

**Citizen Review Panel
Annual & Recommendations Report**
(2006/2007 Program Year)

County: San Mateo

Contact Person for this Report:

Name: Patricia Brown, CRP Facilitator
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Please report on the Citizen Review Panel's activities per the items below and submit your response to CDSS, Office of Child Abuse Prevention no later than November 15, 2007.

1. **County Profile** (OCAP will provide current data from current annual report)
General Demographics and check with AB 636 data on DSS external web site for consistency.
Ethnic make-up of county
Household income

2. Panel Activities

A. Panel structure and development

- I. Membership (**Work plan Goal #1**) – Recruit a diverse panel or expand the existing panel

Have there been any changes in membership or panel composition during the reporting period?

During the past year one long time panel member, Warren Hagberg, a retired educator/administrator resigned from the panel and Ben Loewy, an educational administrator with the San Mateo County Office of Education, joined it. Kathleen (Caitie) O'Shea, a retired educational administrator who focused on special education, submitted her application for membership to the Panel (and was elected to the Panel on 10/15/07). Jodell Seagrave, a foster parent and staff member of the Schwab Foundation (which supports special education families) has completed her application for membership. Vielka McCarthy, a probation manager, attended one meeting but due to a change in job responsibilities was unable to pursue membership. The Panel is

actively recruiting members from law enforcement and clients of the system (foster parents).

Please discuss any activities the panel has engaged in specific to the recruitment of panel members to reflect community demographics and support creating or maintaining a diverse panel.

The San Mateo Citizen Review Panel has developed operational guidelines that describe the desired make-up of the Panel and CRP has maintained ongoing efforts to build membership within those guidelines. Currently the Panel has 11 members representing a broad range of perspectives (private defenders, educators, mental health and nonprofit organization professionals, adoptive parents and community representatives.) The Panel is recruiting members who represent interests identified in the guidelines.

In October 2006, the CRP sponsored a community outreach event with the goal of raising the profile of the Panel and encouraging interest in participation. The Chair of the State CRP and the Director of Children and Family Services in San Mateo County were featured speakers. Approximately 25 persons attended the evening event and several expressed interest in the Panel, but none have submitted applications.

In March 2007, the Panel started to work with a web designer on the development of a CRP website. This work continues, and the purpose for the site is two-fold: it will raise the public profile of CRP and serve as a recruiting tool for community members to express interest in service on the Panel. Target implementation date is December 1, 2007.

II. Panel Training (**Work plan goal #2**) – Please elaborate on the on-going orientation trainings of new CRP members. In addition, please describe any training activities the CRP has engaged in this past year as a means of ongoing Panel development.

In an attempt to systematically provide the Panel with an understanding of the Children and Family Services provided by the County, in January 2007 we initiated regular social worker presentations at each monthly Panel meeting.

- January - Intake/Screening Unit
- February – Emergency Response Unit
- March – AB636 Update by Mark Lane, Director of Children and Family Services
- April – Discussion with HSA Liaison about how to make AB636 and other data more useful for CRP's purposes
- May – No meeting because of member commitments

- June - Investigations Unit
- July - Report on Foster Parent Recruiting and Support Efforts

In February 2007, Annette Marcus of Strategies, substituting for Louanne Shahandeh, met with the Panel to determine anticipated technical assistance needs for the year. Annette provided the Panel with feedback encouraging San Mateo County to “drill deeper” as they develop their annual recommendations.

The following are the technical assistance requests that were submitted this year:

- Examples of recommendations that were considered by DSS to be models
- Information about what other early implementing counties were accomplishing with differential response programs
- Additional information about how Team Decision Making is being utilized, including what is the catalyst for a TDM, how are agreements being developed, how much of the agreement is developed prior to the meeting itself and how is implementation of the agreements tracked
- Information about the composition and background of other functioning CRPs.

Technical assistance requests were addressed by Strategies consultant Louanne Shahandeh through written materials, rosters, in meetings and phone calls and at the annual meeting of CRPs in Sacramento. The TA provided has been an instrumental resource for the San Mateo CRP.

