**Goshen County Department of Family Services Review**

Date of Review: November 17-18, 2014

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel (WYCRP) conducted interviews of staff and community stakeholders to compile information about the state of child welfare in the Goshen County area.

Total Interviews:

DFS Staff – 6

Community Stakeholders – 17

**Goshen County Demographics**:

* As of 2013 the population for Goshen County was 13,612.
* There are 2 GAL’s in Goshen County.
* Poverty level is in Goshen County.
* Many jobs require “shift work” in Goshen County which makes it difficult to have access to available resources, including child care.
* There is no homeless shelter in Goshen County.
* There is no crisis shelter in Goshen County.

**Strengths:**

1. Goshen County has a solid team with their DFS office. They work well together and they also are a great support to each other. There is not a lot of turnover in this office which also helps.
2. The caseworkers are working with the CDC’s and the caseworkers are referring them to the CDC’s within a two week time period. The DFS aid helps in the scheduling of these appointments.
3. The office works well with the Public Health office and they work together for the resources regarding Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, regardless if this is for the workers to have information or a client needing information.
4. Communication within the office and within the community is reported to be strong and very reliable.
5. Caseworkers are reported to follow up in a timely manner on issues related to child welfare in the community.
6. Starting Signs of Safety is slowly being introduced and they are using it as they are learning it. There is still more to learn for the office.
7. All caseworkers including the APS worker are able to get out and visit their clients at minimum once a month basis.

**Opportunities for Growth:**

1. Goshen County is experiencing a lack of foster families. It is reported that as a result of this, children have been placed back into unstable environments. This has a potential to increase re-entry and decrease the likelihood of long term permanency.
2. It was reported that there is concern that the CPT does not meet in December and during the summer months. This is concern because there could be more stress going on this time of year for families and this is when they need extra monitoring.
3. Computer systems are not functioning correctly. Thy freeze while people are working on them and they will just shut down. IT people are not sure how to fix the problem and when this does happen it is causing stress and worry for the caseworkers because they may miss a deadline.
4. Ipads or dictation pens would be great for the oncall person to be using. Otherwise when on call and get a call have to go to the office for everything first before able to respond to call.

**Recommendation (local and state)**

1. Ongoing training for WYCAPS especially when updates are made. Go more in depth regarding timelines and alerts that WYCAPS can provide as the main computer program that is used.
2. It was reported that health care providers who take Title 19 is very limited in the area and this could be a great community resource if expanded. Then there will not be waiting lists or children having to go to neighboring towns.
3. Possibly look at the CPT team meeting schedule and consider adding two more meetings to that schedule. There is a committed and strong CPT team in Goshen County.
4. It would be beneficial to partner with law enforcement and attorneys to have a conversation regarding establishing an intense drug and alcohol program for juveniles, such as an IOP program.
5. It is difficult to complete data entry and reporting due to computer malfunctions. It would be beneficial to investigate improved computer systems. It is also difficult to complete narratives when the WYCAPS system is down because word is directly linked to this system. Investigate other alternatives to decrease loss of productive work hours related to computer issues.
6. It has been reported that it would be beneficial if there was a training with a mock trial. This would be for all caseworkers new and old. It would also be good to have as much participation from other members of team on this training and could work a whole case as a training.
7. Looking forward to DEC and learning more about it and having that in the community. Thinking that this would be a good thing for the community and it would help even more with the communication and working relationship with law enforcement.

**Summary:**

Goshen County is working together to improve the lives of children and families. Operations can be complicated due to the computer systems going down and caseworkers not able to do that part of their job. This office was complimented on their communication within the office and with the community. They have a good relationship with a good percentage of the resources that they have and are aware of the challenges that need to be worked on.

Ongoing training will be necessary to continue the quality work that is evident in this office. Overall Goshen County is making efforts to ensure that children and families are successful by offering quality services that impact the future.