

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel's mission is review of our child protective system across agencies offering summaries and recommendations for improvements benefiting children and families.

Wyoming



Citizen Review Panel, Inc.

Board of Directors

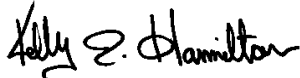
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Kelly J. Hamilton
Executive Director

“The story behind the data, through the eyes of citizens”

DATE: November 1, 2006

TO: Ed Heimer, District Manager - Child Protective Services
Bob Quick, Regional Manager - Juvenile Services

FROM: Kelly J. Hamilton, Wyoming Citizen Review Panel 

RE: October 2006 Mini CFSR Review; District 5 and Region 1

Executive Summary:

Safety:

The outcome of safety is divided into two subcategories: “Safety 1” (children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect and “safety 2” (children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate).

Permanency:

The outcome of permanency is divided into two categories: “Permanency 1” (children have permanency and stability in their living situations” and “permanency 2” (the continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children).

Adjudication delays

Well Being:

The outcome of well being is divided into three categories: “Well-being 1” (families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs), “well-being 2” (children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs) and “well-being 3” (children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs).

Contributing Factors:

It is the intent of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel to do more than just highlight data: The CRP looks for various observations that are worthy to note and may help to explain the story behind the data in an effort to promote best practices throughout the state.

Conclusion:

R1240

15 year old boy, mom and dad divorced, wbs, complete probation, reunify with mom, report dad emotionally abusing brother, unfounded, continued relationship with dad and David, dad doesn't like counseling, bonded with therapist and beneficial, mom dependants behavior, mom changes boyfriends, out of WBS, mom and son emeshed, victim role, everyone's fault, mom has modeled that well, lots of counseling, medical condition of anemia taken care of, school was a big issue, bright but stubborn, looking at going home, but will not do anything in science class

R1241

Hispanic, 17 when placed at wbs, turned 18 in placement, case still open, delinquent, lovell, 100's of thefts, admitted to 11, restitution 5K, IEP expired, learning disability, determined and protective mother, reunification, stepfather, other sibling, 11/2005, wbs 10 months, mom needed parenting, child needed GED, assessments, substance abuse, electronic monitoring, job, community service, MDTs, IL, mom lost her job over investigation, mom combative with caseworker, mom uncooperative,

R1244

3 counts of sexual assault; group home, 8-9 months, infractions, attempted least restrictive first, then ramped up. Inpatient and outpatient, fp, mdt

R1245

Probation, July 2004, stole grandmas car, drugs, reunification, good academics, parents not real good at following thru, maltreatment prior, mom hit girl with board, mom was kinda tough, resistant at first, mom needed to go thru therapy first and then introduce child, dad was whatever,

D5242

Cutter, threatening, reunification, 11/2005, group home in Greybull, St Joes, constantly fought with step dad,

D5243

D5246

5 kids in house, mom cannot keep a clean house, boy is in foster care, boy does not want him home and is making it so he doesn't have to go home...mom is operates slowly, kid doesn't think he can make it at home; 9/23/05 came into care, mom came in and asked for help; CHINS, mom put him in Sunlight crisis bed

D5247

Case started years ago, pc taken in January 2002, child 19 now, one sibling place with her at 17, one sibling at C-V, caucasion, long term foster care since 2002, stability is

good, weekend respite, bio parents not engaged but by their own choice, dad in jail third meth bust, parents still have some degree, been in foster care for four years now.

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Appendix A

The graph above shows category comparisons in the areas of safety, permanency and well being. It is important to note that the 2002 graph line represents a state average, not a specific local office average. Wyoming Mini CFSR items are listed below for further clarification along with category explanations *highlighted in blue*. Individual item ratings contribute to the corresponding category rating in the review process.

Item 1 = Timeliness of investigation

Item 2 = Repeat Maltreatment

S1 - Children are protected

Item 3 = Services in home/prevent removal

Item 4 = Risk of harm to children

S2 - Children are safely maintained at home

Item 5 = Foster Care

Item 6 = Stability of foster care placement

Item 7 = Permanency goal for child

Item 8 = Reunification/Guardianship/Relative

Item 9 = Adoption

Item 10 = Other planned living

P1 - Children are stable in placement

Item 11 = Proximity of foster care placement

Item 12 = Placement with siblings

Item 13 = Visiting w/parents and siblings/fc

Item 14 = Preserving connections

Item 15 = Relative placement

Item 16 = Relationship of child w/parents

P2 - Family relationships are preserved

Item 17 = Needs/services

Item 18 = Child/family involvement in plan

Item 19 = Worker visits w/child

Item 20 = Worker visits w/parent(s)

WB1 - Families can provide child's needs

Item 21 = Educational needs of the child

WB2 - Educational needs met

Item 22 = Physical health of the child

Item 23 = Mental health of the child

WB2-Physical and Mental health needs met

For further definition explanations, the entire Wyoming Mini CFSR instrument is available for review and downloading at <http://www.wycrp.org/page9.html>.