In March the Panel received and reviewed a comprehensive report about how parents as partners to other parents are used in other Family to Family counties. This report was prepared by Patricia Brown, through a contract between HSA and the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center. Last year, the Panel identified this parent helping parent concept as one of interest and after reviewing the information in the report, determined it would encourage the County to pursue the development and implementation of a parent-to-parent support model for families involved in the child welfare system.

III. Panel self-evaluation activities – **(Work plan Goal #6)**

Has the panel undertaken any activities to help it assess its own performance during the reporting period? If so briefly describe these activities and the findings. If not, please describe when and how the panel will assess its performance.

The Panel reviews its performance on an annual basis at the September meeting. The compiled results of this year's annual review are listed below:

San Mateo County Citizen Review Panel
Annual Panel Self-Evaluation – Scoring Sheet
September 2007

The San Mateo Citizen Review Panel engages in a self-evaluation annually. The compiled results will be discussed further at November CRP meeting.

Scale = 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree)
10 evaluations completed

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. CRP members take their role seriously and conscientiously prepare for each meeting. | Compiled score: 4.3 |
| 2. CRP members place a high priority on regular meeting attendance. | Compiled score: 3.95 |
| 3. CRP is working hard to address priority issues that relate to the safety and welfare of children involved with the child welfare system in San Mateo County. | Compiled score: 4.2 |
| 4. CRP members feel informed enough to participate in discussion of agenda items. | Compiled score: 3.6 |
| 5. CRP receives the technical assistance support it needs to do its job well. | Compiled score: 3.9 |
| 6. CRP receives the information it needs from the Human Services Agency in an understandable format. | Compiled score: 3.3 |
| 7. CRP receives the facilitation support it needs to do its work in an efficient and inclusive manner. | Compiled score: 4.6 |
| 8. CRP members feel satisfaction with the contribution they are making to improving the safety and well being of children in this community | Compiled score: 3.2 |

The individual panel member comments submitted with the evaluation forms will be discussed by the Panel in an upcoming meeting and some portions are likely to be included in the work plan for the upcoming year.

3. CRP objectives (Work plan Goals #3 and #5)

For each objective identified in your work plan, please report on the following:

- Any demographics related to the CRP objective(s)
- Description of the review activities and any technical assistance provided (example = case review, focus group, data review, State-Strategies- CRP consultant) to support your review work.
- Findings based on review activities
- Formal recommendations based on findings (for County and State)
- Follow-up on the prior year's annual report recommendations, including any County and State responses to the recommendations
- Discuss how the CRP recommendations will be disseminated to County and State officials, as well as the public, and how the CRP will handle any comments made
- Future Directions – Briefly discuss the activities that the Panel expects to undertake during the 2007-08 program year – with an emphasis on July-September activities. (Please attach an updated work plan for next year.)

Description of activities for the past year

During the past year, San Mateo CRP focused on monitoring the recommendations it developed during the previous year (05-06) and continuing to enhance the knowledge and understanding of Panel members regarding the child welfare system. In addition, the Panel has worked on developing a web site, increasing membership and addressing issues of potential interest raised by members.

The following recommendations were monitored during the past fiscal year:

I. Team Decision Making

The Human Services Agency should continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Team Decision Making model and promote its use in all appropriate situations.

CRP encourages HSA to continue to provide opportunities for regular community input regarding the implementation of the TDM model and inform CRP as the opportunities are scheduled.

II. Re-entry

HSA should continue efforts to address the relatively high re-entry rate and report on its progress quarterly. CRP will receive and discuss these reports.

III. CRP recommends that HSA undertake the following actions to reduce the high rate of re-entry:

- 1) Study the possibility of implementing a parent mentor program to assist parents to navigate the child welfare system.
- 2) Review and update the parent education curriculum, ensuring that it is accessible for parents who may have language, reading or learning challenges.
- 3) Encourage Children and Family Services staff to take appropriate actions to ensure that parents who may have language barriers, communication challenges or learning difficulties understand the information they are receiving.
- 4) Pursue funding for enhanced services for families (for family maintenance after reunification - after care).

IV. Closely monitor the implementation of differential response to ascertain its impact on keeping families out of the child welfare system.

To assist with the effort of monitoring recommendations, in February and March 2007 the Panel developed the following template with the assistance of Elaine Azzopardi and Marissa Saludes of Children and Family Services.

