

Wyoming Citizen Review Panel



2016 Annual Report

Mailing Address:

1401 Airport Parkway

Suite 225

Cheyenne WY, 82003

307-632-0032

www.wycrp.org

*Never doubt that one person can change the world; indeed, it is the
only thing that ever has*

Margaret Mead



Our Mission

WYCRP promotes and provides systemic reviews, education, prevention and early intervention to ensure the safety of children and families.

Our Vision

WYCRP is the statewide leader in building collaborations for strong and healthy families and communities.

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel (WYCRP) is a federally mandated group of volunteer citizens who are responsible for determining whether state and local agencies are effectively discharging child protective responsibilities pursuant to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and subsequent amendments. Through a review of policies and procedures, research and reviews of child protective and juvenile service cases the purpose of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel is to promote child safety, permanency and well-being for children and families.

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel also partners with other organizations on collaborative efforts that ultimately support and/or improve the child welfare system. Under the WYCRP organization both Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming (PCAWY), a statewide primary prevention program and Parents as Teachers (PAT), a home visitation program focused on early intervention and parenting strategies, are housed.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	Page 4
Letter from WYCRP Executive Director	Page 6
Letter from WYCRP Executive Committee Chair	Page 7
Thank You	Page 8
Citizen Review Panel Duties	Page 10
Citizen Review Panel Membership	Page 11
Meeting and Activities	Page 12
2016 Annual Report	Page 15
2016 Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)	Page 16
Continuous Quality Improvement	Page 20
Child Welfare Focus Groups	Page 35
Core Training	Page 37
Drug Endangered Children Initiative	Page 37
Collaboration Efforts	Page 38
Wyoming Child Death Review and Prevention Team	Page 39
Wyoming 2016 Child Maltreatment Statistics	Page 42
WYCRP Strategic Plan	Page 43

Executive Summary

In July 2016, the Wyoming Department of Family Services (DFS) participated in the third round of the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). This review measured *Safety*, *Permanency* and *Well-Being* of children as well as the following seven systemic factors that affect outcomes for children and families:

- *Statewide Information System*
- *Case Review System*
- *Quality Assurance System*
- *Staff and Provider Training*
- *Service Array and Resource Development*
- *Agency Responsiveness to the Community*
- *Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention*

During the preliminary review, it was noted that the “Wyoming Department of Family Services has strong relationships with community agencies and folks in the community”. With that in mind the Wyoming Department of Family Services has continued the trend of reaching out to existing stakeholders and community partners, including the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel, as well as forming new relationships for the purpose of supporting children and families.

In addition to the CFSR, the Wyoming Department of Family Services Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team, in collaboration with the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel, reviewed the cases of youth in the areas of:

- *Non-Certified Foster Care*
- *Safety Assessments*
- *Certified Foster Care*
- *Adoption*
- *Youth Involvement*

What are the citizens saying about existing services, access, barriers and lack of services in Wyoming communities? From the collaborative efforts of WYCRP, DFS, the Wyoming Children’s Trust Fund (WCTF), 211 and WY Quality Counts we have learned that while there are a variety of resources in our communities to help support children and families both in communities and within the child welfare system, there continues to be a shortfall in the availability of transportation, health care, mental health supports, low-income housing options, and high quality childcare, to name a few. The collaborative efforts of hosting and facilitating community reviews between the entities mentioned above will continue throughout the summer

of 2017 with results being compiled and efforts being made in addressing improved access and identified barriers and needs.

The Wyoming Child Death Review and Prevention Team (WCDRPT), which WYCRP administers, provides an independent review of major child injuries and child fatalities on a quarterly basis. The WCDRPT advocates collaboration among organizations and agencies and development of programs that prevent injuries and fatalities. During these reviews recommendations for action are developed to assist both DFS and other entities involved in the child welfare system in improving services that contribute in the support of protecting children.

In addition to the role and responsibilities that WYCRP has regarding the WCDRPT, we are also responsible for facilitating the Children's Justice Act (CJA task force). The CJA provides grants to States to improve the investigation, prosecution and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner that limits additional trauma to the child victim. This also includes the handling of child fatality cases in which child abuse or neglect is suspected and some cases of children with disabilities and serious health problems. In an effort to purposefully and consistently align the work of the WCDRPT and the CJA, members are expected to be active participants in various stakeholder meetings and planning committees related to the Child and Family Services Plan and supporting local and/or State child fatality review teams, including multidisciplinary training, team development, and annual reporting.

Finally, WYCRP and DFS had the honor of presenting at the National Citizen Review Panel Conference in June of 2016, regarding the effectiveness of working together in our respective roles and how that work supports ways to actively involve citizens and their input on strengthening the child welfare system. WYCRP staff and Chair also participated in workshops in the following topics:

- *Value of Authentic Youth Engagement, Advocacy, and Youth-Adult Partnerships in Youth Panels*
- *Substance Abuse in the Child Welfare Caseload: What Can Citizen Review Panels Do*
- *Involving Citizens in Public Child Welfare: Challenges, Opportunities, and Building CRP Capacity*
- *How Do Child Welfare Administrators Perceive Work of Citizen Review Panels?*
- *Family Empowerment - National Changes in Child Welfare*

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel is proud to be a partner in the Wyoming child welfare and juvenile justice systems and is appreciative of citizen involvement in the organization. To this end we have an active panel with 13 volunteer members and two representatives from state agencies. Further information about panel activities and panel members can be found in this report. We hope that you find this report both informative and useful; supporting information along with other information can be found at <http://wycrp.org> or by calling (307) 632-0032.

Letter from WYCRP Executive Director

Safety. Permanency. Well-Being. While these words are the cornerstone of WYCRP's purpose, I am proud to say that we are not alone in this belief. As my first full year of serving as the Executive Director approaches, it is with great pleasure to write this report as it is a reflection of positive findings about social services in Wyoming with many new, innovative and progressive changes happening throughout the state that positively impact children and families.

I had the pleasure of participating in the Child and Family Service Review (CFSR), which took place during the week of July 11th, 2016. The traditional review consisted of a one week, onsite evaluation during which a federal and state team reviewed a sample of cases at three sites, and stakeholder interviews which were held with individuals and groups. Primarily my role was as a participant during the weeklong interviews that involved community stakeholders. While the purpose of these interviews was to gather information, and identify strengths and areas needing improvement, it quickly became evident to me that the Wyoming Department of Family Services places a high priority on making, growing and building strong relationships in the community.

Since receiving the CFSR report, the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel has been a part of participating in community stakeholder interviews to develop goals and strategies for improving service array statewide. As noted in the CSFR, Wyoming did well, but there are areas that demonstrate needing improvement; therefore, a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) has recently been developed to address those areas. WYCRP has been tasked with reviewing the preliminary PIP to determine what areas the Panel may be of assistance. This could include opportunities such as providing support to DFS through policy review/change, case file reviews, CQI efforts, surveys of training needs, etc. Ultimately it will be up to DFS to determine how best WYCRP can assist in the continued efforts of building capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes, but it is with confidence that I note the success in which DFS will achieve in the implementation of the PIP.

As a final thought, I must offer abundant gratitude to the Wyoming Department of Family Services in their support of not only the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel, but to me as the new Executive Director. This year was filled with a multitude of new experiences and learning opportunities. DFS provided many occasions in which to learn, understand and grow my awareness in child welfare issues and allowed me to share my input into the quality of their services.

Please take a minute to visit our website at <http://wycrp.org>. Consider becoming a volunteer panel member; it is a way to give Wyoming children in the child welfare system a voice. I would love to hear from you in person or by e-mail; please feel free to call me at (307) 632-0032 or e-mail me at eswilling@wycrp.org.

Sincerely,



Letter from WYCRP Chair

Dear Wyoming Citizen:

In partnership with the members, Executive Director and program staff of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel (CRP), I am pleased to release our 2016 Annual Report. As with past reports, this reflects the workings of Wyoming's human service system and the impacts on children and families.

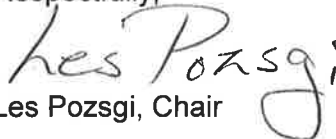
This past year has presented both challenge and reward. We began as participants in a national conference, one of twenty-three state panels, sharing practice, plans and goals. Presenting the dynamic partnership and collaborative efforts between our citizen volunteer panel and the Department of Family Services (DFS) elicited positive response (and in some cases, envy) from all the attending panels. This collective feedback from our peers was rewarding and affirming of our advocacy for progressive change to improve the lives of children and families. The Citizen Review Panel has remained true to this mission

CRP has been impacted by the economic downturn. Decreased operational funding promoted targeted reduction in staff and supportive resources. These reductions combined with the critical and important focus of the Child and Family Service Review limited Panel involvement at the community level. The Panel has primarily served in the role of providing oversight and direction to the Executive Director in working with the Department of Family Services and program staff to promote prevention, early intervention and response to child maltreatment and fatalities. At this writing we are exploring an expanded role for the Panel, working with the Department around program improvement and with other collaborative partners focusing on services within communities.

Finally, the materials presented in this 2016 report provide an in-depth analysis of the child welfare system. This information was developed through review of case materials and interviews with stakeholders. Where areas of concern are identified, action steps to address have been implemented or are in the process of development and initiation. We welcome your thoughts and suggestions for improving services for Wyoming children and families. These can be provided via e-mail to eswilling@wycrp.org.

As citizens, we share responsibility for the health and wellbeing of children and families and together we can make a difference.

