

Wisconsin Citizen Review Panel Annual Report
January 1-December 31, 2016

Name of Panel	Polk County Citizen Review Panel
Contact Person & Title	Betsy Byker, Coordinator
Panel Chairperson(s)	Dawn Larson

Briefly describe the panel’s meeting schedule and number/types of meetings, including subcommittee and workgroup meetings, held in 2016.

The Polk County Panel meets monthly for one hour on the first Thursday of each month from 8-9 am. 11 of 12 meetings were completed this year. In addition;

1 Panel Workgroup – met in August to create new panel documents.

5 Blue Ribbon Subcommittees Meetings that included, ACEs/Compassion Fatigue training, Hands Across the Courthouse, Million March, and Sexual Abuse Awareness presentation by Mike Piscarelli.

2 Media Awareness Subcommittees Meetings.

2 Polk County Fair Subcommittees Meeting.

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 are receiving public disclosure notices of egregious incidents and child fatalities in the state.
 - Panel members recently researched, with the assistance of local CPS Director, the prevalence of drug use in all reports to child protective services. Community-wide trainings are being planned in response.

2. Evaluating local and State progress under the State CAPTA Plan.
 - The 2016 WI CRP Conference provided the panel with guidance and resources to move forward better prepared to provide evaluation and guidance.
 - Results of CRP led Guardian Ad Litem survey Project were presented to local interdisciplinary team.

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.

- March 2016: the panel promoted and financially supported an ACEs/Compassion Fatigue training meant for all County Health and Human Services employees to attend free of charge. 72 people attended.
- April 2016: the panel planned and attended a “Hands Across the Courthouse” event planned in conjunction with a sexual abuse awareness presentation by Mike Piscarelli. The event was attended by approximately 100 community members.
- April 2016: Blue Ribbon events were planned using the media tool kit, “Say Something, Do Something.” Events included 5 newspaper articles highlighting Child Abuse Prevention
- July 2016: the panel planned and financially supported a booth at the county fair manned by local BACA members. The work of Bikers Against Child Abuse has been highlighted at several outreach events. Thus, requests for their services have increased.
- In October 2016: the panel promoted and financially supported a viewing of the film “Paper Tigers” at a local school district. More than 200 district employees and community members attended. Plans continue toward the goal of developing a fully trauma-informed school-district.
- Ongoing: The panel continues to support the distribution of Shaken Baby Syndrome materials by the Family Resource Center St Croix Valley

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

Please describe any other panel activities or issues addressed in 2016.

- The panel has established a mission, logo, confidentiality agreement, and financial procedures for reimbursement in 2016.

Please describe any potential activities being planned for CY 2017.

- A request was made by Child Protective Services to assist in providing a celebration banquet to thank, educate, and support Foster Care Providers in the county.
- Drug Endangered Children Training is planned for April 24th. The CRP Panel will coordinate planning and promotion as well as facilitate community action conversations. Grant monies were applied for this project through Wisconsin CJA mini-grants.

- “Hands Around the Courthouse” is being considered in conjunction with state scheduling.
- The panel hopes to research local GAL practices.
- The panel is concerned with hopes to seek ways to improve communication between CPS and other local resources.

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

- The panel has expressed their desire to help in creating a HHS staff that is fully trauma-informed
- The panel is discussing a local survey to Guardian Ad Litem to expand upon the work of the state project.

How did the local agency respond to your previous recommendations?

A local ACE Master Trainer attended a CPS staff meeting to present on the possibility of using the ACE survey as part of the intake or ongoing work relationship with families.

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

The panel requests that changes be made in the ICPC (Interstate Compact) process necessary to place children in care outside of the state of Wisconsin. Situations have come to light in which children given priority placement status have not been processed with the required 25day requirement.

The panel questions if there is a need for more staff and/or support for those workers. Our proximity to the state of Minnesota and the transient nature of the population possibly makes this a problem unique to border counties such as Polk.

Please provide a brief description and example of the issue that contributed to this recommendation:

One worker describes 6 requests that were made to the WI Interstate Compact (ICPC) for a relative placement. Three of those asked for priority placement. Only 1 of those 3 was approved within the time frame and it was felt that that only happened because the worker had a personal relationship with the social worker on the MN side. The frustration experienced is that we have identified safe and appropriate relatives who could be approved for placement but we have children living in local foster homes instead making connections to those WI foster parents while we wait. In a time when we are continually talking about becoming trauma-informed, this situation seems particularly in need of repair.

Optional/additional information or comments:

Please submit the **completed CRP Annual Report** and the **panel's current membership list** 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. Thank you!