This template was designed with two things in mind: to provide CRP with specific information needed to perform its responsibilities and to reduce the need for HSA to prepare/deliver additional reports especially for CRP.

CRP Recommendation	Data to be monitored	Source
Team Decision Making	Total number of TDMs / quarter Feedback from participants about the quality of the TDM process	TDM Manager
Re-entry	AB 636 quarterly reports – data relating to re-entry	AB636 reports
CRP recommends that HSA undertake the following actions to reduce the high rate of	AB 636 Reports on other approaches Quarterly visits to CRP by Children	AB636 Reports and updates from CFS

<p>re-entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the possibility of implementing a parent mentor program to assist parents to navigate the child welfare system. • Review and update the parent education curriculum, ensuring that it is accessible for parents who may have language, reading or learning challenges. • Encourage Children and Family Services staff to take appropriate actions to ensure that parents who may have language barriers, communication challenges or learning difficulties understand the information they are receiving. • Pursue funding for enhanced services for families (for family maintenance after reunification - after care). 	<p>and Family Services Director</p> <p>Review of Parents as Partners Report</p> <p>Report from CFS Manager responsible for parent training and support</p>	<p>staff</p>
<p>Closely monitor the implementation of differential response to ascertain its impact on</p>	<p>CARE report (Differential Response monthly report)</p>	

keeping families out of the child welfare system		
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The following table summarizes the findings of CRP, based on reviewing monitoring activities in relation to its 2005-06 recommendations to the state:

Recommendation	Description of review activities	Findings
<p>Team Decision Making The Human Services Agency should continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Team Decision Making model and promote its use in all appropriate situations</p> <p>CRP encourages HSA to continue to provide opportunities for regular community input regarding the implementation of the TDM model and inform CRP as the opportunities are scheduled.</p>	<p>Quarterly Updates by TDM manager</p> <p>Panel member observations of TDMs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. TDMs are occurring with more consistency as initial placement and placement changes are made. The actual number of TDMs has increased. b. TDMs are normally not held if a parent is unable to attend c. TDMs are being used for case planning as well as placement changes – the purpose needs to be clear to participants d. When needed, the structure of TDMs allows some flexibility e. There does not appear to be a reliable evaluation method to determine if TDMs are achieving the goals for which they were instituted f. In some instances, TDM sessions appear to focus more on “buy in” by parents to a prepared plan,

		<p>rather than co-development of a plan in the TDM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. CRP members need easier access to TDMs in order to monitor implementation effectively h. Families could be better prepared to advocate for themselves in the TDM i. Participants need to be able to provide feedback about the experience outside of the TDM session
<p>Re-entry HSA should continue efforts to address the relatively high re-entry rate and report on its progress quarterly. CRP will receive and discuss these reports.</p>	<p>Panel received quarterly AB 636 reports relating to re-entry and reviewed the data with the agency liaison and/or data manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. CFS recognizes the need to improve the rate of non-re-entry into the system and efforts are being made to address contributing factors b. CFS has not yet met its own goals for improvement nor has it met the state standards c. As improvement is being made in re-entry rates, the adoption rate is going up d. There is a question about whether the federal goals are attainable/realistic e. The AB636 reports being used to monitor this recommendation

		<p>have not been clear nor timely</p>
<p>CRP recommends that HSA undertake the following actions to reduce the high rate of re-entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the possibility of implementing a parent mentor program to assist parents to navigate the child welfare system. • Review and update the parent education curriculum, ensuring that it is accessible for parents who may have language, reading or learning challenges. • Encourage Children and Family Services staff to take appropriate actions to ensure that parents who may have language barriers, communication challenges or learning difficulties 	<p>Review and discussion of study prepared by PCRC at the request of HSA</p> <p>Presentation by Helen McClain, Training Manager and report re. Implementation</p> <p>Review of some materials used to educate families about how the child welfare system works</p>	<p>CRP is supportive of this approach to helping families succeed in the system and will likely make a formal recommendation in this area.</p> <p>CFS has redesigned its parent education curriculum using an evidence-based model that builds on strengths. The new program offers language and culturally appropriate training to families through a partnership with Canada College. Evaluation of the program includes input from participants and trainers</p> <p>While some information was reviewed, more work is needed to determine if barriers such as language and communication challenges are being addressed</p>