Respectfully,


Les Pozsgi, Chair

Wyoming Citizen Review Panel

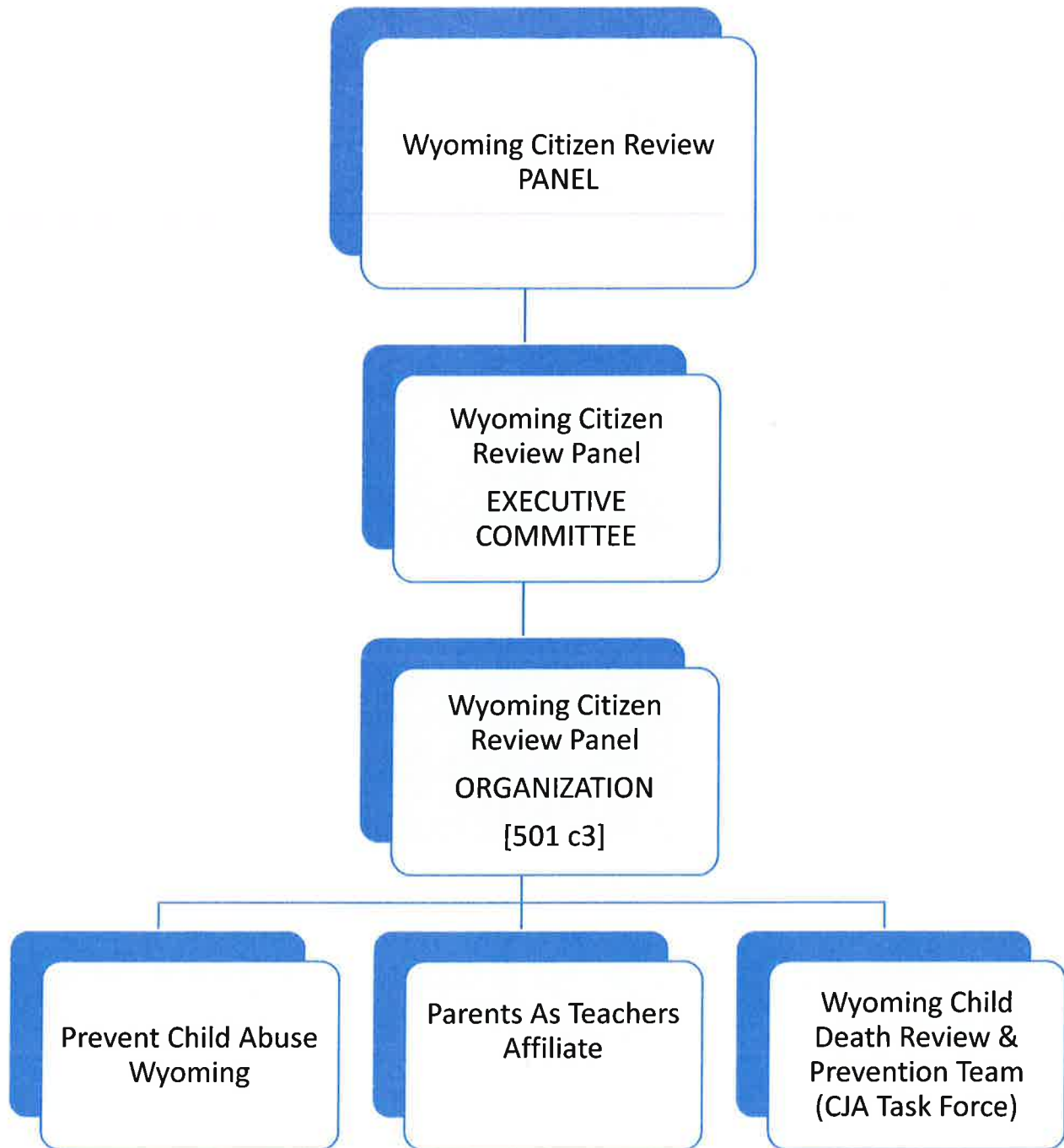
Thank You

- The work of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel would not be possible if it were not for the progressive thinking of DFS administrative and field personnel who strive for organizational excellence and use WYCRP as a measuring instrument. Thank you to our partners at DFS.
- A big thank you to the WYCRP Executive Committee; Les Pozsgi, Chair; Jo Ann Numoto, Vice-Chair; Emily Quaterman-Genoff, Secretary; Shad Bates, Treasurer. These four elected positions are invaluable to WYCRP and go above and beyond in their time and commitment to the Panel and more importantly, in their dedication to children and families.
- Along with our Executive Committee, it is also important to acknowledge WYCRP panel members. This group of volunteers are passionate about the work they do and bring a multitude of experiences and visions to each meeting they attend.
- Our partnership with Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming continues to be of great importance and it is with appreciation of ongoing collaboration efforts that WYCRP acknowledges the relationship between our two organizations.
- As with Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming, WYCRP must thank the Parents as Teachers Program, both at the state level and the national level, for ongoing collaboration efforts in the arena of prevention and early intervention efforts. As Parents as Teachers is a home visitation program, WYCRP notes the value of having Parents As Teachers be the “eyes and ears” of Wyoming families to ensure a continuum of care is shared across disciplines.
- Wyoming Children’s Trust Fund has been a partner and collaborator to the WYCRP many times and continues to work in partnership with us on a multitude of projects involving primary prevention efforts.
- To the Department of Corrections assigning a representative to the Panel, recognizing a shared goal for our children and families.
- Last but not least, much appreciation goes out to DFS field staff, for their commitment and passion to the youngest of our Wyoming citizens. Your voice is needed in providing program change and in bringing hope and help to those most in need.

Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time.

We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

Barack Obama



Citizen Review Panel Duties

Title: Volunteer Citizen Review Panel Member

Serving as a Citizen Review Panel Member is a meaningful volunteer role that can provide opportunities for gaining skills, insight and experience including”

- Access to a wide variety of resources and people
- Access to and an understanding of the child protection system and Juvenile Court proceedings
- An opportunity to actively participate on the behalf of abuse and neglected children
- An opportunity to promote and affect positive changes for the well-being of children
- An opportunity to out your interests, talents and expertise to good use for a worthy cause
- An opportunity to update and add to your resume

Orientation offered by the Citizen Review Panel to the child protection system includes an understanding of:

- Case plans and efforts to reunite families
- Child abuse and neglect issues
- Child development attachment issues
- Foster care, alternatives to family reunification
- The best interests of children
- The court process
- Ongoing professional support and consultation
- Reimbursement for mileage, parking and other approves out of pocket expenses

Citizen Review Panel Members do best if they have:

- Ability to articulate ideas, concerns and thoughts
- Ability to listen, be open minded, non-judgmental and constructive
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Common sense and maturity
- Desire to have a positive impact on the child protections service system
- Desire to promote needed changes in the child protection system as identifies by the panels
- Genuine concerns and compassion for those involved in the child protection service system.
- Willingness to make a commitment to serve actively

Citizen Review Panel Members are expected to:

- Advocate for needed resources to protect children from abuse and neglect and to ensure permanent homes for children in a timely manner
- Support high standards for financial accountability and program management and evaluation
- Commit to assessing measurable impact in all funding considerations and recommendations
- Analyze the information gathered and shared by CRP Director and Staff
- Assist with compilation of an annual report summarizing the Panel's activities
- Attend and participate in all Panel meetings
- Participate in contracted agency reviews at least once annually
- Increase community understanding, ownership and investment in child protection
- Make recommendations for needed policy changes and suggest corrective actions
- Participate in educational activities to better understand the child protection system
- Promote cooperation among community resources and child protection service agencies
- Provide feedback on what is working well
- Submit reimbursement claims and other requested records in a timely manner

Citizen Review Panel Membership

Required Membership: The Panel shall be composed of volunteer members who are broadly representative of the state, including members who have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect and the juvenile justice system.

Current Membership

Les Pozsgi, Chair, Lander	JoAnn Numoto, Vice-Chair, Cheyenne
Emily Quaterman-Genoff, Secretary, Casper	Shad Bates, Treasurer, Torrington
Peter Newell, Member, Cheyenne	Sheri England, Member, Gillette
Shannon Horton, Member, Lander	Stephanie Fisher, Member, Lingle
Kellie Johnson, Member, Cheyenne	Carol Nicolarsen, Member, Cheyenne
Rob Johnston, Member, Casper	Tricia Whynott, Member, Cheyenne
Korin Schmidt, Member, Cheyenne	Erin Swilling, Executive Director, Cheyenne
Dawn Sides, Dept. of Corrections Rep.	Lauri Lamm, Dept. of Family Services Rep.
Alli Anderson, WCDRPT Coordinator.	Jo Lee Schuler, Member, Cheyenne

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel is building collaborations for strong and healthy families and communities by:

- Supporting the development of strong, healthy families and communities through informative training facilitated by Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming and Parents as Teachers;
- Promoting safety and well-being for all children and families through Child Death Review Team recommendations to state agencies;
- Building the Child Protection and Juvenile Justice Systems with recommendations for improving access to mental health and crisis supports;
- Providing reviews of Department of Family Services policy and procedure implementation at the local level to ensure laws and service standards encourage community, child and family health and safety.

Meetings and Activities

Date	Panel Meeting	Number of Attendees
July 2016	Teleconference	9
August 2016	Teleconference	5
September 2016	In-person – Cheyenne	8
October 2016	Teleconference	10
November 2016	Teleconference	7
December 2016	In-person – Cheyenne	9
January 2017	Teleconference	7
February 2017	Teleconference	9
March 2017	In-person – Cheyenne	13
April 2017	Teleconference	6
June 2017	In-person – Cheyenne	9

Supportive Activities

Date	Meeting Type	Purpose	# of Attendees
July 22, 2016	Chair/ED	General	2
August 9, 2016	Chair/ED	General	2
August 10, 2016	Executive Committee	General	5
September 2, 2016	Chair/ED	Strategic Plan	2
September 13, 2016	Chair/ED	Panel Meeting	2
October 3, 2016	Outreach Committee	Strategic Planning	6
October 11, 2016	Chair/ED	Meet with DFS	5
November 17, 2016	Chair/ED	General	2
December 16, 2016	Chair/ED	General	2
January 5, 2017	Executive Committee	Strategic Planning	4
January 19, 2017	Chair/ED	Training	2
January 23, 2017	Outreach Committee	Strategic Planning	5
February 6, 2017	Executive Committee	Financial Planning	4
February 27, 2016	Chair/ED	General	2
March 17, 2017	Chair/ED	General	2
March 22, 2017	Chair/ED	Meet with DFS	3
March 31, 2017	Chair/ED	General	2
April 12, 2017	Outreach Committee	Strategic Planning	2
April 17, 2017	Chair/ED	General	2
May 2, 2017	Chair/ED	Annual Report	2
May 8, 2017	Chair/ED	PCAWY Contract	2
May 10, 2017	Chair/ED	Annual Report	2

May 26, 2017	Chair/ED	General/Annual Report	2
June 5, 2017	Chair/ED	General	2
June 15, 2017	Chair/ED	Panel Meeting	2
June 29, 2017	Chair/ED	General	2

The Acronym ED stands for Executive Director

"Time is one of your most valuable commodities and how you spend it determines what your life will be. You can either waste it, invest it or give it away." David Khalil

Note to the Reader

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel supports the Department of Family Services in its efforts to serve families and to that end, we've compiled accomplishments of multiple initiatives aimed at gathering information to be used to improve services available in the community intended to promote family stability. WYCRP shares information with communities to assist them in their efforts to work collaboratively to reach underserved and at risk families.

