



2019
Wisconsin Citizen Review Panel
Annual Report

For the period of: January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019

NAME OF PANEL:	Jefferson County Citizen Review Panel
CONTACT PERSON:	Brent Ruehlow, Panel Coordinator and Chair Laura Wagner, Panel Coordinator and Chair

I. REPORT OF 2019 ACTIVITIES:

1. Please describe the panel's 2019 meeting schedule. Please include the following specific information:
 - a. The frequency and type of panel meetings;
 - b. The frequency and type of any subcommittee and workgroup meetings.

Our schedule has vacillated over the years and due to conflicts we met four times this year:
2/14, 6/20, 10/31, 12/5.

We did not have any sub-committee work, but we do conduct inter-session work via email or phone call for various projects.

2. Please describe how the panel provided for public outreach and comment in order to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in the community.

Our committee is made up of a number of community members that were able to offer feedback from their point of view, in addition to representing the various community groups they are involved with. Furthermore, we conducted surveys upon the completion of various community presentations that provided valuable feedback.

3. Please describe any case reviews conducted by the panel in 2019.

Our committee does not conduct case reviews at this time.

4. Please summarize any other panel activities or panel events that took place in 2019.

In 2019 we conducted the following activities:

- DEC training event (development of our local Children in Crisis Guide)
- DEC protocol signing event

- We purchased the “Sexting “curriculum to be used in conjunction with schools and law enforcement.
- We developed and delivered Trauma 102 for the Legal Community (follow up to Trauma 101).
- Updates to the staff common areas per the past TIC survey.

II. **EVALUATION**: In completing the evaluation portion of this report, please examine, to the best of your ability, the policies, procedures, and practices of State and local agencies, and where appropriate, specific cases.

1. Please provide an evaluation of the following:

STATE

a. The extent to which the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is effectively carrying out the **two below listed** child protection responsibilities assigned to it under the State CAPTA Plan, and the Wisconsin Child Welfare Standards (Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards, Access and Initial Assessment Standards, and Ongoing Services Standards).

- The Alternative Response Pilot

The AR Pilot began in 2010 and Jefferson County became an AR pilot site in 2012. At that time, all onboarding pilot sites received comprehensive training and technical assistance from DCF, PDS, and BSC, and I believe this training and technical support has continued with all onboarding pilot sites. In 2016, funding from DCF provided several opportunities for AR pilot sites to meet and dialog with DCF, PDS, and BSC about the challenges and successes with AR. In 2017, DCF hosted a series of policy meetings throughout the state and AR pilot sites provided input regarding their applied understanding of AR and pathway assignment. The meetings resulted in a deeper understanding of how AR implementation impacts practice within each county differently. In 2018, an AR Policy Think Tank was created which Jefferson County was part of. The goal of this sub group was to align county feedback with policy, and position DCF to make the best possible recommendations regarding levels of AR implementation, including pathway assignment criteria and guidance around how to think through those criteria; recommendations for policy; ideas regarding statewide implementation; and expansion of case decision options. Based on Jefferson County’s participation in this sub group, it’s our understanding that DCF’s ultimate goal is for every county to practice AR and potentially be the only pathway for Primary Initial Assessments. While DCF has provided comprehensive training, technical assistance, and ongoing forums for AR pilot sites, one specific area that appears to need more focus and structure is section V.I.C.3. of the AR Standards. The language in this section is vague, and historically, DCF has provided little guidance on what Community Response Programming is or what the referral process to such programming should entail. Additionally, given that AR pilot sites are required to make referrals to Community Response Programming when a CPS Report is screened out, funding and technical support for such programming would be beneficial.

- Cross System Collaboration Between CPS and Law Enforcement Agencies:

As noted in the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) report, the state has been extremely active in the area of Cross System Collaboration between CPS and law enforcement agencies. The CRP panel as a whole had some familiarity in this area due to the efforts of our local panel this past year as we supported the research and development of a local Drug Endangered Children (DEC) protocol. It was during this development phase that the panel was able to see firsthand the work from DCF at the state level in the area of Cross System Collaboration. It was this expertise and guidance from the Wisconsin Alliance for Drug Endangered Children whom brought in regional partners to educate, train and support local law enforcement, human services staff, legal personnel, along with a variety of other stakeholders, that made this process outstanding. Additionally, it was the collaboration and pre-existing relationship that the Wisconsin Alliance for Drug Endangered Children had with law enforcement across the state level that allowed for instant buy-in for our local agencies. Finally, the various tried and tested DEC protocols that DSP has supported and offered guidance to across the state allowed our workgroup to have a starting point for this localized process. Furthermore, the work by DSP and expertise in this area provided instant credibility due to the statewide work by the Alliance and DCF as a whole. Additionally, the work that DSP has done to develop MOU's with law enforcement was made available to us locally as we began the process of refreshing our local MOU's within the county. These practices were very tangible items that our panel took on locally, allowing our members to see that work done by DSP and the Alliance first hand. In summary it is our panel's belief that the work being done in the area of Cross System Collaboration between CPS and law enforcement agencies at the state level is being met as we cross walked CAPTA and the CPS Standards.