<p>understand the information they are receiving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue funding for enhanced services for families (for family maintenance after reunification - after care). 	<p>Report by CFS Director on grant applications</p>	<p>The primary grant request of interest to CRP was not funded</p>
<p>Closely monitor the implementation of differential response to ascertain its impact on keeping families out of the child welfare system.</p>	<p>CARE report</p>	<p>This recommendation was not closely monitored, so no finding has been made</p>

Based on the findings related to last year's recommendations, CRP developed the following **Recommendations for 2007-08:**

1. Children and Family Services (CFS) should clarify/clearly define the goals of TDMS and make those goals clear to all, prior to implementing an effective evaluation of the TDM process and outcomes, including short and long term assessment of the outcomes.
2. CFS should allow CRP to review each re-entry case for the purpose of accessing narrative and anecdotal information.
3. CFS should proceed with the development and implementation of a parent as partner program and provide CRP with quarterly status reports.
4. CFS should continue implementation of the new parent education curriculum and provide CRP with evaluation information by June 2008, following the first year of the program.
5. CFS should continue to ensure that all materials used to educate parents about the child welfare system are accessible to families who may have language barriers, communication challenges or learning difficulties, and report to CRP in six months.

6. CFS should continue to monitor closely the implementation of differential response and report to CRP with quarterly status reports.

Note: all of these recommendations build on past recommendations from CRP. CRP believes that the complex nature of the child welfare system and the specific recommendation areas selected by SM CRP require time and commitment to implement desired changes and measure progress toward goals.

4. Public in-put (Work plan Goal #4)

Briefly describe any public input that the panel obtained during the reporting period and how this input was taken into consideration when making your final recommendations for this annual report.

This continues to be a challenging area for the Panel. The annual report by CRP to the Children's Collaborative Action Team (CCAT) has been the primary approach to publicizing the work of the Panel and seeking input from the public.

The report is provided by the CRP Chair at a regular meeting of CCAT, the designated Child Abuse Prevention entity in the County. The CRP Annual Report and Recommendation has been posted on the CCAT website this year.

The Panel's decision to develop a web-site is based on the desire to expand opportunities for educating the public about the existence and role of CRP and offering accessible opportunities for public input.

If you will be obtaining public input after this annual report's recommendations are developed and published, briefly describe your public input process and outline the time frames for this process.

The CRP Annual Report and Recommendations will be presented to CCAT within two-three months of its completion. The report will immediately be posted on the CRP website which is to be completed by October 2007.

Please attach the following documents to this report:

- ❖ Updated roster of Citizen Review Panel Members, including their affiliations
- ❖ Minutes of the panel's meetings for the July 1, 2007 to September 30, 2007. If the panel utilizes committees, please attach the minutes, if any, of these committees
- ❖ Updated Scope of Work for the coming year's panel activities 2007/2008
- ❖ Please submit a statement of the panel's expenditures for the 2006/2007 program year.

Please email this report to **Louanne Shahandeh by November 15, 2007**, including the name, email address and phone number of the person who can be contacted should there be questions regarding this report. The report must be submitted by email to:

Louanne Shahandeh
L.Shahandeh@roadrunner.com

Should you have questions, please call or e-mail:
Louanne Shahandeh- Strategies Consultant to the CRP
(805) 523-2189 – office
(805) 341-9361 – cell

Attachments

Roster of CRP Members

Minutes from July, August and September CRP meetings

Financial report

Roster - San Mateo County Citizen Review Panel

Name	Affiliation
Barrios, Angel	Associate Director: (IHSD) Head Start
Baumel, Jan	Licensed Educational Psychologist and Retired Special Educator
Cherniss, David	Director, Juvenile Mediation Program, San Mateo Superior Court
Lynch, Julie	Community Member, Adoptive Parent
Loewy, Ben	Administrator, SM County Office of Education
McClure, Katharine Co-Chair	Retired School Director
Miljanich, Patricia	Executive Director, Court Appointed Special Advocates of SM County
Miller, Bonnie	Attorney, Public Defenders Office
O'Shea, Kathleen (Caitie)	Retired educator
Plotnikoff, Bernie Co-Chair	Community member, retired administrator, Child Abuse Prevention agency
Pounds, Jamila	Edgewood Center (nonprofit providing mental health services to families)

