

**Wisconsin Citizen Review Panel Annual Report**  
2013-2014

Name of Panel:	Marathon County
Contact Person & Title:	Pam Cotton, Child Welfare Manager/Cathy Teske, Citizen Member

Briefly describe the panel’s meeting schedule and number/types of meetings, including subcommittee and workgroup meetings, held in 2013.

The full committee met six times or bimonthly throughout 2013. The Marathon County CRP also has an executive committee made up of the Chair, Vice-Chair, coordinator and Director, which meets six times per year on opposite months of the full committee. The last half hour of each full committee meeting was devoted to subcommittee meeting time, with the Journey Bus Tour subcommittee meeting most frequently during this time. The Shaken Baby Simulator subcommittee met twice outside of regularly scheduled meeting time. The Child Abuse & Prevention Month Planning subcommittee started meeting monthly in August of 2013 to prepare for April 2014 activities. Other smaller subcommittees such as Public Information and Membership met on an as-needed basis. Finally, two members of the Marathon County CRP worked on the Statewide Committee to review child fatalities. Individuals and committees are in frequent contact outside of formal meetings to forward project work as needed.

Please provide a summary of the panel’s activities in regards to:

1. Evaluating the extent to which the State and the local child protection agencies are fulfilling their child protection responsibilities.
  - Reviewed federal outcomes measures related to Child Protective Services through the agency’s annual Scorecard.
  - Evaluated impact of Shaken Baby Syndrome locally and statewide and changed course in direction of use of simulator: we are currently working with area high school health teachers to have the doll used in their curriculum as well as facilitating quarterly simulator training at the Marathon County Jail for inmates.
  
2. Evaluating local and State progress under the State CAPTA Plan.
  - The panel Chair and Coordinator have participated in data analysis of statewide child deaths as part of the statewide CRP workgroup. This analysis is ongoing and summary information will be shared with the panel in the future.

3. Activities related to public outreach and comment to assess the impact of current child protection procedures and practices on children and families in the community.
  - Continued participation in Marathon County United Way's 211 Youth Yellow Pages available online and in print format features access points to local supports and services for families, youth and children.
  - Attendance of Coordinator and two citizen members at the National CRP Conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.
  - April calendars featuring positive messages about parenting were distributed through the Marathon County's library system during Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Month.

Did the panel conduct any reviews of CPS cases, child fatalities and near fatalities? If yes, please describe.

- The panel did not conduct any reviews of individual CPS cases or child fatalities/near fatalities. However, two members of the panel continue to participate in the statewide child death review data team, which is analyzing data from 2011 and 2012.
- Marathon County's Medical Examiner, John Larson, retired in August of 2013. He was replaced by Jessica Blahnik who is not currently on the panel.
- Pam Cotton, panel coordinator, along with Jessica Blahnik, Medical Examiner and Joan Theurer, Health Officer, are now leading the Marathon County Child Death Review Team. With Pam Cotton's leadership on both groups, it is hoped that a joint project can be developed in 2015.

Please describe any other panel activities or issues addressed in 2013.

- Structure of the CRP was revised in 2013 from quarterly to bimonthly meetings, with time built in to the meetings for subcommittee work. However, since the same core people take part in several smaller subcommittees, it appears momentum was lost in the subcommittee groups with members being spread too thin. For 2014, subcommittees will have designated chair members and it is expected that subcommittees meet outside of regular CRP meeting times.
- Three panel members attended the National CRP conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.
- See attached 2013 work plan for further details on ongoing projects.

Please describe activities planned or held to date in 2014.

- Quarterly Shaken Baby Simulator doll trainings to be facilitated by a social worker and nurse together at the Marathon County Jail beginning in March 2014; Shaken Baby Simulator to be used in Wausau area high school health classes beginning in 2014.

- Month long basic needs drive during Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Month (April) to benefit local agencies in meeting families' basic needs/reducing stress. This group is also planning public awareness efforts with other local groups including the Women's Shelter and the Marathon County Early Years Coalition.
- Results of the 2011 and 2012 State Study of Child Deaths in Wisconsin will be reviewed with Committee members.
- Local CRP will participate in a National CRP webinar with the aid of the State CRP coordinator and a member of the newly formed St. Croix CRP. The subject will be the how the previous statewide project was successfully implemented.
- Local CRP member with the Statewide Coordinator are exploring the possibility of University professors in multiple disciplines (Ex.: Social Sciences and Political Science) leading independent study groups of students in those disciplines as a possible youth CRP.
- Continue recognition efforts for foster parents and local DSS staff.
- Four members (two CPS staff and two citizen members) are attending the National CRP Conference in Atlanta in May.
- Presentation on Marathon County's child protective services Scorecard, comparing outcome measure goals to county and state results for Out of Home Care CPS Ongoing and Juvenile Justice is scheduled for April of 2014.
- Plan to be finalized by fall of 2014 for follow up to 2012 Journey Bus Tour; subcommittee is planning modified event to target school personnel via an in-service presentation.
- Marathon County intends to participate in statewide CRP project related to Guardian ad Litem and their role in the child welfare system.

Panel recommendations to improve child protection services at the local level:

- The panel is working to develop a presentation board that can be displayed at local resource fairs or conferences that will contain information about CRP and its work together with CPS.
- Continued use of the Shaken Baby Simulator doll in the local community to educate on abusive head trauma.

Panel recommendations to improve child protection services at the State level:

- It is recommended that the state evaluate possibilities for reducing paperwork requirements for social workers in order to allow for more face to face time with families.
- More coordinated approach to child welfare training. The CPS Ongoing Standards were implemented in January 2013 without providing advance training to social workers. It appears that the Post Reunification Support Program is rolling out with test counties without recommended training components in place prior (motivational interviewing). This impedes the agency's ability to meet the requirements of the program and provide best outcomes for families.
- The CRP supports DCF's initiative to revamp the Continuous Quality Improvement process to make the process the most useful for child welfare

agencies to improve outcomes for children. The existing Quality Service Review process is extremely labor intensive. We recommend the process be less labor intensive per case and still examine factors such as engagement, family teaming, etc.

- Local panel members have found the National CRP Convention educational opportunities and connections valuable at the local level. We encourage funding attendance of state personnel at this event.
- We encourage public education efforts by DCF and CRP's via print and television. Focus on the positive; statewide/pioneering local accomplishments and public education centered around what the community can do to support children and families.

Optional/additional information or comments:

- Marathon County will take part in the 2014 Statewide CRP project determined as a result of a statewide meeting with Blake Jones in January of 2014. The focus of the project will be Guardians ad Litem and their role in CPS cases.
- Marathon County is grateful for Paula Brown's participation and support in both our local CRP full committee and subcommittees, as well as her leadership on statewide initiatives. She has made herself very available to questions on process and openly shares information and ideas with our group.
- We would like to express appreciation for the support of DCF as evidenced by encouragement of statewide CRP projects, consideration of CRP recommendations, and the efforts to increase the number of CRP panels for the betterment of Wisconsin's children.

Please submit the completed CRP Annual Report and the panel's current membership list to the State of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families by e-mailing copies to Paula Brown at [PaulaL.Brown@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PaulaL.Brown@wisconsin.gov). The annual report and the DCF response to each report will be posted on the DCF Citizen Review Panel web page at [http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/citizen\\_review/default.htm](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/citizen_review/default.htm). Thank you.