Special Note:

If you wish to review any portion of the State CAPTA Plan and its most recent updates in formulating your response, a copy of the Plan is attached to this report, and the 2019 updates are available through the following link:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cqi-cfsr/pdf/plans/2015-2019-cfs-report-draft.pdf> (see pages 107-113). If you wish to access any of the Wisconsin Child Welfare Standards in formulating your response, they are available through the following link: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy?accactive=0>.

- b. The extent to which the DCF is effectively complying with any other criteria that the panel considers important to ensure the protection of children (e.g., the extent to which the State child protective services system is coordinated with foster care and adoption programs; a review of child fatalities and near fatalities).

LOCAL

- The extent to which local child protection agencies are effectively carrying out the **two below listed** child protection responsibilities assigned to them under the State CAPTA Plan, and the Wisconsin Child Welfare Standards, referenced above.
 - The Alternative Response Pilot

As noted, Jefferson County has been an AR pilot site since 2012. Even prior to becoming an AR pilot site, we believe our work with families always aligned with the principles of the AR pathway, so the onboarding process was quite seamless and natural for our county. Training and technical assistance from DCF, PDS, and BSC was provided to our Access, Initial Assessment, and Ongoing staff in order to ensure continuity in our AR implementation. We also host informational meetings and Mandated Reporter presentations with our community partners on what AR is and the value of using this pathway. We have found great value in working with families under the AR approach as it is truly strength-based, family focused, trauma informed, collaborative and comprehensive. Jefferson County has been recognized as one of the counties in the state with the highest percentage of AR cases. The state average of AR cases in 2019 was 16% whereas Jefferson County's average of AR cases was 62%.

In 2016, several of our Initial Assessment Workers were part of an AR Writing Guide Workgroup with other AR pilot sites. This Workgroup ultimately developed a Writing Guide for all AR pilot sites to use when completing Initial Assessment documentation, which included how to capture more of the critical thinking process by the IA Worker. The guide helped develop consistency within each county, as well as consistency among all AR counties. Our IA Workers also have extensive ongoing training in Motivational Interviewing which makes their work with the AR approach that much more successful. Our IA Workers also are trained in the use of some of the AR tools, such as the Three Column Mapping tool, as well as the Three Houses tool, and use these regularly in their practice.

The Intake Unit was fortunate to establish our own Community Response Programming in the fall of 2018. Under this programming are a Family Advocate and a Parent Coach, both of whom carry out the philosophy and tenets of a voluntary intervention and support model that offers a family-centered, strength-based assessment and planning process. These two staff have strong community partnerships and offer direct service or referral services in the areas of domestic violence, vocational assistance, family medical needs, financial support, household or family needs, housing, mental health services, parent education and child development, as well as substance abuse services. Over 100 families have been referred to our Community Response Programming since its conception and approximately 100 children are currently being served.

- Cross System Collaboration Between CPS and Law Enforcement Agencies:

As referenced in the State portion of the Cross System Collaboration between CPS and law enforcement agencies report, our panel was very active in this area in 2019, giving our panel insight into this topic. Additionally, as we cross walked the CPS Standards and the CAPTA report for collaboration, rich discussion ensued locally. It was our panel's belief that with the development of the DEC committee, established response protocol and subsequent case review process with law enforcement that Human Services was effectively complying with this part of CAPTA. A local strength as identified by the Jefferson County Sheriffs and Chiefs association was the relationship with Child Protective Services and Jefferson County Human Services as a whole. Additionally, 2019 saw Human Services join with the sheriff's department on active shooter training, along with hands on active shooter drills. A number of agencies commented at the DEC

protocol signing their appreciation for our continued relationship as a whole, along with this protocol specifically. The panel also commented positively on the Cross System Collaboration between CPS and law enforcement at the Initial Assessment phase as discussed at various meetings in 2019.

- The extent to which local child protection agencies are effectively complying with any other criteria that the panel considers important to ensure the protection of children (e.g., the extent to which the State child protective services system is coordinated with foster care and adoption programs; a review of child fatalities and near fatalities).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Please list any panel recommendations to improve child protection services at the State level.
 - Reimbursement for supportive housing projects as a Medicaid benefit. Housing is a real struggle for families and as an evidenced based practice this has been shown to be effective.
 - Work with ICPC to align policy with Family Find philosophy when working with parents out of state or like-kin.
 - Any improvement to the Immigration laws affecting our youth and families ability to access services, become providers etc...
2. Please list any panel recommendations to improve child protection services at the local level.
 - More training opportunities for local stakeholders
 - Increased cooperation with counties for courtesy supervision situations.
 - Advocacy attorneys for immigration situations for children and their families.
3. Please list any additional information or comments that the panel wishes to share.

Please submit the **completed Citizen Review Panel Annual Report and the panel's current membership list** to the State of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families by e-mailing both documents to Alicia Breininger at alicia.breininger@wisconsin.gov **no later than January 31, 2020.**

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> not later than six months after receipt of each report. Thank you.