San Mateo County Citizen Review Panel

The mission of the CRP is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Notes from Meeting

July 23, 2007

11:30-1:30 PM

Harvard Room, Human Services Agency
400 Harbor Boulevard, Building B, Belmont

Present: Barrios, Baumel, Cherniss, Loewy, McClure, Miljanich, Miller, Smithson
Excused: Plotnikoff, Pounds, Saludes
Absent: Lynch
Others: Elaine Azzopardi, CFS Liaison, Pat Brown, Facilitator

Follow-up from last meeting

- a) Review notes from last meeting – changes/corrections
Several corrections were offered and the notes will be corrected.
- b) Follow-up questions from Panel (relating to June meeting)
There were no follow up questions.
- c) Update on CRP Web site
Herb Moore was present to preview the design for the CRP web page –
The URL is SMCRP.org
Members were asked to submit suggestions to Pat who will compile them and send them to Herb for his consideration.

Information from Children and Family Services

- a) Team Decision Making
Gary Beasley was unable to attend. He will be invited to the August meeting.
- b) Foster Parent Recruiting
Sue Ferren and Sharon Stone presented information about the Foster/Resource Parent Liaison Role and the status of Resource Parent recruiting. The term “resource parent” includes both foster families and relatives who are caring for a child. The liaison works to provide information to and educate foster parents, assist them with resolving concerns, and coordinating with Legal Advocates for Permanent Parenting (LAPP). LAPP recently supported legislation that resulted in guidelines for “prudent foster parenting”.

Sue has been in the position of Foster Parent Liaison for about 2 years. The position was one of a number of ideas developed through a series of Foster Parent/Social Worker

Conferences aimed at improving communications and the working relationship between social workers and foster parents. Other ideas were the Foster Parent Handbook.

Sue distributed the Homefinding Herald Newsletter and handouts entitled "Facts about Children in Foster Care in San Mateo County" and "Facts about Children in Foster Care in California".

Sharon is responsible for efforts to recruit and retain foster families and adoptive parents. She assists with recruiting, training, and licensing new foster parents. In this county this is a great need for more local foster families for teens, fragile infants and siblings. The same need exists for adoptive families.

Required training includes and 2.5 hour orientation and a 18 hour training class (which is offered 10-12 times/year and is available in Spanish).

Sharon distributed a handout that highlighted the efforts of the 12-person Homefinding Unit.

CRP members were very interested in outreach and recruiting efforts and had a number of suggestions for reaching people who may not think of themselves as foster parents. They also suggested that it might be useful for the Unit to follow up with people who had some initial interest in foster parenting, but later decided not to do it.

c) Parents as Partners

Ellen Bucci was not present because there is little progress to report on the Parents as Partners program. She will be asked to come when there is something to report.

Items from CRP Work plan

a) Review/adopt quarterly report to State CRP

The Panel approved submission of the quarterly report

b) Follow-up on member recruiting (10 minutes)

- Foster parents – Marissa was not present, so she will provide an update at the next meeting.
- Probation, Police –
There have been a number of approaches to Probation, but no evidence of interest. David Cherniss will follow up since his office is at the Youth Services Center.
- Others
Jan has contacted Caitie O'Shea, a retired educator from North County and she is interested. There was discussion about the balance of educators on the Panel, but since Jane Smithson indicated she will not seek re-election in September and there is an existing vacancy from Warren Hagberg's resignation it was decided to ask Caitie to submit her application.

The Panel remains interested in diversity and will continue efforts to recruit members that represent the diversity of this community.

Panel members also believe that law enforcement and mental health perspectives are needed on the Panel.

Discussion re. Child Welfare System approaches to preventing abuse of children by professional service providers/contractors

One panel member has been approached with information collected by an investigative reporter. This material relates to possible systemic failures that allowed child abuse by a professional service provider to continue over a period of years. The alleged abuser is currently involved in a criminal trial. The Panel member provided information about how the report was received and a brief introduction to the contents of the report.