This year WYCRP staff and panel members began the program year by participating in the Wyoming Department of Family Service (DFS) Child and Family Service Review (CFSR), a federal review conducted by the Children's Bureau. WYCRP members were interviewed during the course of the review, along with a variety of stakeholders throughout the state. The interviews were facilitated by the Children's Bureau and were conducted to gain insight and additional information about how well certain systemic factors were functioning in the state. Participation included providing input to DFS around the following six systemic factors:

- *Case Review System*
- *Quality Assurance System*
- *Staff and Provider Training*
- *Service Array and Resource Development*
- *Agency Responsiveness to the Community*
- *Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention*

WYCRP also operates the Wyoming Child Death Review and Prevention Team (WCDRPT) to review files and provide recommendations to DFS and other local and state agencies regarding children who suffered a major injury or fatality caused by abuse or neglect or while in the custody of the Department of Family Services.

WYCRP will be providing information and recommendations based on input from the state's DFS office, the CFSR, the Program Improvement Plan (PIP), the reviews of WCDRPT, involvement in statewide case files reviews, community needs reviews, and participation in DFS focus groups. Additionally, WYCRP continues our effort in coordinating with the Wyoming Department of Family Services Continuous Quality Improvement Team (CQI), and the Wyoming Child Death Review Prevention Team as discussed in both the 2014 Annual Report and the 2015 Annual Report. The persistence of these groups continues to be in both building sustainable roles and tasks that support best practice in child welfare as well as supporting established procedures that have proven to be mutually effective and valuable.

The collaborative process that WYCRP employs in partnership with DFS continues to be a crucial component in providing quality services to children and families. DFS has made great strides in responding to the recommendations and information that was shared in the 2015 Annual Report. As the new program year approaches, WYCRP remains committed to

participating with DFS in supportive conversations to encourage further discussion and progressive change in child welfare.

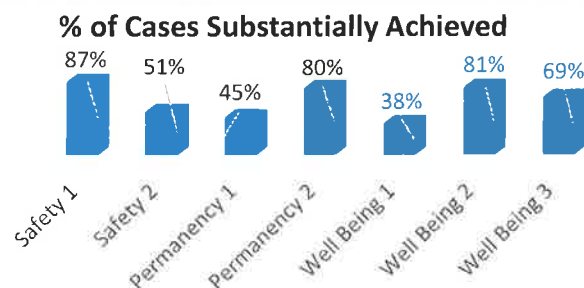
Child and Family Service Review Results

The following information was taken from the Children’s Bureau CFSR report and can be found, in its entirety, on the DFS website. The CFSR are periodic reviews of state child welfare systems, to achieve three goals:

- Ensure conformity with federal child welfare requirements
- Determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services
- Assist states in helping children and families achieve positive outcomes

2016 CFSR Information/Results:

- Wyoming DFS completed a statewide assessment, prior to the onsite review in July of 2016, which included relevant information and data to show how well the systemic factors (as noted on the previous page) are functioning across the state
- 65 cases were received using the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI). 25 were in-home cases and 40 were foster cases.
- Cases were reviewed in three counties: Laramie, Natrona, Park.
- For each of the 2 Safety, 2 Permanency, and 3 Well-Being Outcomes – an outcome is considered to be in substantial conformity (passing) when – *95% of the applicable cases reviewed “substantially achieve” the specific outcome requirements based on the OSRI rating scale. See graph below, provided by the Children’s Bureau, for further information regarding how the state performed in these particular areas:*



Graph provided by the Children’s Bureau

- None of the 7 Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes were found to be in substantial conformity.
- 29 stakeholder interviews were held with individuals and groups
- The Children’s Bureau and Wyoming DFS agreed that the following systemic factor items were not functioning as required – based on data/information in the statewide assessment - no further stakeholder interviews would be needed on these items for CFSR rating purposes. *Statewide information System, Periodic Reviews, Permanency Hearings, Filling of Termination of Parental Rights Petitions.*
- 3 of 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity. These include *Staff and Provider Training, Agency Responsiveness to the Community, Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention.*
- Systemic Factors not in substantial conformity include *Statewide Information System, Case Review System, Quality Assurance System, Service Array and Resource Development*

2016 CFSR Themes –Strengths:

- Case review findings and stakeholder interviews indicated Wyoming’s implementation of Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs for foster care cases), foster care and the state’s “Practice Model” promotes the achievement of safety, permanency and child and family well-being outcomes.
- MDTs and wrap-around services appear to promote a more comprehensive understanding of the needs of children and families.
- Children with siblings in foster care are placed together.
- Caseworkers do well in promoting family connections during a child’s foster care placement.
- Efforts to implement the Practice Model continue throughout the state.
- DFS has strong partnerships in the communities and with other agencies.
- The Department of Family Service’s quality assurance system had made progress in its development and functioning and is moving in a promising direction.
- Efforts are underway to strengthen caseworker and supervisory training by more clearly linking the curriculum and training objectives to key child safety, permanency and child and family well-being outcomes.
- Initial staff training and orientation.
- Ongoing staff training.

- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or childcare institutions receiving Federal funds.
- Agency responsiveness to statewide community system functioning to ensure services under the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are coordinated with services or benefits of other federally assisted programs serving the same population.
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention meets requirements for criminal background checks.
- State use of cross-jurisdictional resources for permanent placements.

CFSR 2016 Themes – Areas Needing Improvement

- Overall the comprehensiveness of child and family assessments was inconsistent and did not always address underlying factors that contribute to a more holistic understanding of individual and family needs.
- Case review findings indicated challenges in the achievement of safety and well-being outcomes across the states in-home cases compared to foster care cases
- Case file information and case specific interviews indicated that in probation cases the casework was generally focused on the child/youth subject to supervision and not other children in the family.
- The engagement of biological fathers in all aspects of casework practice was identified as an area of need for foster care and in-home cases.
- Stakeholder interviews indicated significant barriers to accessing needed services and resources for children and families.
- Significant challenges exist in ensuring timely periodic reviews, permanency hearings and filing termination of parental rights petitions within the required time-frames.
- Case review finding indicated permanency delays for children.
- Case review findings and stakeholder interviews indicated a need for DFS and the court system to coordinate efforts and to ensure timely permanency reviews for children in the foster care system.
- Individualizing services
- Agency responsiveness to the community to ensure engagement in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court and other public and private child-and-family serving agencies.
- Diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive homes, who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

CFSR - Next Steps

- A Program Improvement Plan (PIP) was submitted to the Children's Bureau by DFS in April 2017.
- Continued collaboration efforts between the State and the Children's Bureau will continue to monitor the PIP.
- Continued collaboration with identified partners, including WYCRP, in implementation of the PIP.
- DFS will implement the PIP over two years with an additional year to monitor data measures.
- Safety interventions shall be prioritized and addressed in less than two years.
- Wyoming shall complete key activities to benchmark progress.
- Wyoming shall achieve measurable progress on identified actions.

While the PIP was recently submitted to the Children's Bureau in April of 2017, WYCRP had an opportunity to review the plan and make determinations as to what identified strategies and interventions could be a focus of the Panel. There are several action steps that WYCRP has recognized as key components that members can support in the implementation of the PIP. These can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- WYCRP can look at how policies are developed, shared and trained to staff and then assess the process to determine effectiveness.
- WYCRP can participate in CQI review of cases to ensure accurate use of documentation.
- WYCRP can work with collaborative groups regarding systemic strengths and areas for improvement.
- WYCRP can review examples of cases that score well with engagement during CFSR to help develop focus area.
- WYCRP can help to evaluate the engagement of children during treatment plan meetings, discharge planning meetings, MDT meetings, as set forth by DFS policy and procedure.
- WYCRP will collaborate with stakeholder and community resources.
- WYCRP can review policy to determine if challenges or modifications are needed.
- WYCRP can participate in steering committee to analyze feedback and work from PIP groups.
- WYCRP can survey supervisors for meeting topics related to overall schedule of priorities.
- WYCRP can survey caseworkers regarding important topics of discussion and training for supervisors on schedule of priorities.
- WYCRP can survey caseworkers on effectiveness of new training topics.
- WYCRP can survey supervisors on effectiveness of TL process.
- WYCRP can survey supervisors regarding topic areas within agency priority schedule.
- WYCRP can survey caseworkers regarding topic areas for their supervisors within agency priority schedule.

