

**Wisconsin Citizen Review Panel Annual Report**  
January 1-December 31, 2017

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| Name of Panel:          | Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council (MCWPC) |
| Contact Person & Title: | Deanna Alexander, Chief – Ongoing Services Section  |
| Panel Chair:            | Mark Mertens, MCWPC Chairman                        |

**Briefly describe the panel’s meeting schedule – including number/types of meetings, and schedule of any subcommittee and workgroup meetings held in 2017.**

The full Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council (MCWPC) met four times, on January 27<sup>th</sup>, March 24<sup>th</sup>, May 19<sup>th</sup>, and September 29<sup>th</sup>, two of which were community meetings at which progress on the Jeanine B. Settlement Agreement was reviewed.

The Critical Incident Committee (CIC) met two times on March 20<sup>th</sup> and July 10<sup>th</sup>.

The Health and Education Committee (HEC) met three times, on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, June 28<sup>th</sup>, and October 25<sup>th</sup>.

The MCWPC also created an Ad-Hoc Rules Committee that met on March 16<sup>th</sup> to serve a temporary purpose of reviewing and advising on changes to the bylaws of the council.

**Please provide a summary of the panel’s activities related to:**

**1. Evaluating the extent to which the State and the local child protection agencies are fulfilling their child protection responsibilities.**

The MCWPC receives regular reports from the Bureau of Performance Management detailing the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services’ (DMCPS) performance on metrics for child safety, permanency and well-being. The Critical Incident Committee reviews recommendations resulting from child deaths and egregious incidents. The Health and Education Committee addresses issues related to the physical, mental and dental health of children served by the Division, and issues related to the education of children served by the Division. The MCWPC also receives regular reports from the DMCPS Division Administrator, DMCPS agencies that contract for ongoing case management, the DSP Administrator, and the DCF Secretary. The MCWPC reviews the sum of this information as it seeks ways to support the mission of DMCPS in fulfilling its child protection responsibilities.

## **2. Evaluating local and State progress under the State CAPTA Plan.**

The MCWPC receives periodic statewide updates from the DMCPD Division Administrator, the DSP Division Administrator, and the Secretary regarding overall progress.

## **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.**

All MCWPC meetings and committees are open to the public, with the exception of closed session Critical Incident Committee meetings. Members of the public are encouraged to comment and question on all child welfare related topics. The MCWPC also receives reports detailing the administrative process for hearing out and taking action on any public complaints against DMCPD or its contracting agency. In 2017, the MCWPC set a goal of finding ways to further engage the community in its efforts and is exploring holding more publicized meetings in alternative locations such as schools or community centers, rather than at the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services.

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

The Critical Incident Committee (CIC) reviews all recommendations for child welfare practice changes in relation to fatal and egregious cases. In 2017, the CIC reviewed multiple death and egregious incident cases and the corresponding agency recommendations. The full MCWPC reviews periodic progress and ensures completion of all recommendations. It was from the review of such incidents that the CIC issued recommendations to the council, which the council then formalized and recommended practice changes to the DMCPD.

### **Please describe any other panel activities or issues addressed in 2017.**

- The MCWPC continued to monitor DMCPD progress on addressing overdue initial assessment reports, improving hiring practices, reducing caseload levels, and improving recruitment for case workers. The council consistently asks questions such as:
  - Are any initial assessment case reports overdue and if so, how many and why?
  - What is being done to work towards better placement stability?
  - What is being done to reduce turnover in the agency?
  - What is being done to ensure the demographics of the agency's workers represent the community they are serving?

- The MCWPC received presentations and thoroughly reviewed and discussed data in relation to placement stability of children placed in out of home care.
- The MCWPC considered requests for items to be included in the budget for the Department of Children and Families in the next biennium and heard presentations on the final decisions made in the State of Wisconsin 2017-2019 budget.
- The MCWPC received a presentation on the children of incarcerated parents.

**Please describe activities planned in 2017.**

Several members of the MCWPC attended the 2017 National CRP Conference in Anchorage, Alaska and reported back to the Council on nationwide practices and developments.

The MCWPC is planning to also send members to the 2018 National CRP Conference in Mackinac Island, Michigan in June of 2018.

The MCWPC plans to enhance community engagement and involvement in 2018, potentially by moving its meeting locations to places outside the traditional meeting place at DMCPS. In 2017 the MCWPC also changed its meeting calendar so that fewer full-council meetings are taking place and there is opportunity for more meaningful and participatory committee meetings throughout the year.

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

The Health and Education Committee advised the DMCPS of the need for more funding for the Educational Liaison services provided to the division under contract, in order to relieve the over-utilized staff serving in those roles and expand services in a way that will help the maximum number of children.

The MCWPC formally advised the State of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families of two improvements to the local and state systems:

1. The Council recommends that the state consider amending the state standards to include a time frame for case plan completion once permanency has been achieved through reunification.
2. The Council recommends that DMCPS work with the Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) to review factors involved in co-sleeping deaths.

**Optional/additional information or comments:** Nothing to add.

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 to Jamie Gennrich at [jamie.gennrich@wisconsin.gov](mailto:jamie.gennrich@wisconsin.gov). The annual report and the DCF response to each report will be posted on the DCF Citizen Review Panel web page at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/prevention/crp>. Thank you.