The Panel concluded the following:

- All Panel members should be provided with the material from the investigative reporter.
- Panel members should review the material, recognizing that it is confidential in nature and should not be shared with others, at this point.
- At the August CRP meeting, there will be a discussion of whether / how CRP might respond to the information it has received. Options include:
 - The Panel would do nothing.
 - The Panel might ask a smaller task force to come back with a recommendation of next steps.
 - The Panel might refer the information to the State Attorney General's Office.
 - The Panel might refer the situation to the Grand Jury.

In the meantime, Panel members asked for information about protocols currently in use in San Mateo County when reports of child abuse are made. Pat will follow up. In addition, Pat has asked for advice from the CRP Technical Assistance provider and received the following response:

On 7/19/07, Louanne Shahandeh <l.shahandeh@roadrunner.com> wrote:
Hi Pat:

I am sorry to hear of the recent child abuse incident involving a professional. As you see, I am cc'ing my response to Latifu and Teresa, as they may have other guidance and input. Here is mine:

The Citizen Review panels choose objectives/systems to review based upon data within their child welfare county system. Whether it is:
(examples)

- data regarding the increased number of recurrence of maltreatment, in which case you might look at case files, policies

etc. to see if there are "holes" or "grey areas" in the system that you could make recommendations on ways that might improve the system

- data regarding child well-being and permanency, in which case you might look at any new systems the county has implemented (TDM's), scan the policies, talk to stakeholders and then compare

to other counties to make recommendations on ways that might improve the system and implementation of the new system.

It is my opinion that if a Citizen Review Panel begins a new objective, And engages in review activities at the request or "Hint" of someone, because of an incident, this leaves you open for being seen as an investigative body (inference of legal responsibility and oversight), so that any time something occurs, they refer to the CRP. This would create a great overload of work, not to mention, the CRP is not an investigative body... we are only involved in reviewing systems activities and making recommendations. To begin to do this would only cloud our purpose with the public.

This is a legal case in the courts. The county has its own investigative unit that I am sure is looking into this, as is law enforcement. They are the ones that should take this on, not us. This would put the CRP in a compromising position, one in which I believe puts you and the members in the position of being subpoenaed, to review what you have learned. Not to mention in the middle of a possible PR nightmare.

Being seen the Oversight Body or Guardians to the system, giving the illusion of more power than we have. We can only make recommendations. If you looked into the practices in this case, it would open a Pandora's box where you might be asked to "provide these services" in other areas.

Now, if San Mateo county has data that shows a significant number of abuse by professional cases, then I suppose that you could take this on as an objective in looking at the policies, procedures, activities, documentation, communication strategies etc regarding the interface of professionals (contracted and/or in house) with children in the child welfare system. But I would make sure I separate it out and far from the case, if you could.

Louanne

Issues of Interest to CRP

No additional issues of interest were brought forward at this meeting.

Next steps

1. Follow up with member recruiting.
2. Panel members review materials distributed at meeting and come prepared to discuss possible CRP actions.
3. Pat will try to find information about current protocols associated with child abuse reports.
4. Members will review draft website at SMCRP.org and email reactions/suggestions to Pat at brownpcrc@gmail.com

Items for next agenda

- a) Report from State CRP meeting – July 30 – Pat B. and Julie will attend
- b) Report on TDM implementation
- c) Continue discussion of role of CRP with investigative report
- d) Begin work on 2007-08 Annual Report and Recommendations

Next CRP meeting: Monday, August 20, 2007

San Mateo County Citizen Review Panel

The mission of the CRP is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Meeting Notes August 20, 2007 11:30-1:30 PM

Harvard Room, Human Services Agency
400 Harbor Boulevard, Building B, Belmont

Panelists Present: Jan Baumel, David Cherniss, Julie Lynch, Ben Loewy, Katharine McClure, Bonnie Miller, Jane Smithson

