

Wisconsin Citizen Review Panel Annual Report
January 1-December 31, 2014

Name of Panel:	Youth Advisory Council Citizen Review Panel
Contact Person & Title:	Ashley Stokes-President Desiree Parker-Secretary

Briefly describe the panel's meeting schedule and number/types of meetings, including subcommittee and workgroup meetings, held in 2014.

The full committee met 4 times, or quarterly throughout 2014. Additionally, Youth Advisory Council members met with one another throughout 2014 at various foster care events where time was allotted for citizen review panel discussion, totally 7 meetings in 2014 as a whole committee. The Youth Advisory Council has subcommittees based on geographical location and County of residence. Subcommittee of the Youth Advisory Council include: Milwaukee, La Crosse, and Jefferson County Chapters. Each subcommittee met, separately and devoted time to specific areas of recommendation. Areas of recommendation include: Badger Care Plus renewal, sibling visitation, and supervised independent living placements. Such meetings included discussion and time spent analyzing data, speaking with experts, and discussion with local county child welfare workers.

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.
 - Panel members participated in the 2014 Statewide CRP meeting determining the need for increased analysis of Guardian Ad Litem involvement in child welfare cases.
 - Members participated in May foster care awareness events at the State Capitol in Madison, WI. Members developed a presentation board highlighting key foster care issues and spoke with citizens and legislators.
 - Milwaukee Chapter subcommittee participated in a webinar for foster parents.
 - Members were guest panelists at a Conference for WI judges and various court officials.
 - Highlighted topics of panel include: Housing, Education instability, increased sibling visitation, Badger Care, and Driver's license

2. Evaluating local and State progress under the State CAPTA Plan.
 - Members Ashley Stokes and Desiree Parker continue to participate in State GAL workgroup.
 - Agrees to bring any information that was shared in the national conference back to our state YAC meetings
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.
 - Youth Advisory Council member, Rowshell Young, traveled to Washington, D.C. to lobby for foster care topics of advocacy on the Federal level.
 - Created Youth Advisory Council Facebook page for increased outreach to foster parents and foster youth.
 - Discussion of development of foster youth survey to capture data on various issues such as; youth's awareness of GAL in case, level of youth participation in court, number of youth who have been homeless, etc.
 - Milwaukee chapter met with ILP coordinator for Milwaukee on ILP/housing/transitional living and what's the state next steps. Talking about issues such as homelessness in youth and what the data says
 - Two members testified in front of Wisconsin legislature for foster care extension for youth with disabilities (IEPs).
 - Panel developed presentation board for display at local events and statewide foster care events. Presentation board will contain information about Citizen Review Panel and Youth Advisory Council Initiatives.

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 CPS cases, child fatalities, or near fatalities.

Please describe any other panel activities or issues addressed in 2014.

- Milwaukee chapter did a presentation for UWM on homelessness in youth lead by Wilton Johnson, Alexander James, Dousha Lacefield and Ashley Stokes
- Ashley Stokes, Wilton Johnson, Kaylin and Desiree Parker sat on a panel presentation for who what when where we are and how the system benefited us

- Wisconsin YAC participated in a training by The National Resource Center for Development on strategic sharing and outreach strategies.

Please describe activities planned or held to date in 2014.

- See List of Accomplishments

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

- All youth should be given the option to live in a supervised independent living placement. In order to accomplish this there should be additional transitional housing opportunities created statewide. It is critical for youth success to have real life experience, with a safety net before they leave care. This also enables youth to have stable housing when they leave care.

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

- It should be court ordered for siblings to have weekly visits and the option for daily phone calls. The person supervising visits should take necessary steps to protect confidentiality by blending into the environment. The reason this is important is to nurture sibling relationships and help youth feel safe.
- Badger Care Plus is automatically renewed annually for youth who have aged out of the WI foster care system. As shown below, youth who have aged out of care are less likely to maintain permanent residence, increasing the difficulty of youth receiving the notification for renewal/update information letter. As a result they do not have health care when they need it.
- DCF should conduct outreach to former foster youth ages 21-25 to make them aware of The Affordable Care Act provision for former foster youth up to age 26 and how to enroll.

Optional/additional information or comments:

- The State Youth Advisory Council will partake in the 2015 Statewide CRP project to determine annual statewide initiative.
- The Youth Advisory Council would like to express gratitude for the opportunity to have a youth voice in the local and State outcomes for foster youth currently in care and those who have age out of care.

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. 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. Thank you.

YAC Accomplishments

Since the council's inception in 2005, Wisconsin's Youth Advisory Council (YAC) members have been involved in advocacy opportunities state-wide!

Panel presentations and participation at numerous conferences, including:

- Wisconsin Summit on Children and Families
- Together for Children Conference
- Wisconsin School Counselor Association
- Foster Parent Association
- Foster Care Coordinator Conference
- Wisconsin County Human Services Association
- Office of Youth Services Conference (Youth Ambassadors - 2013)

Membership on various committees and councils, including:

- Secretary's Child Welfare Committee
- Milwaukee Partnership Council
- National Governor's Association Grant project for Wisconsin (2011)
- Trauma-Informed Care Committee (2013)

Participation in advocacy and training opportunities, including:

- Consultation for Levels of Care Workgroup
- Wisconsin's Child Services Review
- Creation of Foster Parent Training modules
- Foster parent recruitment meetings
- Court Improvement training video (2012)
- Consultation for Foster Youth Handbook (now given to every youth in WI upon entering foster care)
- Independent Living webinar with Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center
- Foster Care Awareness Month activities each May:
 - Meet with legislators (semi-annually)
 - Distribute Foster Care Awareness Month pins and ribbons at the Capitol
 - Project Pinwheel in Milwaukee
- Citizen Review Panel (2014)
- Creation of W-YAC organization Facebook page (2013)

Participation in national internship and youth board opportunities, including:

- National FosterClub All-Star internship (six members chosen since 2006, leading to one member testifying before Congress – search Greta Anderson on YouTube!)
- Congressional Foster Youth internship (three members selected since 2009)
- University of Oklahoma's National Resource Center for Youth Development internship (two members chosen since 2011)
- National youth boards and national trainings (three members chosen)



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