



2021 Wisconsin Citizen Review Panel Annual Report

Due By:
March 1, 2022

Submission Information

Please submit the completed report to the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families by emailing the completed document to Sarah Hanson at sarah.hanson1@wisconsin.gov by March 1, 2022.

Notes:

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 was included in the email along with this report and the 2021 updates are available through the following link:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cqi-cfsr/pdf/report/apsr21.pdf>

The 2021 CAPTA Requirements and updates can be found in Section D (pg. 3) of the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR).

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>

Citizen Review Panel Information	
Citizen Review Panel Name	
Coordinator 1 Name	Email Address
Connie Raether	connieraether@gmail.com
Coordinator 2 Name (if applicable)	Email Address

Section 1: Report of 2021 Activities

1. Please describe the panel's 2021 meeting schedule, including the frequency and type of panel meetings, and the frequency and type of any subcommittee and workgroup meetings.

The CRP Serving Outagamie County met every other month starting in January of 2021 from 11:30-1:00. Additionally, we held two case reviews, one in February and one in October. Meetings were held via zoom. There are three workgroups, Retention and Resiliency, Outreach and Guardian ad Litem. They meet when needed.

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.

The Panel has a facebook page. Also, in April, the CRP had a pinwheel campaign in which pinwheels were placed at Harbor House (local domestic abuse shelter) on the fence and at local organizations as well. Several media outlets picked it up. The County Executive proclaimed April Child Abuse Prevention Month. Co-chair Pastor Larry Creamer and DCF Manager Melissa Blom were on WHBY to talk about child abuse prevention. Community members commented on social media because of the hashtag. Pastor Larry also wrote "Children are gifts from God, handle with care," in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month, on a very visible sign in front of his church.

3. Please describe any case reviews conducted by the panel in 2021.

Case Review Feb. 2021: Concerned a child with significant mental health issues (Dx. ODD, ADHD, Bipolar Disorder, borderline intelligence), physical abuse by father, mother deceased. Multiple foster care placements and residential care placements. Maternal grandmother involved. Does best in structured environment. Hospital seems to be her "safe place." Due to lack of treatment foster homes and state facilities equipped to meet her needs, she was placed in an out of state facility. This was not only costly but didn't allow for connections with her family.

Case Review Oct. 2021: Concerned two children ages 7 and 4, removed from home due to parents' addiction and incarceration. Multiple placements with extended family and foster care. Lack of follow through by parents in regard to substance use treatment and visits. DA's conflicted out due to past contact with family so hearings were heard by different DAs. The relatives were trying to decide between guardianship and adoption. While writing a referral for TPR the family changed their mind about adoption due to fears about how adoption would impact their relationship with other family members. Guardianship law changed in August of 2020 so guardianship petition wasn't filed, had to be resubmitted. Went through August 13, 2021 after children had been in out of home care for 6 years. TPR not able to be filed with no adoption plan in place.