Children and Family Services: Elaine Azzopardi, Marissa Saludes, Gary Beasley

Facilitator: Pat Brown

Follow-up from last meeting

- a) Review notes from last meeting – there were no changes/corrections
- b) Follow-up questions from Panel (relating to July meeting) – no follow-up questions
- c) Member recruiting follow-up
 - Caitie O'Shea, North County, Educator, application has been submitted
 - Vielka McCarthy, Probation, pending
 - Jodell Seagrave, Foster/Adoptive parent, pendingApproach to Foster Parent Association – September (Bernie)
Alcohol and other Drug (AOD) meeting – will approach for interest - Marissa
- d) Update on CRP Web site: Pat asked for volunteers to work with her and Herb on design revisions: David and Kacy will do it
- e) Report on State CRP Meeting: Julie reported that only Calaveras County (CRP is one year old) and San Mateo County participated in the July 30th meeting in Sacramento.

There have been numerous changes in the Office of Child Abuse Prevention and we still do not know who the next assigned CRP liaison will be. Louanne Shahandeh, our TA consultant, has been contracted by the State to coordinate the CRPs. During the meeting we found that Calaveras and San Mateo shared concerns about high re-entry rates and accessibility of services, even though the demographics are very different. The State CRP is the third body in the state, but it is currently not meeting regularly.

Information from Children and Family Services: Team Decision Making

Gary Beasley, who has been promoted to the role of Regional Manager, Central Region, provided an update about TDM implementation, since he retains some overall responsibility for the program. Before Mark Lane retired, Frieda Cobb was named to manage the TDM

program, but that assignment is being reviewed. In the midst of these changes, there is some stability since the two primary facilitators trained by SPIN are still in place. SPIN, a group out of Boston, has been retained by HSA to assist with continued improvement of the TDM program, which was originally grant funded but is now included in HSA's budget. SPIN videotapes the first 10 minutes of each TDM for training and quality control purposes, to observe how the facilitator creates a safe and inclusive environment for the meeting. The facilitators are given feedback in monthly face-to-face sessions with SPIN staff.

The average monthly number of TDMs is currently 22.

Gary reported that about 600 surveys from TDM participants had been given to a consultant to be used for evaluating the quality of the process. The consultant felt that the data was too "trite" and not useful for conducting a process evaluation.

The Casey Foundation, which funded TDM start-up, is also interested in evaluating the quality of the program and in October a consultant will be meeting with the original implementing counties to develop an evaluation model. CRP expressed interest in hearing more about the results of this work, since one recommendation of CRP has dealt with monitoring the quality of the TDM process.

Gary noted that they are making some efforts in the following additional areas:

- arranging to travel outside the County placements to hold TDMs
- addressing disproportionate representation more directly. African American males are 37% of those in placement, while they are only 2% of the population. Latino males are also disproportionately represented. The intervention is now that social workers who had to rely on parent / guardian voluntary participation as TDMs were set up are now able to use gender and ethnically appropriate advocates to meet with TDMs for youth who are not doing well in placement.
- working with community partners who provide locations for TDMs and sometimes staff participation. Asian American Recovery Center is a new Family to Family site in South San Francisco. The goal is to increase the number of sites available in the County.
- scheduling of TDMs: more emphasis is being put on getting the right people to the table at the right time – try to minimize any actual or perceived pre-development of plans so that the authentic work takes place in the TDM itself.

Gary suggested that Panel members might like to observe an Emergency Response TDM – to schedule observations, please contact Rosa.

Discussion re. Child Welfare System approaches to preventing abuse of children by professional service providers/contractors

- Review of information developed by investigatory reporter
- Implications for CRP – system issues?
- Discussion and decision re. next steps

Panel members engaged in a wide-ranging discussion of material they have reviewed and determined that the following are appropriate next steps:

San Mateo Citizen Review Panel Annual Report and Recommendations
FY 2006-07

- Bonnie (CRP chair) and Kacy will approach a local legislator to convey the Panel's concern re. The information it has received and its interest in addressing any systemic issues that could impair the effectiveness of the current approaches
- They will report on their meeting before the next scheduled CRP meeting
- If it appears useful to set aside additional time for discussion at the September meeting, that will be done, adding some time to the beginning of the meeting.

Issues of possible interest to CRP: No new issues were raised.

Items for next agenda

- e) Begin work on 2007-08 Recommendations (new format)
- f) Election of officers and new members
- g) Discussion of fiscal year for CRP – July-June
- h) Visits from Louanne Shahandeh: October 15, January 28, April 21, June 16

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 PM.