Continuous Quality Improvement – Case File Reviews

CQI, by definition, is an approach to quality management that builds upon traditional quality assurance methods by emphasizing the organization and systems: focuses on “process” rather than the individual; recognizes both internal and external “customers”; promotes the need for objective data to analyze and improve processes. Source: Graham, N.O. *Quality in Health Care* (1995)

Key elements of Continuous Quality Improvement:

- Accountability
- Driven by good management...not crisis
- Driven by input from all levels of staff and stakeholders
- Teamwork
- Continuous review of progress

Goals of Continuous Quality Improvement:

- Guide quality operations
- Ensuring a safe environment and high quality of service
- Meet external standards and regulations
- Assist agency programs and services to meet annual goals and objectives

The Wyoming Department of Family Services quality improvement process involves a consistent team of DFS staff including social service program analysts, the CQI Supervisor, the policy and program manager, general program manager, and WYCRP Executive Director. The purpose of the CQI meetings are multi-faceted and consist of reviewing the Annual Program Service Report (APSR) to monitor the progress of goals, objectives and interventions, to gather input and feedback from focus groups and stakeholder calls, and to analyze casefiles to ensure effective case management and policy development. WYCRP participated in the review of case files that focused on CQI efforts in the following areas:

- Youth Participation
- Adoption
- Safety Assessments
- Non-Certified Foster Care
- Certified Foster Care

Results and information are as follows:

Youth Participation

Based on the Youth Participation review, the Department of Family Services compiled the following information and results, which was then shared with WYCRP for the purpose of incorporating into the Annual Report.

Evaluated documents:

- Independent and Transitional Living Plan, SS-9t (from the life of the case)
- Rights for Wyoming Youth SS-9r (from the life of the case)
- Human and Sex Trafficking Screening, SS-07 (from the life of the case)
- Case Plan (from the life of the case)

Additionally, reviewers determined if the youth was actively involved in case planning during the period under review from 10/1/2016-12/30/2016. The Child and Family Services Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions were utilized to develop the CQI evaluation tool as well as guide reviewer ratings.

In order to make the determination, documentation was requested from local offices in the form of:

- Relevant case narrative
- Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) reports
- Case Plans
- Rights for Wyoming Youth
- Independent and Transitional Living Plan
- Wyoming Practice Model documentation
- Other relevant documents

Description of Sample and Cases Reviewed

A total of 100 cases were reviewed for information regarding youth participation and consultation in the case planning process. The sample consisted of youth age 14 and older who were in foster care from October 1, 2016, through December 31, 2016. The sample consisted of 76% Juvenile Service Probation cases and 24% Child Protection cases.

Completion of Case Plan

Of the total cases reviewed, 91% had case plan documentation while 9% did not have documentation of completed case plans.

Concerted Efforts Youth were Actively Involved in Case Planning During the Period Under Review

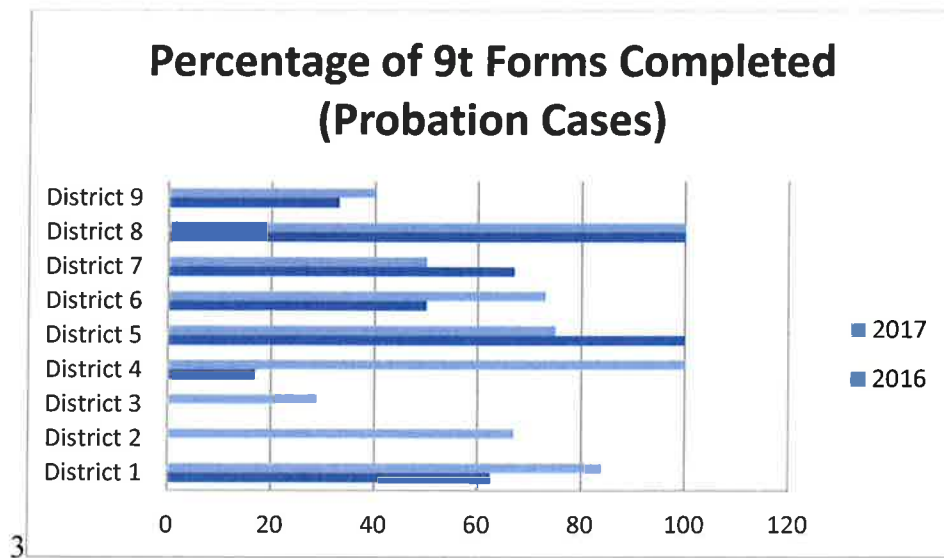
Of the total cases reviewed, 77% of cases had documentation that the youth was involved in case planning during the period under review; 21% did not have documentation of youth involvement; and in 2% of cases it was documented that the youth was unavailable and therefore not able to be involved in case planning.

Completion of Independent and Transitional Living Plan (9t)

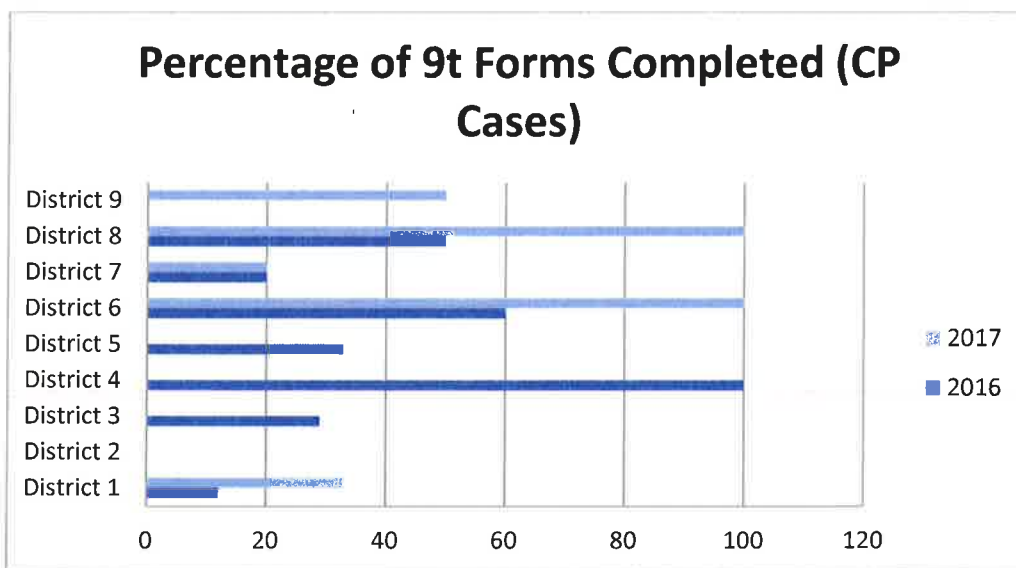
Of the total cases reviewed, 55% of cases had documentation that the 9t was completed with the youth’s signature, while 44% did not include a completed 9t with the youth’s signature. In 1% of the cases, the youth was incapacitated and unable to sign the 9t that was provided. Additional information is listed below, separated by District, comparing the results of the 2016 and 2017 reviews.

Following the 2016 review the CQI established the goal to have 95% of cases contain the completed 9t and 9r documents and be able to observe evidence they were developed and explained to each youth upon the subsequent review. Although this goal was not reached, the number of cases containing completed 9t and 9r documents has increased dramatically. These increases can be seen in most Districts as detailed in the graphs below.

The following chart depicts the percentage of 9t forms completed by District for Probation cases, comparing completion in the 2016 review to the 2017 review.



The following chart depicts the percentage of 9t forms completed by District for Child Protection cases, comparing completion in the 2016 review to the 2017 review.



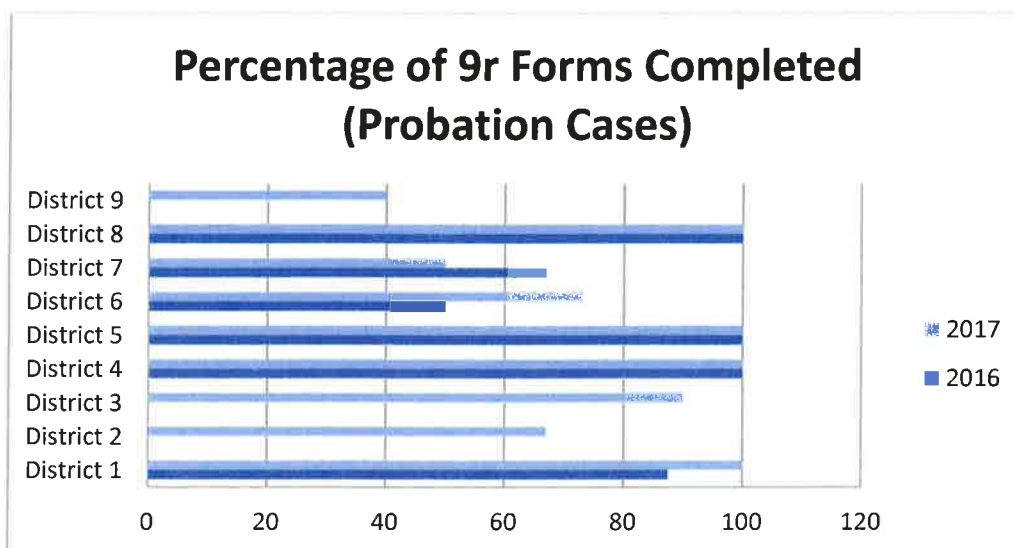
Concerted Efforts Youth were Actively Involved in Independent and Transitional Living Planning (9t) During the Period Under Review

Of the total cases reviewed, 49% had evidence of the youth’s active involvement in the 9t; 50% did not have documented involvement; and in 1% the youth was unavailable and unable to participate in the 9t.

