



2019
Wisconsin Citizen Review Panel
Annual Report

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

NAME OF PANEL:	Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council
CONTACT PERSON:	Bridget Chybowski, Panel Coordinator

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;

The Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council (MCWPC) met four times on the following dates: March 29, 2019, June 21, 2019, September 27, 2019 and November 15, 2019.

b. The frequency and type of any subcommittee and workgroup meetings.

The MCWPC has three subcommittees:

- **Critical Incident Committee:** This Committee shall review child fatalities and near fatalities in accordance with 42 U.S.C.A. § 5106a(c)(4)(A)(iii)(II). It shall also review recommendations of the Department Children and Families (DCF) Independent Review Team (IRT) following any death or egregious incident review. The Committee shall follow Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) progress in addressing these recommendations.
- **Health and Education Committee:** This Committee shall address issues related to the physical, mental, and dental health of children served by DMCPS and issues related to the education of children served by DMCPS.

- Out-of-Home Care Committee: This Committee shall address issues related to services for children who have been removed from their homes, recruitment, licensing, support and training of foster care and placement resources. This Committee shall also address issues related to adoption.

The MCWPC members were updated in 2019 due to the change in State leadership. New subcommittee chairpersons and members will be selected in Fall of 2020 for each subcommittee.

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.

All MCWPC meetings are open to the public with the exception of the closed sessions. Members of the public are encouraged to comment and question on all child welfare related topics. There is time set aside for public comments and questions at every MCWPC meeting.

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

The MCWPC did not conduct case reviews in 2019 and will resume case reviews in Fall of 2020. In 2016, the Division of Safety and Permanence (DSP) implemented the System Change Review process for all counties; this new case review process is used for child deaths and serious and egregious incidents. Milwaukee County implemented the System Change Review process in mid-2018 with the case reviews occurring in March 2019. The MCWPC identified this as an area for further consideration, specifically regarding the impact of the state's new process on the Critical Incident Committee's case review process.

4. Please summarize any other panel activities or panel events that took place in 2019.
 - Appointment of the following MCWPC members:
 - Honorable Laura Crivello, Presiding Judge of Milwaukee County Children's Court
 - Ms. Carmen Pitre, Executive Director of Sojourner Family Peace Center
 - Milwaukee County Supervisor Sequanna Taylor
 - Milwaukee County Supervisor Patti Logsdon
 - Ms. Bria Grant, Executive Director of Unite MKE
 - Ms. Jameelah Love, Young Adult Consultant with ICF International
 - DMCPS' progress on the *Jeanine B. Settlement Agreement*¹ was reviewed at the March 29, 2019 and September 29, 2019 meetings.
 - The MCWPC continued to monitor DMCPS' progress on addressing initial assessments not closed in a timely manner.

¹ *Jeanine B. v. Evers*, Case No. 93-C-0547 (E.D. Wis.), a broad-based class action lawsuit alleging system-wide deficiencies in the Milwaukee child welfare system. The case was settled in 2002 and one required benchmark remains unmet and therefore subject to monitoring and enforcement.

- A presentation to MCWPC about upcoming implementation of the federal legislation Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), which addresses preventing youth from entering out-of-home care, providing supportive services to families, and reducing congregate care placements. In addition, the MCWPC provided input to DMCPs and DCF on areas of need for children and families related to the implementation of this legislation.
- Presentation of Scaling Wellness in Milwaukee (SWIM) by Amy Lovell, President of REDGEN and Co-founder of SWIM.
- Invited to participate in Request for Proposal Case Management Listening Sessions conducted by DCF in Fall of 2019.

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).

- Integration of the Child Welfare Practice Model into the Ongoing Services Standards and Integrated Case Planning

Wisconsin's Child Welfare Model of Practice was collaboratively developed in 2015. The purpose of Wisconsin's child welfare system, as articulated in the Wisconsin Child Welfare Model for Practice, is to keep children safe and to support families to provide safe, permanent, and nurturing homes for their children. The system strives to engage with children, youth, and families to expand healthy connections to supports in their communities and tribes and bolster resiliency in families to help them thrive. The following core values guide the work of the child welfare system: Trust, Respect, Engagement, Accountability, Trauma-Informed Practices, Culturally Responsible Practices, Workforce Support, and Family-Centered Approaches. The Wisconsin Child Welfare Model for Practice serves as the compass that guides the work and decision-making in the child welfare system.

DCF continued to partner with Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System to implement the Child Welfare Model for Practice within the trainings provided to private and public child welfare staff. In addition, the Child Welfare Model for Practice principals are incorporated in Child Protective State Standards, policies and procedures.

- Integration of Family Participation in Case Planning into the Ongoing Services Standards and Integrated Case Planning

DCF recognizes the importance of family connections and participation in case planning. Families are more successful when they have a strong role and voice in the direction of their family case. DCF and its Milwaukee County ongoing case management contractor agencies have continued to implement strategies to promote family participation in the case plan. Formal training related to case planning is provided by the state's Child Welfare Professional Development System to enhance child welfare staffs' skills in engaging families in the case planning process. In addition, the Ongoing State Standards provide guidance related to engagement of families including but not limited to family teaming.

- 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).

The MCWPC does not have input on the extent to which DCF is complying with other criteria that impacts the protection of children at the state level.

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.
 - Integration of the Child Welfare Practice Model into the Ongoing Services Standards and Integrated Case Planning
 - Integration of Family Participation in Case Planning into the Ongoing Services Standards and Integrated Case Planning

DMCPS works with families to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Under the supervision of DCF, DMCPS has implemented the Wisconsin Model for Practice and continues to follow all CPS State Standards which direct and guides DMCPS' work and the work of its contractor agencies with children and families. DMCPS recognizes the importance of the family voice and familial connections and requires family teaming for all DMCPS families.

- 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).

None at this time.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Please list any panel recommendations to improve child protection services at the State level.

The MCWPC did not make any recommendations to DCF in 2019. The MCWPC is working on identifying areas of interest to address in 2020-21 regarding systems recommendations.

2. Please list any panel recommendations to improve child protection services at the local level.

None at this time.

3. Please list any additional information or comments that the panel wishes to share.

None at this time.