

**Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
Citizen Review Panel
CAPTA Report for CY 2010
March 21, 2011**

Purpose

The purpose of the Citizen Review Panel (the Panel) is to evaluate the extent to which the state is fulfilling its child protection responsibilities in accordance with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. This is done through examining policies, procedures and practices of state and local child protection agencies, reviewing specific cases where appropriate, and examining other criteria that are important to ensure the protection of children. The Children, Youth, and Family Services Advisory Committee serves as the Statewide Citizen Review Panel for Washington state.

Area of Focus Selected for this Report

During the CY 2010 reporting period, the Panel continued work begun in 2007 on racial and ethnic disproportionality related to child protection. The primary focus in 2010 was on the efforts of the department to reduce and eliminate racial disproportionality in the child welfare system. The Panel continued monitoring the department's implementation plans of recommendations made by the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee in December 2008, in response to a 2007 legislative mandate.

The Panel focused specifically on the department's efforts to address disproportionality at the decision point of referral. In Washington state disproportionality initially occurs at referral indicating that mandated reporters need training and resources.

Process

The Citizen Review Panel met in person five times during 2010. The Panel reviewed relevant documents and research, received information from key

staff and stakeholders, and used group discussion as its primary methods for review and education. At each meeting CA staff and Panel members discussed proposals and implementation of plans to address disproportionality, especially at referral, in the child welfare system.

Examination of Racial Disproportionality within Washington State Child Welfare Services

This is the fourth year of the Panel's multi-year study on Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality and Disparity. The Panel received updates periodically on all remediation efforts of the department. The primary focus, as discussed above, was on disproportionality at referral to the child welfare system.

In 2009 the Panel recommended training for all mandated reporters that included information about disproportionality and specifically recommended updating a mandated reporter video currently in use. In response to this the department developed new training resources for mandated reporters statewide. This Mandated Reporter's Tool Kit includes: a new Mandated Reporter Disproportionality Video Brochure, an updated guide on reporting abuse and neglect, and a new statewide training PowerPoint. Regional trainers will use these tools and the previously developed mandated reporter video for group presentations.

- After exploring multiple options, staff determined that revising the mandated reporter video was cost prohibitive and adding a few minutes about disproportionality would break up the video's continuity. The department decided to develop a video brochure that could serve as a stand-alone communications tool and as a training tool to augment other materials. A video brochure is a tool that uses still images, text, and voiceover to convey a message.
- ✓ Panel members reviewed a script the department developed and commented on an early screening of the production. The Panel, CA staff and other interested partners gave specific feedback on wording, graphics and tone of the video. They provided recommendations about vital information targeted to help mandated reporters understand and consider their effect on the

disproportionate number of referrals on children and families of color.

- ✓ This video brochure challenges viewers to “check yourself” about biases and stereotypes. Panel members and CA staff were both adamant that the prevailing message is: mandated reporters need to be aware of racial and ethnic bias influencing reporting decisions; however, they should never hesitate to report any child who they believe is in harm’s way.
- ✓ The video brochure is in final review with the department and expected to be released in spring 2011.
- Children’s Administration updated “Protecting the Abused and Neglected Child – A Guide for Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect” for inclusion in the Tool Kit. The Panel reviewed the Guide and made specific suggestions about disproportionality information to add or to clarify.
- Child Protective Services, communications, and disproportionality staff researched and developed a PowerPoint titled “Child Protective Services: Guidance for Mandated Reporters” to provide information and resources to mandated reporters, including staff. As recommended by the Panel and CA staff, it includes comprehensive information on reporting child abuse and neglect and the importance of cultural competency and understanding disproportionality.
- Communications staff in partnership with Child Protective Services and disproportionality staff developed a communication plan to inform staff of the new Tool Kit for mandated reporter training. These tools will be used by regional trainers to educate mandated reporters, including staff, and will ensure consistency in training across the state.

The Panel expressed concern about data availability to track disproportionality, specifically to monitor if remediation efforts work. CA staff continue to develop race data for all performance measures. Significant progress was made in 2010 and efforts continue in 2011.

The Panel keeps a lens of disproportionality on all of the work and information that comes before it. This includes review and discussions of major initiatives, policy, practice, and legislation that may impact children and families of color. In 2009, the Washington State Legislature passed into law legislation that requires DSHS Children's Administration to:

- Convert current contracts to performance-based contracts, by July 2011.
- Develop two demonstration sites where case management for children and families involved in the child welfare system will be performed by private contractors, by December 30, 2012.

DSHS staff update the Panel at every meeting on progress and possible effects of these mandates on children and families of color, including unintended consequences. During each update, staff request input and advice on plans for implementation, language in contracts, and other areas where the Panel can provide guidance and input.

In 2010 the Panel reviewed and provided input into the Performance Based Contracts – Request for Proposal. The Panel gave special attention to expectations of cultural competency requirements of contractors.

Recommendations:

- CA should ensure mandated reporter training materials and training are widely distributed to mandated reporters and a plan is developed to ensure training and materials reach as many mandated reporters as possible.
- CA should continue to improve Family Team Decision Making model fidelity.
- CA should continue to expedite efforts to address data and reporting, including race and ethnicity, of FTDM efforts. This will help CA determine whether FTDMs are impacting racial disproportionality in the Washington state child welfare system.

Future Plans: Continue to focus on Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality and Disparity in Washington State

The CRP plan to address racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity in Washington State is multi year.

In 2011 the Panel plans to:

- Review the distribution plan for the Mandated Reporter Tool Kit training materials and give feedback to CA.
- Monitor how CA distributes the training materials and their tracking system for who receives training and where training is held.
- Review the Family Team Decision Making protocol and procedures developed by CA with technical assistance from Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- Review updated data on CPS decision points where disproportionality was identified to determine if there is improvement. Provide feedback and input on results of review. Collaborate with CA staff to improve current strategies and develop new strategies to help the department continue moving forward to impact racial disproportionality and disparity as found in those decision points.

2010 Citizen Review Panel members:

Jim Sherrill, Indian Policy Advisory Committee, Longview – **Chair**

Janis Avery, Treehouse, Seattle

Michael Bates, Juvenile Court Administrators, Walla Walla County

Lucy Berliner, Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress, Seattle

Robert Faltermeyer, Excelsior Youth Center, Spokane

Jana Heyd, Society of Counsel, Seattle

Ed Holm, Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, Olympia

Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society, Seattle

Byron Manering, Brigid Collins Family Support Center, Bellingham

Ron Murphy, Casey Family Programs, Seattle

Nancy Roberts-Brown, Catalyst for Kids, Seattle

Jim Theofelis, The Mockingbird Society, Seattle

Tess Thomas, Thomas House, Seattle

Gwendolyn Townsend, OCOC/UJIMA Community Services, Seattle

Kitty-Ann Van Doorninck, Superior Court Judges, Tacoma