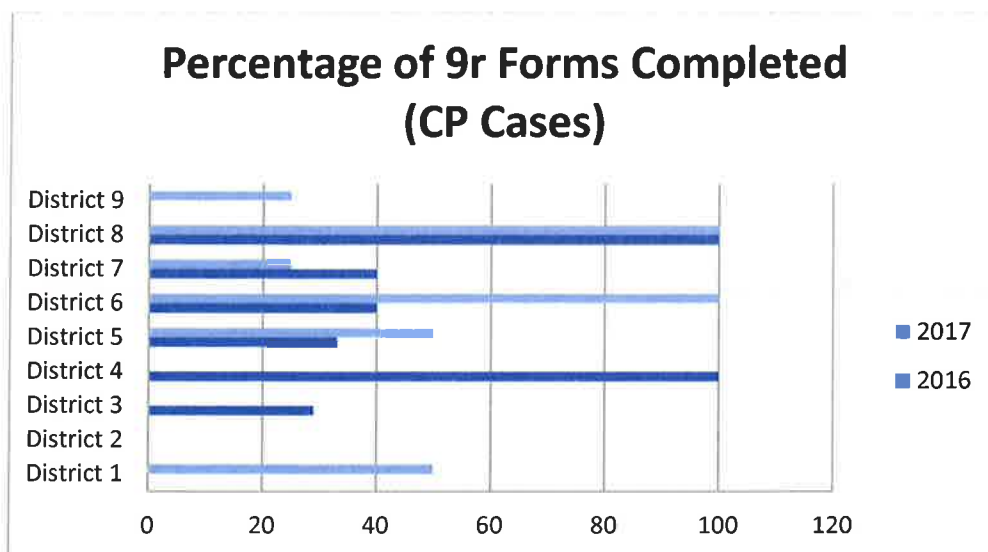
Completion of Rights for Wyoming Youth (9r)

Of the total cases reviewed, 72% of cases had documentation that the 9r was completed with the youth’s signature, while 26% did not include a completed 9r with the youth’s signature. In 2% of the cases, the youth was unavailable and unable to sign the 9r.

The following graph depicts the percentage of 9r forms completed by District for Probation cases, comparing completion in the 2016 review to the 2017 review.



The following graph depicts the percentage of 9r forms completed by District for Child Protection cases, comparing completion in the 2016 review to the 2017 review.



Appropriateness of Permanency Goal of OPPLA/APPLA

Of the total cases reviewed, 17% had OPPLA (Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement) as a case plan goal or concurrent goal, while 83% of the cases did not. Of those cases with an OPPLA plan or concurrent plan, 2% were for children under the age of 16.

Completion of Human Trafficking Screening (SS-07)

Of the total cases reviewed, 69% had completed the SS-07 and 31% had. This review only evaluated completion of the SS-07 in out-of-home placement cases.

During the review it was evident additional support from the State and for the field staff will be necessary. In numerous instances the SS-07 was completed and placed in the case file; however, those results were not entered into the DFS data system (WYCAPS). While it is good practice that the screening is completed and should be recognized in this report, states are also bound by federal reporting requirements which includes information on youth in foster care that have been victims of trafficking. Reporting is documented based on information in WYCAPS so it is imperative the content of the screening be entered into WYCAPS. A majority of the completed SS-07s submitted for review were completed but not entered into WYCAPS. Because there is not a place to indicate the date of completion on the template it was difficult to determine when the form had been completed.

Next Steps

A “Lunch and Learn” Policy meeting occurred in March 2017 to ensure staff received supplementary information on Policy 2.9 regarding Human Trafficking and use of the screening tool plus Policy 3.4.1 regarding Independent and Transitional Living and increased awareness of the SS-9t and SS-9r.

Wyoming’s Independent Living Coordinators will also continue to be trained in participating and assisting youth and their case planning teams complete the Rights for Wyoming Youth and the Independent and Transitional Living Plan.

Safety Assessments

Based on the Safety Assessment review, the Department of Family Services compiled the following information and results, which was then shared with WYCRP for the purpose of incorporating into the Annual Report.

The following information was derived from randomly reviewing 75 child protection cases which is reflected in the table below:

Initial Assessment Rating	Number of Cases	Determination for Review
Initial Assessment Safe	271	Not selected for review
Initial Assessment Unsafe	114	33.3% randomly selected for review
Initial Assessment Conditionally Safe	208	18.2% randomly selected for review

Within the statewide sample, safety assessments rated as conditionally safe or unsafe were evaluated to determine whether safety planning was completed; the following factors were reviewed:

- Number of days from the initial assessment to date of written safety plan
- When a formal safety plan was not completed, was an informal plan completed
- How the informal safety plan was documented
- Documentation that children participated in safety planning
- Parents signing the safety plan
- Missing participants in development of the safety plan identified
- Child(ren) signature on the safety plan
- Behaviorally based components of the safety plan.

Of the 75 cases reviewed, 100% of the cases were found to have an initial safety assessment completed in WYCAPS. Per DFS policy, initial safety assessments are required to be completed on all CP cases. The results of this review verified safety assessments are being completed in WYCAPS, as required by policy.

DFS policy requires a written safety plan be completed for cases with an assessment rating of unsafe or conditionally safe. Of the 75 cases reviewed, 51% of the initial assessments were rated unsafe and 49% of the initial assessments were rated conditionally safe. Refer to the table below for assessment ratings for cases reviewed by District.

District	Initial Assessments Rated Unsafe	Initial Assessments Rated Conditionally Safe	Total Number of Cases Reviewed
1	3	2	5
2	3	2	5
3	5	5	10
4	1	1	2
5	4	3	7
6	7	7	14
7	9	8	17
8	3	5	8
9	3	4	7
TOTAL	38	37	75

Of the 75 reviewed cases, 58 of the cases reviewed had documentation of initial formal or informal safety planning. 43 cases had written safety plans completed. Of the 43 with written safety plans, 32 written safety plans signed by both parents and 26 safety plans included behaviorally based components. Of the 32 cases without written safety plans, 17 did not have informal safety planning, while 15 had informal safety planning.

Of those 17 cases reviewed that had no documentation of formal or informal safety planning, reasons noted in the documentation include:

- Child placed into protective custody
- Parents refusing to meet with caseworker.

Safety Plan Signatures

Of the 43 cases that had written safety plans, 33 had parent signatures. Additionally, the results indicated that all children in the home signed the safety plan in 4 cases; some of the children in 2 cases children were too young to sign the plan in 18 cases; and children did not in 19 cases.

Informal Safety Plan Documentation

Of the 15 cases with informal safety planning, documentation appeared in several places. 10 of the cases documented in narrative; 4 of the cases documented in the case plan; and 1 case documented in other places.

Participation in Informal Safety Plan Development

Of the 15 cases with only informal safety plan documentation, 4 cases indicated child(ren) participated; 8 cases indicated child(ren) were not included in the planning; and in 3 cases the child was too young to participate. In the 4 cases with child engagement, documentation included child engagement activities under the Practice Model. Additionally, child(ren) were able to articulate what needed to happen for the house to be safe and provide information on past unsafe behavior.

Behaviorally Based Plans

Of the total 58 cases with formal or informal safety planning, 26 cases had behaviorally based safety plans while 32 cases did not.

Of the total 75 cases, 17 of the reviewed cases, had no formal or informal safety planning.

Components of behaviorally-based safety plans include:

- Safety services have an immediate impact on controlling safety threats
- Safety actions, not treatment services (although treatment services may be offered in addition).
- Matches the safety threats as they occur in the family
- Describes ongoing oversight by caseworker or safety network
- Includes a communication plan for monitoring, feedback, and problem solving.

Areas identified as strength

The CQI Team reviewed initial safety plans, identifying the following strengths:

- All of the cases reviewed had a formal safety assessment completed in WYCAPS
- 56 of the cases reviewed have initial formal or informal safety planning
- In cases with written safety plans, the written form was often done same day or within A few days of the opening incident.
- Cases with formal or informal planning had a higher rate of youth involved in planning.
- Behaviorally-based safety plans documented factors and actions, persons responsible for tasks, when and where safety action will occur, involvement of a safety network and when and how each task will be monitored.
- Involvement of children in safety planning was found documented in cases with:
 - Safety Houses;
 - Three Houses;
 - Safe Behavior Plans;
 - Three column maps;
 - Safety Goals Plans;
 - Parent Family Case Planning notes;
 - Narrative describing safety discussions; and
 - Case plans.

In reviewed cases with formal written safety plans, most involved some form of informal planning which included both caretakers and children in the home. Efforts to involve children in safety planning were clearly documented by caseworkers using Three Houses and Safety Houses.

Areas identified as needing improvement

- 17 of the cases were found to have no formal or informal safety planning
- Documentation noted child(ren) being taken into protective custody as a reason written safety planning was not completed.
- Of the total 58 cases with formal or informal safety planning, 26 cases (45%) had behaviorally based safety plans.
- Of the 43 cases with written safety plans, 11 cases had safety plans that were not signed by the parent.

Cases without written safety plans often had discussion of safety factors with parents, MDT members, etc.; however, actions steps to control the safety factors lacked detail in many cases

when the plan was not in written form with the family. In those cases without formal safety plans, monitoring of progress was not clearly identified or documented.

Next Steps

The CQI team will assist local field offices with training specific to safety planning needs. A review of safety plans will be completed within 12 months from the date of this review to monitor progress.

Adoption

Based on the adoption review, the Department of Family Services compiled the following information and results, which was then shared with WYCRP for the purpose of incorporating into the Annual Report.

DFS Permanency and Adoption Policies were utilized to determine if forms required by DFS policy were thoroughly and accurately completed. The policies are created to ensure financial and medical assistance is provided for families who need support for children with special needs and maintain a record of the adoption. The 33 cases reviewed were from adoptions that were finalized in 2014 and 2015 from each judicial district.

The forms reviewed were as follows:

- Birth Parent's Medical History SS-40B
- Older Child Medical History Information SS-40c
- Application for Assistance and/or Waiver SS-41
- Adoption Assistance Agreement SS-43
- Annual Review Form for Adoption Assistance SS-46
- Acknowledgment of Shared Information SS-49
- Needs Based Care Assessment for Children in Foster care, under 13, SS-66
- Needs Based Care Assessment for Children in Foster Care, 13 and older, SS-67

The review also included determination of whether Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) applied and if appropriate, a notice was sent to the State Office for sealing. The significance of following the ICAMA policy is if a child moves out of state, Medicaid follows the child if that Medicaid payment was a part of their adoption subsidy. Policy 3.2.1 states that *“moving across state lines does not change the Adoption Assistance/Subsidy amount or the state of origin's payment responsibility. Continuance of Medicaid is based on the new State's Medicaid Plan.”*

The information gathered from this review is as follows:

Birth Parent's Medical History (SS-40B)

Of the 33 cases reviewed, 84.8% did not have the SS-40B in the file and 5 cases were in the file. Of those included in the file, 4 cases were complete.