4. Please summarize any other panel activities or panel events that took place in 2021.

- The Panel funded a two hour training for social workers in February called ReFuel, ReEnergize! We also continue to fund the work of the Retention and Resilience Work Group and IPADs for social workers. We have funded pack n plays for several years, but this year we looked into assisting the county in securing a grant for the pack n plays through the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region. The Foundation agreed and paid for the requested items. We are hopeful that this will be a continuing source of funds.
- Social Work Appreciation Day March 17th: Bookmarks and “treats” for the staff were purchased and dropped off for Social Work Appreciation Day March 17th. Co-Chair of the Panel, Pastor Larry Creamer, addressed the group at their meeting with words of encouragement and a pledge that our Panel will support the staff in any way we can.
- Information was shared on the Pillars Ascend Program, which provides up to two years living for young adults (18-25) with mental health issues at \$225 per month. Includes case management, occupational therapy. This is an option for some of the youth aging out of foster care.
- In April, the CRP assisted the county with the Pinwheel Campaign for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month. Pinwheels were placed at Harbor House Domestic Abuse Shelter on the fence and at local organizations as well. A tri-fold and flyer were created and distributed with small pinwheel displays to businesses in the community. Several media outlets picked it up. The Outagamie County Executive did a proclamation and Melissa Blom, Manager of CYF, and Pastor Larry Creamer, CRP Co-Chair, were on WHBY to talk about child abuse prevention. Community members commented on social media because of the hashtag. Pastor Larry also had on his church sign “Children are gifts from God, handle with care,” in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month. Pictures were shared on the Outagamie County Foster Care facebook page and on the CRP facebook page.
- The Panel is leading a group who will be developing an “Advocating for Myself” packet. This provides dependent youth with a resource to assist them in advocating for themselves by providing them with information on their rights, resources, and the structure of the juvenile dependency process.
- Two CRP members attended part or all of the CRP National Conference and brought information back on the sessions attended. Information shared included “The Art of Doing it All,” the impact of covid on families and issues around kinship care.
- Had a presentation by the Executive Director of Safe Families, a new program in Outagamie County whose goal is to create a social support system for families in need by stabilizing families first, then supporting them as needed with family friends, family coaches and host families who will provide a place for the family to live on a temporary basis.
- Found a new home for our “Shaken Baby” doll, that simulated what happens to the brain of a child who is being shaken. It is now at Family Services and can be checked out by any group that would like to have it.
- 2 Panel members attended the Statewide CRP meeting and we will be looking at racial disparities in our CYF system as a result.
- The Panel continues to support the Retention and Resiliency (R and R) project at the county, which we helped fund. This has been a two year project in which a consultant was hired to look at the culture at the Department and work with a team to make sure workers feel supported and appreciated. Two Panel members serve on the R and R team and Pastor Larry serves on the R and R Sponsorship Team.

Section 2: State 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:



a) The extent to which the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is effectively carrying out **at least one and up to three of the 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).

***Choose at least one and up to three of the following CPS Responsibilities:**

- CPS & Law Enforcement Agencies
- CPS & Domestic Abuse Programs
- CPS & Health Care Professionals
- CPS & Tribal CW Agencies
- CPS & the Judicial System
- CRP Support
- Integration of the CW Practice Model into the Ongoing Services Standards and Integrated Case Planning; Training
- Integration of Family Participation in Case Planning into the Ongoing Services Standards & Integrated Case Planning
- Safety & Stability of Children Placed in Relative or Foster Care
- Predictive Risk Model
- WI Act 78 & Systems Change Review
- CPS & Child Abuse Prevention

Chosen CPS Responsibility #1	
	<p>Support for CRPs. The CAPTA plan states that the state is required to "provide the panel access to information on cases that the panel desires to review" and "provide the panel, upon its request, staff assistance for the performance of the duties of the panel." The state provides the Panel with \$10,000 which we use for sending members to the National Conference, funding projects at the request of the county, and funding any initiatives deemed important by the Panel. The state also hosts quarterly calls for all Panels, giving people a chance to share information and cover topics of interest to members. And the state hosts a one day meeting, in 2021 over zoom, normally in person. Topic of the 2021 meeting was racial disparities in services to children and families</p>

b) The extent to which 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 CPS system is coordinated with foster care and adoption programs; a review of child fatalities and near fatalities):

At this time, the Panel is in transition as the Manager of Outagamie County's Children, Youth and Families Department has retired. There is no one who is able to report on this section.

Section 3: Local 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:

a) The extent to which local child protection agencies are effectively carrying out **at least one, and up to three of the below listed*** child protection responsibilities assigned to them under the State CAPTA Plan and the Wisconsin Child Welfare Standards, referenced above.

