

**Region 2 Children's Administration Oversight Committee
Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)
Citizen Review Panel
CAPTA Work Plan 2006**

May 25, 2007

Purpose

The purpose of the Citizen Review Panel (CRP) is to evaluate the extent to which the state is fulfilling its child protection responsibilities in accordance with its Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) State plan.

Area of Focus

The Region 2 Oversight Committee also serves as a Citizen Review Panel for Washington State. Its mission statement is:

It is the mission of the Region 2 Oversight Committee to be a presence in the community by reaching out and advocating for the needs of children and families across Region 2.

A major focus for the Oversight Committee CRP during 2006 was to move into areas which may be under-served by Children's Administration (CA). The Oversight Committee CRP's intent is to ensure that CA services are accessible and delivered in all communities in this large, rural region. An additional, related area of focus was on ways to expand client access to effective resources to reduce child abuse and neglect. This included identifying and advising the Agency about what factors promote strong community relationships, coordination, and collaboration, particularly in resource-poor rural areas.

Process

The Region 2 Oversight Committee CRP met eight times during 2006. The March 2006 meeting was a facilitated committee retreat which resulted in an updated mission statement and strategic plan for the next two years. The 2006 meetings were conducted in various communities throughout the eight counties which comprise Region 2. Meetings were held in more non-traditional locations and more remote communities than in previous years. Meetings were held as follows:

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| January | Toppenish |
| March | Grandview |
| April | Kennewick |
| May | Dayton |
| July | Yakima |
| September | Cle Elum |
| October | Kennewick |
| December | Yakima |

Meetings included community comment from people active in community services and knowledgeable about service gaps. Comment was received from the following Committee guests during 2006:

Yakama Indian Nation Administrator
Yakama Nation Prosecutor
Bilingual Parenting Educator, Toppenish School District
CA Region 2 Child Protective Services Program (CPS) Manager
Kennewick Police Department Detective
Catholic Family & Child Services Administrator
CPS Social Worker out-stationed at Kennewick Police Department
Columbia County Sheriff
Dayton School District Superintendent
Columbia County Deputy Juvenile Court Administrator
Out-stationed CPS Social Worker and Supervisor (2 individuals), Dayton
Elementary and Middle School Professionals (3 individuals), Cle Elum School District
Drug/Alcohol Program Coordinator, Cle Elum
Juvenile Court Administrator, Benton/Franklin Counties
Drug/Alcohol Program Manager, Benton/Franklin Counties
Regional Support Network (Mental Health) (3 individuals), Greater Columbia RSN
Southeast Yakima Community Center Director

Findings and Recommendations

The Oversight Committee CRP noted, made recommendations to the agency, and tracked progress for four primary problem areas during the year:

I. Inaccessibility of CA services in Columbia County.

CRP Recommendation: Provide local CA presence.

CA Response:

- Established a new part-time CPS social worker position stationed in Dayton (the largest town and county seat). Community stakeholders participated in the interview and staff selection process. The social worker was stationed with Juvenile Court staff in small out-station in Dayton. Previously, all services were provided from the Walla Walla office in the next county.
- At May 2006 meeting, the Sheriff and school Superintendent provided feedback on the success of this change. CA staff reported that CPS intakes and investigations were increasing significantly in Columbia County since the local staff started. The CA Regional Administrator then increased the social worker's hours to full-time to meet local needs.

II. Stressed Working Relationships in Klickitat County (esp. CA-Juvenile Court)

CRP Recommendation: Host meetings with opportunity for open input from variety of stakeholders, CA to participate more regularly in ongoing local efforts.

CA Response:

- Area Administrator established local advisory committee and invited community stakeholders to participate.
- Area Administrator and Regional office staff met with Juvenile Court Administrator and identified key resource shortages creating stress.

- New contract for Receiving Care and Assessment beds was developed with participation by Juvenile Court Administrator.
- Office supervisor began attending local JAG juvenile court services coordination meetings.

III. Temporary Housing Needs for Out-of-County Runaway Youth- Kittitas County
CRP Recommendation: Collaboration between CA and law enforcement to develop resources to meet this specific need.

CA Response:

- Several meetings held between county law enforcement, local CA staff and local Oversight Committee member. No product yet.

IV. Foster Home Shortage (raised in Toppenish, but a region-wide problem)

CRP Recommendation: Improve the effectiveness of agency recruitment and retention of foster homes at the local level.

CA Response:

- Regional Administrator provides financial support to Yakama Nation Child Placing Agency foster home recruitment activities in Toppenish.
- Regional Administrator maintains a full-time regional program manager with responsibility for foster and kinship caregiver relationships/ support and foster home recruitment and retention. She coordinates with local staff and community stakeholders throughout the region, conducts ongoing telephone surveys of caregiver satisfaction and needs, and produces a regional caregiver newsletter and other informational services. This program manager attends Oversight Committee meetings regularly to report.

CRP Recommendations to CA State Office

1. The CA State Office provide for more local and regional-level foster home recruitment and retention contracts, in lieu of statewide contractors lacking strong local presence and track record.
2. The Oversight Committee CRP has heard significant concerns from law enforcement personnel in several locations for more than a year about timeliness of CPS response after-hours and weekends. Since the return of day time CPS intake to local offices last year, this was reported no longer to be a problem during office hours. But after-hours, law enforcement described a serious problem they face. Despite calls to Centralized Intake (CI) in Seattle requesting social worker assistance for transfers of children taken into protective custody, officers are faced with very slow response times. In small jurisdictions, this creates a crisis. The station can be distant, and may not be staffed after-hours. The officer may be the only officer on duty, with responsibility to respond to emergency calls, but cannot do so with a child in the car. The Oversight Committee CRP plans to develop recommendations in the coming year to address this problem. The Committee requests availability of the CA State Office CPS and CAPTA Program Manager to attend meetings in Region 2 as a resource to discuss this issue.

Submitted by:

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