Older Child Medical History Information (SS-40c)

Of the 33 cases reviewed, 26 cases were applicable and 7 cases were not applicable. Of those applicable cases, 2 cases were present in the file and both of the forms were complete.

Application for Assistance and/or Waiver (SS-41)

Of the 33 cases reviewed, 32 had the SS-41 present in the file. The form was not present in 1 case. Of those cases that had the form in the file, it was complete in 29 cases and not complete in 3 cases.

The following signatures were included on the forms:

- Caseworker signed in 31 cases
- Parents signed in 31 cases
- District Manager signed in 30 cases

Adoption Assistance Agreement (SS-43)

Of the 33 cases reviewed, 100% had the SS-43 included in the file. The form was complete and signed by all required parties in all cases.

Annual Review Form for Adoption Assistance (SS-46)

Of the total cases reviewed, 21 cases had the form in the file and 12 cases did not. Of the cases with the form in the file, 20 cases had the form completed.

Of the total 33 cases, 16 cases had documentation of all required annual reviews completed while 17 cases did not.

Of those cases that had all required annual review completed, parents signed the reviews in 16 cases; Caseworkers signed in 14 cases; and District Managers signed in 13 cases.

Acknowledgement of Shared Information (SS-49)

Of the total cases reviewed, 2 cases had the form in the file and 31 cases did not. Of the two cases in the file, both were complete and signed by the parents and the Caseworker.

Needs Based Care Assessment for Children in Foster Care (Under 13) (SS-66)

Of the total cases reviewed, the form was applicable in 21 cases and not applicable for 12 cases. Of the applicable cases, 14 cases had the document in the file and 7 cases did not. The document was complete in six (6) cases.

Of the 14 cases with the document in the file, 1 had with no signatures; 13 had District Manager signatures; 12 had parent signatures; and 10 had Caseworker signatures.

Needs Based Care Assessment for Children in Foster Care (13 and older) (SS-67)

The SS-67 was applicable for 12 cases and not applicable for 21 cases of the total cases reviewed. Of the applicable cases, 8 cases had the document in the file and 4 cases did not .

Of the total cases with the SS-67 in the file, all were signed by parents; 6 cases were signed by the District Manager; and 5 cases were signed by Caseworker.

ICAMA and Sealing

Of the total cases reviewed 33 cases did not have evidence that ICAMA was applicable due to the child moving out of State while 1 case did have evidence that ICAMA was applicable, and the appropriate notice was sent to the State office.

Of the total 14 cases had been sent to the State file for sealing and 19 cases had not.

Areas identified as strength Completion and inclusion of several forms, including the SS-41 Application for Assistance and/or Waiver, SS-43 Adoption Assistance Agreement, and SS-46 Annual Review Form for Adoption Assistance is noted as a strength. These results indicate that the appropriate adoption subsidy forms appear to be regularly included in the file and signed off by the appropriate parties.

Regarding the SS-66 Needs Based Care Assessment for Children in Foster Care (Under 13) and SS-67 Needs Based Care Assessment for Children in Foster Care (13 and older), it appears the forms are included in the file at least half the time. These forms document the needs of the child and provide additional verification for the subsidy amount and negotiation process.

Areas identified as needing improvement

The inclusion of the forms SS-40B Birth Parent's Medical History, SS-40c Older Child Medical History Information, and SS-49 Acknowledgment of Shared Information appear to be areas in need of improvement. It is important to note that some files had extensive medical documentation but had not completed the form required per policy.

Next Steps

It is important to note that some of the documents reviewed were those that had not been sealed prior to the review; therefore, missing documentation may have been included in the sealed files rather than retained by the office. However, the documents listed should be included in the files at local offices at least until the subsidy period has ended in order to assist the provision of post-adoption services, renegotiations, and adjustments that should occur in subsequent years. This shall be clarified in policy and will be modified through policy and practice.

The adoption review demonstrated that some forms are used on a regular basis and some are rarely used. DFS policy will need to be modified to clarify the importance of the forms and how they are an essential piece of strong practice. The goal is to refine the information in the files and build on the practice.

DFS will continue working to increase service array (not just specific to adoption services) in communities and using existing resources, for example, utilizing certified adoption agencies.

Certified Foster Care

Foster Care is the temporary service provided to ensure the safety and well-being of children/youth while in out-of-home care. To become certified foster parents must complete specific requirements, as outlined by DFS policy, that ensure the safety and well-being of

children placed in foster care homes. Relatives of a foster child are required to complete the certification process if they want to receive a foster care maintenance payment.

Based on the Certified Foster Care review, the Department of Family Services compiled the following information and results, which was then shared with WYCRP for the purpose of incorporating into the Annual Report.

The CQI team, conducted a targeted review on November 8 and 9, 2016 consisting of 70 certified foster home cases. The CQI team looked to determine the completion rate of background checks, required training hours prior to Issurance and Effective Date of certification and that requirements in the file were up-to-date as of the Issurance and Effective Date of certification.

Results are as follows:

Total Cases: 70 Initial Certifications: 24 Recertification's: 46

Results of all background checks received prior to Issurance and Effective Date of certificate

Yes	No	NA
61	9	0

All required training hours completed prior to Issurance and Effective Date of certificate

Yes	No	NA
61	9	0

Requirements in the file and up-to-date as of the Issurance and Effective Date of the certification

Yes	No	NA
52	18	0

Non-Certified Foster Care

Based on the Non-Certified Foster Care review, the Department of Family Services compiled the following information and results, which was then shared with WYCRP for the purpose of incorporating into the Annual Report

If foster parents choose not to become certified they are still mandated to complete all safety requirements, including background checks and meet the foster care requirements shown below:

- At least 21 years of age. (some exceptions for relatives)

- Singles and couples.
- Good physical and emotional health.
- Financially stable
- No history of substantiated abuse or neglect.
- No criminal history as defined by certification rules

The CQI team conducted a targeted review on October 11 and 12, 2016 consisting of 34 non-certified foster home cases.

For this review, the CQI team looked to determine the completion rate of eighteen (18) specific components related to the completion for approval for non-certified foster homes

Total Cases: 34

WYCAPS Checked for Substantiations

Yes	No	NA
9	15	10

Law Enforcement asked if there is a reason not to use home

Yes	No	NA
8	15	11

Walk-through completed

Yes	No	NA
21	12	1

DFS Manager/Designee Approval

Yes	No	NA
14	19	1

Foster Care Coordinator Notified

Yes	No	NA
9	25	0

F-SS 61 Application to Care for Child

Yes	No	NA
31	3	0

References in the file

Yes	No	NA
27	7	0

Relative References

Yes	No	NA
23	11	0

Non-Relative References

Yes	No	NA
29	5	0

Central Registry Check

Yes	No	NA
33	1	0

Local Law Enforcement Checks

Yes	No	NA
34	0	0

Fingerprint Checks

Yes	No	NA
31	3	0

Manager Review of Criminal History Record

Yes	No	NA
2	1	31

Sex Offender Registry Check

Yes	No	NA
27	7	0

Wyoming Sex Offender Registry Check

Yes	No	NA
24	10	0

National Sex Offender Registry Check

Yes	No	NA
27	7	0

F-SS54 Health and Safety Checklist

Yes	No	NA
34	0	0

F-SS 54a Emergency Contact Form

Yes	No	NA
28	6	0

Areas Identified as Strengths

Since conducting these reviews, the DFS Foster Care Analyst has provided tailored, one-on-one training and support to each Foster Care Coordinator using review results. The Foster Care Analyst consistently works with the Coordinators to determine what is working well in each case and what potential barriers have been encountered. Additionally, the Foster Care Analyst leads a quarterly Focus Group involving, Foster Care Coordinators, Youth, Caseworkers, Stakeholders, DFS Supervisors and District Managers and DFS Partners focusing on Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention. The Foster Care Analyst, since these reviews, continues to train DFS field staff, both individually and in groups, to address individual needs as well as systemic issues identified during the reviews. The review process has also been continued by District Managers, who were provided CQI results to ensure appropriate timelines and paperwork are completed as per DFS policy.

Areas Needing Improvement

It appears that a more streamlined communication plan is needed to ensure both the DFS District Manager and Foster Care Coordinator are notified of issues concerning Non-Certified Foster Homes. Increased communication with Law Enforcement is recommended to determine if there is reason that a home should not be used.

Next Steps

Both Certified and Non-Certified Foster Home cases will be reviewed on an annual basis and CQI processes will be written into DFS policy. Policies will be formally transmitted to Caseworkers, Supervisors, District Managers, and Foster Care Coordinators. The Foster Care Analyst will continue to solicit input and feedback from Foster Care Coordinators, Youth, Caseworkers, Stakeholders, DFS Supervisors and District Managers and DFS Partners during quarterly Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention Focus Group. This information will be used to measure best practice, ensure policies are understood and implemented, and needs of youth are being met through the appropriate and safe actions of their temporary guardians.

Child Welfare Focus Groups

The purpose of the Child Welfare Focus Groups is to determine systemic practice around child welfare issues as established in the Annual Program Service Report (APSR). Goals and needs are discussed in a variety of capacities to determine what is happening with children and families as they are engaged in the child welfare process and enhance capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes. Based on facilitated discussions led by DFS, several agencies, including WYCRP, GAL's, Independent Living Coordinators, caseworkers, etc., participated in providing feedback regarding child welfare issues. From those discussions, the following information was gathered:

- DFS caseworkers are incredible in terms of being active team members for crisis and transition planning of youth in placement facilities.
- DFS caseworkers are very involved in wrap-around service planning with families.
- DFS caseworkers ensure needed documentation is provided to facilities which assists in comprehensive assessments.
- DFS partners with stakeholders, i.e. GALs and Public Health for home visits with families.
- Educational trainings facilitated during the Child Protection Team (CPT) meetings.
- Ongoing Practice Model trainings.