***Choose at least one and up to three of the following CPS Responsibilities:**

- CPS & Law Enforcement Agencies
- CPS & Domestic Abuse Programs
- CPS & Health Care Professionals
- CPS & Tribal CW Agencies
- CPS & the Judicial System
- CRP Support
- Integration of the CW Practice Model into the Ongoing Services Standards and Integrated Case Planning; Training
- Integration of Family Participation in Case Planning into the Ongoing Services Standards & Integrated Case Planning
- Safety & Stability of Children Placed in Relative or Foster Care
- CPS & Child Abuse Prevention

Chosen CPS Responsibility #1
CRP Support. Until her retirement, the Manager of CYF attended meetings of the Panel and participated in our activities. Two supervisors and one social worker also attend and participate. They provide information that is essential for the Panel and coordinate activities, such as the Pinwheels for Prevention campaign. They also determine which cases will be reviewed based on the Panel's recommendations re: issues that we feel are important and social workers involved in the cases present them at our case review meetings.

b) 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).

At this time, the Panel is in transition as the former Manager of Outagamie County DCF has retired and that position has not been filled. At this time there is no one able to comment on this section.

Section 4: Recommendations

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

Recommendation 1	Need locked psych residential treatment facilities in WI. As well as facilities that allow kids with low cognitive functioning to be admitted. Now kids need to go out of state and that is expensive and difficult to maintain family connections.
Recommendation 2	Need a state initiative to more aggressively recruit and provide a high level of training and support for foster parents statewide due to complex situations and very difficult cases.
Recommendation 3	Need option to offer option for foster parents to do foster care professionally full time and be paid appropriately.
Recommendation 4	Need treatment facilities in Wisconsin that have staff trained in brain interventions. Currently kids are sent to a facility in Georgia.
Recommendation 5	Law requires least restrictive setting and we also try to keep kids in community, but it sets kids who need a more restrictive setting in order to feel safe to go through placements that do not work. Law needs to be changed to allow some kids to be placed in a more restrictive setting earlier if needed and if in their best interest.
Recommendation 6	Need a law change so families do not have to go through child welfare system before being placed in residential care. It stigmatizes the families who have not abused or neglected their children.

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

Recommendation 1	Workers need dedicated time for difficult cases requiring many more hours of work than the average case.
Recommendation 2	Need more support for fathers, both at home and when incarcerated, to help with possibility of reunification.
Recommendation 3	Need a facility like shelter care for youth with mental health needs, but not punitive, ie Hope Center in Green Bay.
Recommendation 4	Need more access to in home services to prevent out of home placement and preserve the family; difficulty now is lack of staff.
Recommendation 5	Need more targeted supports to strengthen families to meet identified needs
Recommendation 6	Need to implement community services that are evidence based.
Recommendation 7	Need timely access to mental health services, especially crisis based, ie. a walk in clinic for youth.
Recommendation 8	Need an OT and a mental health therapist to work with each case.

Recommendation 9	People in our community need more knowledge of and access to the recovery community, ie. recovery coaches and other supportive services to assist families in creating plans to ensure the safety of their children.
Recommendation 10	Need AODA treatment facilities where mothers can stay with their children.
Recommendation 11	Need better cooperation from local methadone clinics
Recommendation 12	Need buy in from stakeholders in the community to address issues relating to needs of children and families

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

Section 5: Planning for 2022

In this section, please outline between one and three of the above mentioned CPS Responsibilities to

Anticipated CPS Responsibility #1	CPS and the judicial system
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Anticipated Efforts and Activities Related to CPS Responsibilities in 2022:
The Citizen Review Panel Serving Outagamie County continues to participate in regular meetings of the Judicial Enhancement Training program. This program has produced significant coordination between the various entities and agencies involved resulting in child protection cases moving more efficiently and effectively through the systems. The JET meetings are scheduled for the third Friday every other month and this effort will continue in 2022.
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Other Anticipated Efforts and Activities in 2022 (Not related to chosen CPS
Working on a strategic planning session led by our state liaison. Looking at racial disparities in our child welfare system. Continuing to assist with retention efforts for county social workers.