Appendix B

Strengths

- Caseworker was very professional, focused on what child needed.
- Child and mom attended MDT
- Child remained in same placement
- Good team work getting GED for child
- Good communication between all the MDT members
- File was in very good shape
- Mother was combative and negative at the start and tried to get PO fired; now signs the praises of DFS and recommends DFS services
- Good case plan
- Good communication between caseworkers and treatment providers
- Good case work planning
- Good indication of family practice
- Child has good input into the plan and is now more committed
- Now that child is in placement his grades are great
- General supervision after the case is discharged for three to six months
- Proactive planning at WBS was a strength
- Great assessments
- Tried to keep child in community, child ran, but they tried
- Reunification has been the consistent goal for 2.5 years now
- All services provided for the child; educational, health, safety
- Good identification of bio relatives; none were appropriate but a through search was done
- Young people were well know and talked about among all MDT members, great communication between all the team members.
- Shopped for Prom dresses with GAL and case worker
- Good communication between GAL, school and DFS
- Lots of services offered
- Everybody spoken to in the interview process spoke very well of DFS
- DFS helped mother get a shed and carpet donated to mother and family
- The work of DFS kept the other siblings out of placement
- BEST PRACTICES with school district from Powell DFS
- Community sees the DFS office as a community resource

Additional contributing factors

- Mom sabotaged the work of the WBS
- Mom used Hispanic divide not to share info for boy with WBS
- 60% of child's income devoted to restitution
- Electronic monitor being used for community safety
- Strong bond between mom and child
- System has provided good services despite scattered out in the Big Horn Basin area

- Judge Hartman's Family Court; mom did not want child participating in family court; court can do UA's on mom who has alcohol problem
- System waiting to see if mom's new boyfriend is "good" or "too good to be true?"
- Major difference between Basin school and Worland school; Basin will work with the child and Worland will just kick him out
- Often times, the schools have to be forced to work with DFS; this demonstrates the need for a better understanding
- Community saw DFS as the reason that the child was not getting educated while incarcerated; but court system may have been the hindrance; child was languishing in detention as child was going to be charged as an adult; PO was trying very hard to get the child in the right system
- Mother was a licensed day care provider; her son perpetrated; community rallied behind the mother
- Delays in adjudication
- Child did her part, but mom did not
- Foster parents has allowed bio mom and grandparents to come stay with the foster parents and see their children
- DFS working on getting an original social security card for child
- Mom has been engaged and done a good job
- Family therapy has been very beneficial
- Good services at St. Joes; child feels safe there
- Girl is allowed to maintain contact with adopted father
- St. Joesphs has given child the necessary tools to deal with stepfather when she goes home
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Opportunities for improvement

- Mom was ugly and combative, caseworker admitted some avoidance
- Look at the whole family; try and address needs of the whole family
- Coordination with new school could be better; school struggling with refusal to do work. School was feeling that court documents were not being followed, why does nobody back the school up when child is not following the court documents?
- Could a neglect case have been opened up on the mother opening up the chance for services for the family? DFS policy is not clear when these sorts of cases should be opened up
- Somehow need to get mom engaged; mom did not feel like she was being heard. However mom has been on adult probation; ran over a person and killed him. Mom felt that services should have been provided locally.
- Physical health documentation in file was lacking; all kids physical health needs were met, but documentation was missing in file
- Child is in St Joes, but mom is not able to visit frequently; more face to face contacts needed

- Transition from St. Joes to Casper School to TFC, will that change from small school to a large public school work?
- No concurrent case plan is in place; child wants mom to make a choice between child and stepfather and there is no concurrent plan in place if child blows out when she goes home
- Case need a concurrent case plan just in case that reunification fails
- Concurrent planning can also be a detriment to a child working a case plan; when they have input and the concurrent plan looks better than the case plan they are currently working, they may sabotage so that they can then fall into the concurrent plan.

Systemic barriers

- Hard to get parenting classes in the basin area; however case worker made calls during the review and took care of it for the mother
- Need transitional programs for kids coming out of WBS
- Court documents took months being prepared by county attorney's office
- 5 month lag between initial appearance and next appearance; left social worker with no leverage
- Was there a way to intervene earlier in the case? Lots of contact, but nothing that warranted services by anybody
- Case started in June, disposition was not until late October
- Judge only visits once a week; when something is postponed it may be weeks or months before it can be put on the court docket
- No services offered locally; family may not have resources to go visit their daughter
- Transitional services are needed for child coming out of NSI and going to ISP.
- At one point foster parents were considering both girls, but due to increased behavior of sister, they elected not to adopt due to losing services
- Mental health services are not provided in many small communities necessitating that the child be placed outside of their community
- The need of "system" concurrent plans such as Habitat for Humanity
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The preceding are comments captured from verbal and written sources during and after the review. They are provided for informational purposes only and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel.

Review process dynamics and comments:

- Citizen reviewers in this review consisted of:
- Question 4; computer questionnaire version, will not allow the "no" to be entered.
- The period under review was August 1, 2005 through January 31, 2005.
- All cases were randomly selected and consent was given by the appropriate party for each case reviewed.
- Training was held for reviewers on October 29, 2006.

- The review instrument that is used looks at 23 specific items in the broad outcome areas of safety, permanency and well-being. The review instrument can re viewed and/or downloaded at <http://wycrp.org>.
- Switch the interview process around to talk to family and child first and then the case worker.
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District and regional goals:

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Big picture issues:

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