Stakeholders provided the following information regarding barriers:

- Stakeholders may not have the same understanding as DFS of risk and safety.
- Parents not always allowing DFS access to families.
- Knowledge of child development behaviors and milestones to help in assessing risk/safety.
- Stakeholders not understanding caseworkers assessing risk and safety.
- Stakeholders not understanding track assignments for different case types.
- Ongoing training or supervision for caseworkers in meeting with children and families.
- Providing clear definitions/expectations to Caseworkers of what involving children and family's means.

Stakeholders provided the following information regarding ways stakeholders may support DFS with children and families:

- A common language to discuss risk and safety.
- GALs are building a database to assist with timelines of critical events (MDTs, court hearings, etc.).
- Training on how to support stakeholders in working with risk and safety in relation to the families.
- Partnering more with home visits.
- Stakeholders introducing families to DFS.

- Involving the medical community in assessing safety of families who do not allow access to the children.
- Determining whether DFS has adequate training on educational laws from the Individuals with Disability Education Act.
- Allowing youth and family to speak at MDTs.
- Having Independent Living Coordinators assist with youth involvement in case planning.
- Stakeholders could attend trainings offered by DFS.
- Stakeholders could share their perspective in seeing the family and children to provide increased knowledge of the situation.
- Better understanding and communication on behalf of stakeholders in making children and families the priority.

The Department of Family Services continues to make great efforts and strides in establishing and implementing positive trends in supporting children, families, stakeholders, field staff, collaborators, and partners. To this end it is important to note the good work at all levels of Department involvement and to commend them for the dedication, commitment and ongoing growth that WYCRP has noted throughout the year. To ensure this work continues DFS has increased efforts in enhancing the skills of caseworkers and supervisors across the state. The following information includes training opportunities that have been offered to caseworkers, stakeholders, collaborators, and partners throughout 2016 and into 2017.

- In September of 2016, trainers completed the Train the Trainer module series. Participants completed 42 hours of training in topics within the Wyoming Practice Model.
- Trainers are hosting trainings within each of their districts to support statewide implementation of Wyoming Practice Model.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) is trained at CORE to all new caseworkers. ACES training can occur through webinars or in person.
- ACES will also be trained at the Wyoming Joint Symposium on Children and Youth in August 2017 for DFS staff and stakeholders.
- ACES has been trained to Independent Living Coordinators throughout the state.
- Juvenile Court collaborative training is occurring throughout the State. Trainings have occurred in Worland, Torrington, Rock Springs, Cheyenne, and Laramie.
- “Blog Talk Trainings” are occurring on a monthly basis with training for DFS staff and stakeholders. These trainings are facilitated by the Children’s Justice Project. Topics include: Incarcerated Parents, ACES, Indian Child Welfare Act, Education, Case Law and Reasonable Prudent Parent Standard.
- Wyoming Afterschool Alliance hosted a Summit on Juvenile Justice Issues on April 25 in Riverton for stakeholders.
- “Lunch and Learn Policy” webinar discussions are occurring monthly for DFS staff and stakeholders to review a policy a month. In addition, transmittal letters are sent to the field with a link of the training.

- Investigations training has occurred throughout the State in partnership with DOC and DCI.
- Juvenile court trainings are occurring throughout the State by the Attorney General and Children’s Justice Project to DFS staff reviewing state statute and policy.
- Coordinated efforts through Interdiction for the Protection of Children has been designed to make Law Enforcement aware of a variety of resources available to assist them in establishing the status of a child who may be missing, exploited or at-risk of exploitation and what courses of action are immediately available. Law enforcement aims at familiarizing Highway Patrol and other Law Enforcement who conduct traffic stops on the signs of child domestic sex trafficking and the interdiction of child pornography, etc.

CORE Training

At the recommendation of DFS’s Federal partners, the services of the Capacity Building Center (CBC) for States has been enlisted for support in training development. Over the past year, the CBC has connected DFS with resources who are experts on training development and process. The training unit, while working with the social services division policy and CQI staff, identified a working list of competencies for social services caseworkers. Those competencies are the foundation for the new core training modules. The new training includes hands-on experience with interviewing families, children, and appearing in court. Attendees are expected to demonstrate skill development with each activity. Additionally, an emphasis in legal process and interviewing skills and been embedded into CORE. The training was altered to three weeks in duration and while there may be a need to extend that time-period, CORE trainers have been able to cover foundational topics which are supported with office assignments between sessions and electronic transfer of learning opportunities. Field supervisors and managers have participated in the onsite training and in the electronic transfer of learning lessons.

As CORE training developed, ongoing training for caseworkers and supervisors using the same model are being developed and implemented. Following each week of training, the training unit makes contact with the field supervisors to provide feedback on the worker's performance and skill development according to the list of competencies.

Drug Endangered Children Initiative

In January 2017, the National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children, in coordination with DFS, focused Drug Endangered Children (DEC) efforts in Carbon County. With support from the Director of DFS, Carbon County invited key partners, stakeholders and collaborators who are involved in the world of child welfare and juvenile justice to participate in DEC efforts. As Carbon County has seen an increase in the use of meth and heroin, and the subsequent maltreatment that accompanies it, it became imperative that strides were made in the community to create a process of understanding system limitations and having conversations about building a better local system to address the safety and wellbeing of children and families.

Since January 2017, Rawlins has met several times, both with support from National DEC coordinators and independently, to form a group dedicated to building a stronger and improved coordinated communication system. As of May 16, 2017, the group had defined themselves as Carbon County DEC. A mission statement was developed, education and training needs were defined, outreach efforts were discussed and perhaps most importantly, future meetings were planned to continue the great work that has begun. Additionally, a protective custody protocol was developed to provide a consistent guideline for law enforcement and medical personnel.

During the May 16 meeting, Carbon County DEC, which consists of approximately forty (40) key community members such as law enforcement (including PD, SO, DCI), DFS staff, CCSD # 1 staff, emergency medical service personnel, medical providers, mental health providers, early childhood providers, etc., discussed a recently developed protocol for protective custody, what's working well, what needs improvement, who else should attend DEC, completing a community needs assessment and the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding, among other things. In October 2017, DFS plans to host a National DEC Alliance Train the Trainer opportunity. WYCRP has begun the initial stages of working with DFS to determine how we can support DEC efforts not only in Carbon County but throughout Wyoming. Opportunities include participating in DEC Train the Trainer and conducting the community needs assessments, not just in Carbon County, but for other Wyoming counties who are interested in bringing DEC to their communities.

Collaboration Efforts

The cornerstone of interagency collaboration in systems of care is "the process of agencies and families joining together for the purpose of interdependent problem solving that focuses on improving services to children and families" (Hodges, Nesman, & Hernandez, 1999). With that in mind it is with definitive acknowledgement that WYCRP recognizes the collaboration efforts between DFS and not only WYCRP but additional entities that work in child welfare, particularly around primary prevention and early intervention. The Wyoming Children's Trust Fund (WCTF), Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming, and the Wyoming Child Death Review and Prevention Team, among many others, are entities that DFS continues to build relationships with. The continuing efforts of these collaborators showcase ongoing partnerships in working alongside each other, in the education, awareness and coordination efforts that support prevention. In June of 2017, WYCRP, DFS, PCAWY and WCTF will attend the Wyoming Association for Physician's Assistants (WAPA) Conference where members from each organization will present to the audience on Adverse Childhood Experiences and Child Abuse and Neglect with a specific emphasis towards medical professionals. Not only is this strong evidence of the collaborative effort between the agencies, it should also be noted that this group came together to write two articles (on the same topics as what will be presented at the WAPA Conference) that were submitted and published in the spring 2017 addition of the Wyoming Medical Society newsletter and the Wyoming Nurses magazine.

It is WYCRP's goal for the upcoming year, that recommendations from the CFSR, CQI and Wyoming Child Death Review will highlight trends in child welfare issues. To that end a multitude of efforts between the collaborative partners mentioned above will be crucial in

determining what trends should be a priority in developing and implementing strategies and goals for the improvement of child welfare issues.

In addition to panel members serving a role as a volunteer citizen who are responsible for determining whether state and local agencies are effectively discharging child protective responsibilities, panel members also serve as the advisory committee for the CJA, of which DFS is a grantee for. Members are considered experts in child welfare and as such fulfill certain professional roles as determined by the CJA. Additionally, WCDRPT members are also used to fulfill the role of a CJA advisory committee and as such WYCRP and DFS will continue to effectively collaborate to ensure a seamless relationship with ongoing opportunities for partnership and communication.

Wyoming Child Death Review Prevention Team

The Wyoming Child Death Review and Prevention Team (WCDRPT) seeks to improve Wyoming's prevention of and response to major injuries and fatalities in cases of child maltreatment. Recommendations for change focus on prevention, intervention, training, education, legislation and public policy.

The WCDRPT holds a minimum of four meetings each year. The team reviews and evaluates trends in child deaths, or near death incidents, using specific guidelines and a strategic group of people involved in human service agencies, justice systems, prevention work and medical professionals, as well as citizens.

Through the collaborative process the team uses the findings to provide community education and promote awareness and advocacy for issues that affect the health and safety of Wyoming Children.

The WCDRPT reviewed 40 child serious injury and fatality cases in Wyoming related to child maltreatment in 2016 (children 0-17 years old). Please note that data gathered from the WCDRPT reviews is specific to WYCAPS (the Department of Family Service data system) and follows the calendar year.

2016 Child Fatalities Reviewed – Child Maltreatment - 10

2016 Child Serious/Near Death Injuries Reviewed - 17

2016 Sexual Abuse Reviewed - 13

During each case review the team addressed the following questions. This information, along with other demographic facts, are entered into a database known as the National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention.

