.

Our panel would like to offer some suggestions in hopes of alleviating the potential legal ramifications and more importantly to better ensure the safety of the children in South Carolina. The Children's Law Center offers on-line training for mandated reporters. Eighty six identified school personnel received this training during a six-month period between July and December 2009. This number drastically increased for the 2009 calendar year to 3821



(some of these participants were day care workers.) This training should become mandatory for ALL school employees at all levels within the system.

Policies and Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse and the Child Abuse Laws should be posted and standardized on all school district websites throughout the state.

We would also encourage the schools to display child abuse and neglect posters throughout the school where school personnel and the general public can view them.

The State of South Carolina and the South Carolina School System has made tremendous strides in attempting to keep our children safe in the past few years. You, yourself, said in regards to the Darkness to Light Education Initiative, "The more teachers and staff we educate, the closer we move to being able to prevent child sexual abuse from happening altogether."

But, we still have much more to do when it comes to the safety and future welfare of our children. Teachers, counselors, assistant principals and principals all play pivotal roles in children's lives just by the nature of their day-to-day and ongoing contact. These professionals need better education and more awareness of child abuse issues, laws, and the legal ramifications of not reporting in order to better ensure the future safety of our children. We would appreciate your help in ensuring that the school districts in South Carolina are aware of their mandated reporter responsibilities regarding child abuse and neglect.

Sincerely,

Martha Jo McGlothlin, Chair  
Lowcountry Citizen Review Panel



## APPENDIX C: MIDLANDS FATHER ENGAGEMENT PLANNING

NAME OF WORKING GROUP \_\_\_\_\_ FATHERHOOD ENGAGEMENT \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM LEADER \_\_\_\_\_ CAROLYN DORRELL \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM MEMBERS: PAIGE GREEN, LELA ALLEN-HAINES, KEISHA ADAMS, DOTTIE CRONISE, RANDY SCOTT, DIANA CANNON

OVERALL GOAL: Expedited permanency through increased fatherhood engagement

GOAL I: To establish a data baseline, assess the current participation rate of fathers in the CPS process, i.e., participation in supervised visitation, participation in family group meetings, consulted in treatment planning, attendance at court hearings. Question the category of “whereabouts unknown.”

Objective 1: Determine who are “fathers” in cases; how are whereabouts of fathers determined;

Objective 2: Examine policies related to father involvement; determine if policies are followed in case practices;

Objective 3: Establish more specific categories for missing fathers, i.e. Un-named, named with address unknown, named with address not participating, and named with address participating. Experiment with locating fathers using current technology, i.e., Internet. Examine alternatives such as third party contracts.

GOAL II: To identify barriers to fathers participating in the CPS process; “what’s keeping fathers away?”

Objective 4: Examine State law, where all rights go to the mother (Title 63)

Objective 5: Examine barrier of back child support payments owed; fear of arrest if attend court;

Objective 6: Examine legal barriers of non-payment of child support;

Objective 7: Examine dynamic of a mother’s resistance to father involvement.



GOAL III: To support that segment of “willing fathers” in the CPS process, i.e. participate in family group meetings; attend court hearings.

Objective 8: Research successful models and best practices

Objective 9: Support fathers being offered same treatment planning process as mothers

Objective 10: Initiate “parent advocates” on the model of GAL’s

TIMELINE:

January: Present research needs to DSS and form questions;

February: Research national models and best practices

March: DSS initiate data search

April: State law and DSS policy research

May:

June:

July: Data analysis completed

August:

September:

October: Formulate recommendations for Annual Report to DSS

November: Preliminary draft of recommendations

December: Final version of recommendations for Annual Report