Next CRP meeting: Monday, September 17, 2007

San Mateo County Citizen Review Panel

The mission of the CRP is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Notes from Meeting

September 17, 2007

11:00-1:30 PM

Harvard Room, Human Services Agency
400 Harbor Boulevard, Building B, Belmont

Panelists present: Barrios, Baumel, Cherniss, Lynch, Loewy, McClure, Miljanich, Miller, Plotnikoff, Pounds

Guests: Caitie O'Shea and Vielka McCarthy, potential members

Children and Family Services: Azzopardi, Saludes, Murillo

Facilitator: Brown

Follow-up from last meeting

- a) Review notes from last meeting – there were no changes/corrections
- b) Follow-up questions from Panel – no questions
- c) Member recruiting follow-up – Bernie made a presentation to the Foster Parents Association on September 11 to explain CRP and possible recruit members. There was interest in CRP's work and a request for information about how to bring issues before CRP for discussion. Bernie will follow-up by providing information relating to current and target re-entry rate statistics, thanking them for their interest and describing how they can bring issues to the attention of CRP.
- d) Update on CRP Web site – David and Kacy have been working with Pat and Herb Moore to finalize the logo and web site information. The proposed logo was distributed for informational purposes. The goal is to complete this project by November 1.
- e) Kathleen (Caitie) O'Shea and Vielka McCarthy were introduced as potential members. Vielka may have a job change that restricts her ability to serve – she will notify the Panel as soon as possible. Jodell Seagrave will be attending next month.

CRP Elections

Bonnie Miller and Jane Smithson's terms have ended and they are eligible for re-election. Jane has declined to continue on the Panel. Bonnie is willing to serve another term.

Bonnie Miller was elected by acclamation to a new three year term on the Panel.

Bernie Plotnikoff and Kacy McClure have offered to serve as Panel co-chairs for the upcoming year.

On a motion by Bonnie Miller and second by Julie Lynch, Bernie and Kacy were unanimously elected co-chairs for the 2007-08 year.

Discussion of findings re. HSA implementation of 2005-06 recommendations

Pat noted that this year the state OCAP is requiring a new format for the annual report. It consists of 3 components: a statement of findings related to the recommendation areas for the 2006-07 year; recommendations for the 2007-08 year; and a scope of work for CRP for the 2007-08 year. The Panel worked to articulate findings and develop possible recommendations, using the worksheet prepared by Pat. The product of this work is Draft 1 of the findings and recommendations – attached to these notes.

Discussion of Panel's self-evaluation of performance

Panel members have each completed a form evaluating the Panel's work for the past year. The results of the compiled scores and comments will be provided to the Panel for discussion at the next meeting.

Report on discussion with Senator Yee's Office - [Closed session]

Panel members discussed conversations with Senator Leland Yee's office in relation to concerns about the child welfare system's response to allegations of abuse or neglect by professional providers.

The Panel agreed to the following next steps:

- Panel Co-chairs will develop a letter requesting the San Mateo Grand Jury follow up on the concerns about system response to allegations of abuse or neglect. Kacy and Bernie will draft the request and run it by Bonnie.
- Panel members will continue to maintain confidentiality around this issue.
- Panel Co-chairs will notify Victoria Balfour of the decision to request a Grand Jury investigation.
- Elaine Azzopardi will update the Director of Children and Family Services about this discussion and action steps.
- At some point, Co-chairs will notify Leland Yee's Office about the action take by CRP.

Issues of possible interest to CRP

No new issues were raised.

Summarize next steps

Pat reminded the Panel that she will not be available next month because of family responsibilities. The Co-chairs agreed that they will conduct the meeting. Pat will provide assistance with preparation for that meeting and will request that PCRC provide a note-taker, since the major discussion item will be the completion of the annual report and recommendations.

Items for next agenda

- a) Confirm 2007-08 Recommendations and work plan for 2007-08(new format)
- b) Continue recruiting efforts
- c) Election of new members
- d) Louanne Shahendeh, TA provider, will be present

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 PM.

Next CRP meeting: Monday, October 15, 2007