- *Could this injury/death have been prevented?*

- *Was the investigation complete?*
- *Are there services that could be provided to family members, other children and other persons in the community as a result of this incident?*
- *What changes in behaviors, technologies, agency systems and/or laws could minimize these risk factors and prevent another incident?*
- *What are our best recommendations for making change?*
- *Who should take the lead in implementing our recommendations?*
- *Does this case need additional follow-up or later discussion?*

Identified Concerns Among Cases Reviewed

- Unrelated young males as a caretaker - 65% of cases reviewed.
- Prior victimization of child that never received treatment – 25% of cases reviewed.
- Substance use and abuse – 93% of cases reviewed.
- Lack of supports for new parents – 25% of cases reviewed.
- Agencies, medical personnel, social service groups, law enforcement not sharing information about a family who may be in crisis – 38% of cases reviewed.
- Financial stress in the home/poverty – 88% of cases reviewed.
- Generational abuse – 90% of cases reviewed.
- Domestic violence concerns in the home – 38% of cases reviewed.
- Lack of community mental health opportunities for children and families – 75% of cases reviewed.
- Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma – 25% of cases reviewed.

Team Recommendations:

Community Education

- Hospital discharge paperwork should include educational information to caregivers on risk factors that could lead to child abuse.
- Substance Abuse training (what to look for, signs and symptoms) should be provided, regularly, to hospital and residential treatment facilities.
- Mandated Reporter training should be provided to hospitals and residential treatment facilities.
- Education to public on what constitutes child abuse.
- Continuing education for law enforcement on child abuse.
- Expanded statewide education surrounding healthy relationships and sexuality to parents and those working directly with children.
- Educate parents on hazards of social media and internet access to pornography, etc.

- Educate the public about the Department of Family Services assessment tracks.

Systems

- Encourage schools to introduce a “Healthy Sexuality” Curriculum (or healthy relationships/boundaries) to student body.
- Realtors/Chamber of Commerce provide a home safety checklist to new home buyers. This should include things like appropriate water temperatures for children, etc.
- Teachers and school counselors communicate regularly to determine students who have low/un-involved guardians so that resources can be provided.
- Forensic collection evidence training to appropriate medical personnel/law enforcement.
- Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming will offer training and education to Wyoming Boys School and Wyoming Girls School on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and Child Abuse and Neglect Mandated Reporting to help them determine identifying risk factors in relationships.

Continuous Systems of Care

- Training and awareness on improving coordinated community responses.
- Increased communication about referrals to out of state hospitals and community public health agencies.
- Encourage and promote community coalitions meeting together regularly to identify families/children who may be at-risk.
- Hospitals, clinics, etc. should conduct a risk assessment on young mothers to determine need/interest in home visitation programs.

During the last eight (8) months, the WCDRPT has taken on the additional task of developing an action plan to address recommendations from case reviews. The action plan is designed to help the team determine specific strategies, timelines and responsible parties for implementing recommendations. In the course of the last three meetings the team has begun to analyze trends and data to incorporate into an action plan. Next steps for the WCDRPT include discussing measures and outcomes based on the identified trends, and tracking progress achieved. It is our plan, to include in the next reporting period, the following information:

- Prioritization of recommendations
- Who is responsible for spearheading the effort (per recommendation)
- How is the change going to happen (per recommendation)
- What improvements and changes have occurred (per recommendation)

After each meeting, strengths of the case and recommendations are shared by the WCDRPT to DFS district managers, so that staff in each district can define specific trends as related to their community. The WCDRPT is in the process of creating a feedback loop so that actions taken by DFS staff can be communicated back to the team on an ongoing basis. The hope of the WCDRPT, in regards to the feedback loop, is to better track how recommendations are having an impact in improving the lives of children involved in the child welfare system. Moreover, as acting members of the CJA task force, we will be able to identify areas where improvement is needed in the statewide response to child maltreatment. Ultimately, the goal of a CJA Task Force, as noted by the Children’s Bureau is “to make policy and training recommendations regarding methods to better handle child maltreatment cases, with the expectation that it will result in reduced trauma to the child victim”.

W yoming 2016 Child Maltreatment Statistics:

Child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Based on the 2016 statistics (as seen below), CQI reports and WCDRPT recommendations, it is WYCRP’s intent to continue to analyze common trends and risk factors and to implement comprehensive strategies designed to support the work being done by DFS in the prevention of child maltreatment.

There were 1389 total substantiations of child maltreatment (children 18 and under) in 2016, with all 23 Wyoming counties and the Wind River Reservation having at least one substantiated incident of child maltreatment.

Breakdown by type (approximate percentages)

67.67% Neglect

18.21% Abuse

5.76% Sexual Abuse

2.09% Educational Neglect

1.37% Physical Abuse

4.90% Miscellaneous *

** Dangerous Act, Lack of Supervision, Medical Neglect, Physical Injury, Abandonment, Emotional Abuse, Negligent Treatment, Mental Injury, Other, Psychological Abuse*

- 970 Number of Unique Substantiated Victims of Maltreatment, Children 18 and Under
- 654 Number of Unique Substantiated Victims of Maltreatment, Children 10 and under (67.42% of Victims were under the age of 10)
- 374 Number of Unique Substantiated Victims of Maltreatment, Children 5 and Under (38.56% of Victims were under the age of 5)
- 9 Number of Unique Substantiated Victims of Maltreatment, With a Disability (0.93%)
- 846 Victims Maltreated by a Biological Parent (87.20%)

(Data provided from Wyoming Department of Family Services WYCAPS System)

Strategic Plan

A two-year strategic plan was developed in April of 2016 by the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel. WYCRP routinely reviews and updates the strategic planning matrix and works collaboratively through both executive committee function and outreach committees to achieve the action steps and goals identified in the plan. For more information about WYCRP's Strategic Plan please refer to the following pages or visit our website at www.wycrp.org, where the Strategic Plan, in its entirety (including Action Steps), can be viewed.

This Annual Report is respectfully submitted by the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel's Executive Director and Board Chair and represents the collective voice of the Executive Committee and Panel Members.



Wyoming Citizen Review Panel | Strategic Plan 2016 - 2017

Priority Strong Organization	
Goal	<p>Goal 1: By September 2016, the WYCRP staff and Board members will have developed an understanding of the budget and funding streams of the WYCRP as a whole, and also at the program level, as exhibited by Board approval of the annual budget for WYCRP and the development, discussion and approval of monthly financial statements.</p> <p>Goal Leader: Executive Director</p>
Objective	<p>Objective A: By July 2016, the Executive Director and the Board officers will create an annual budget.</p> <p>PCA = \$ 94,000 PAT = \$488,500 CRP = <u>\$184,533</u> Total: \$767,033</p>
Objective	<p>Objective B: By August 2016, the Executive Director, program managers, Treasurer and Board Chair will commit to the ongoing use, review and approval of necessary financial statements.</p>
Goal	<p>Goal 2: By April 2017, the Board officers and the Executive Director will create a two-year financial plan for the WYCRP. The plan shall include current funding streams if appropriate, possible funding streams, and the development of funding streams for discretionary spending and the development of a reserve account in the amount to be determined as part of the plan.</p> <p>Goal Leader: Board Chair</p>
Objective	<p>Objective A: The Executive Director and the Board officers will prepare the first draft the financial plan by February 2017.</p>

Objective	Objective B: Once approved, by June 2017, the WYCRP will begin to implement the financial plan.
Goal	Goal 3: By April 2017, the WYCRP will have a community media and marketing plan for public awareness, Board or Panel member/volunteer recruitment, and financial stability. Goal Leader: Outreach Committee
Objective	Objective A: By December 2016, an outreach committee will have been formed, met, and drafted an “elevator speech” to be shared with and approved by the WYCRP Board at the September 2016 meeting.
Objective	Objective B: By March 2017, the outreach committee will have drafted the media and marketing plan.
Objective	Objective C: By June 2017, the WYCRP staff and Board (as assigned in the plan) will begin to implement the marketing and media plan.
Goal	Goal 4: By June 2017, the WYCRP will have a full, engaged, and informed Board with diverse backgrounds. Goal Leader: Board Chair and Vice Chair
Objective	Objective A: By April 2017, the outreach committee will have developed and drafted a plan to recruit and retain well-informed and engaged Board members.
Objective	Objective B: By December 2016, the WYCRP will have begun to implement the recruitment and retention plan.

Goal	<p>Goal 5: By April 2017, the WYCRP will have staff, Board members and panel members/volunteers who consistently collaborate and communicate across the state to provide a unified message of WYCRP.</p> <p>Goal Leader: Executive Director</p>
Objective	<p>Objective A: By September 2016, the Executive Director will have developed clear, written, explanations of expectations for Board members and panel members/volunteers.</p>
Objective	<p>Objective B: By September 2016, the Executive Director will have developed, sent and discussed at the Board meeting, a communication memorandum setting expectations and limitations for internal and external communications.</p>

Priority Prevention	
Goal	<p>Goal 6: By April 2017, after reviewing data, receiving Board and stakeholder input, and analyzing trends surrounding identified risk factors and outcomes, the WYCRP will create recommendations for organizational action (possible Goals) to impact recommended outcomes (metrics) within the priority/area of prevention.</p> <p>In more simple terms, the WYCRP staff and Board will take the year to research available data, appropriate outcomes/outputs in prevention, and prevention strategies to develop WYCRP goals in prevention for the next strategic planning period 2017-2019. By April 2017, the WYCRP will have developed and approved prevention goals for the period of 2017-2019.</p> <p>Goal Leader: Executive Director (with assistance from PCAWY program manager)</p>
Objective	<p>Objective A: By April 2017, the WYCRP Board and staff will identify risk factors and outcomes for analysis and identify appropriate data sources to be used to analyze such risk factors and outcomes for the purpose of targeted prevention efforts.</p>
Objective	<p>Objective B: By March 2017, the Executive Director and the PCAWY program manager will provide recommendations to the Board for outcomes/outputs/metrics to measure and possible prevention strategies to implement as prevention goals in the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan.</p>

