



“My initial response when a child protective worker knocked on my door was complete terror and fear.”

“The last thing I wanted was for someone to take my daughter away from me.”

INTRODUCTION

“It took about an hour for me to realize this was someone who was here to help my family, not just to keep my daughter safe. Family Assessment Response took the fear out of CPS. We were in a tough spot and I began to feel this just may be what my family needs.”

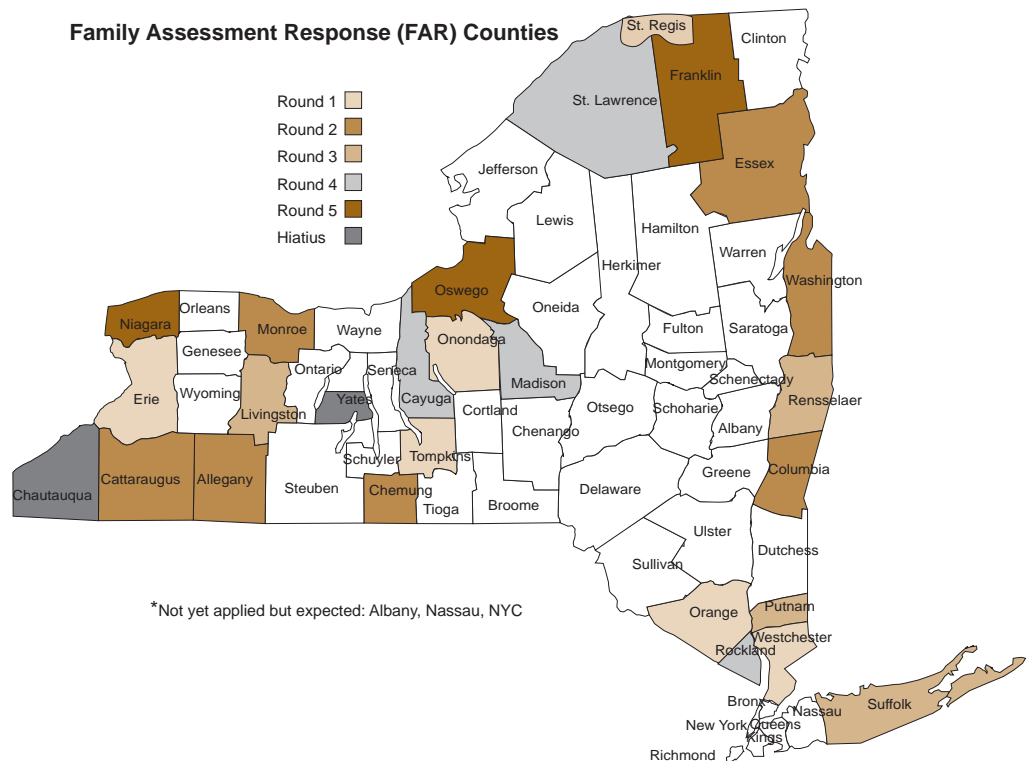
—Brenda, New York Family Assessment Response Symposium, October 4, 2011.

Although only a small percentage of families ever have their children removed for safety reasons, when a child protective services (CPS) caseworker knocks on their door, the fear on the part of families that they could lose their children is very real. Family Assessment Response (FAR) is helping to change that perception in counties across New York State. With FAR, caseworkers notify families before visiting their homes, and after ensuring each child is safe and not at risk of imminent harm, offer help and support rather than conducting an investigation to identify whether or not abuse or neglect took place in that household. Families are noticing the difference. Further, safety is not compromised.

Legislation passed in 2007 allowed counties to offer FAR as an alternative response to an investigation in child protective services, and six counties were part of the initial pilot in late 2008 and early 2009. The law which passed in 2007 was due to expire in June 2011.

In 2011, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law a bill, S4504 Savino/A6823 Paulin, making FAR permanent and removing a provision that had previously excluded New York City. The New York Citizen Review

Panels for Child Protective Services applaud the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), Senators, Assembly Members, and the Governor for making FAR permanent in New York. FAR represents a significant reform in child welfare practice that benefits children and families who are reported to the State Central Register (SCR). FAR is an approach that helps families access supports that meet their needs, especially those related to poverty. Now, 20 counties offer FAR and another three to six will be added in 2012. Over 16,000 families have been served through FAR.¹



In their position as citizen advocates, the three New York Citizen Review Panels work on behalf of New York’s most vulnerable children and families—those who come through the front door of the child welfare system. In that role, the Panels encourage further reforms that focus on building strong families and increasing child and family well-being with the goal of reducing the occurrence of abuse and neglect in the first instance. They respectfully submit their recommendations jointly.

2011 RECOMMENDATIONS

CHILD WELFARE FINANCING LAW REAUTHORIZATION

Reauthorization of the Child Welfare Financing Law in 2012 provides an opportunity to continue reforms in child welfare, shifting funding and practice from placement into foster care toward primary prevention and intervention strategies that lead to better outcomes for children and their families. These prevention/intervention strategies aim to reduce the number of children who are placed in foster homes and residential facilities, recurrence, and the incidence of abuse and neglect overall.² Importantly, prevention and early intervention offer the opportunity to maximize New York's resources by funding strategies that improve outcomes for children and families and lessen more costly placements into foster care. Financing should align with these policy goals.

Many instances of child abuse and neglect can be eliminated with a commitment to reduce poverty. A section of the Panels' 2009 Annual Report, *Root Causes of Child Maltreatment*, addressed the issue of poverty as a common thread in reports of abuse and neglect.³ Since the beginning of the Great Recession, the number of reports made to the SCR grew from 154,828 in 2007 to 170,224 in 2010, an increase of 10% in three years, while the population of children ages 0-17 decreased by 2.1%.^{4,5}

At the same time poverty has reached its highest number since 1959;⁶ one in five of New York's children lives below the federal poverty level.⁷ In Buffalo, Rochester, Elmira, Syracuse and Utica the child poverty rate exceeds two in five children. The overall New York City rate is nearly one in three, with the Bronx close to two in five.⁸ Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino populations experience significantly higher levels of child poverty and rates of entry into the child welfare system. Historically, during an economic decline, when families are stressed and struggling with a lack of resources there are more reports to the SCR.⁹ Families

need help weathering this difficult economic climate with basic supports including food, safe housing, jobs, clothing, and medical care. The specific challenges associated with poverty and its relationship to reports of child neglect must be taken into consideration when making any changes to New York's Child Welfare Financing Law.

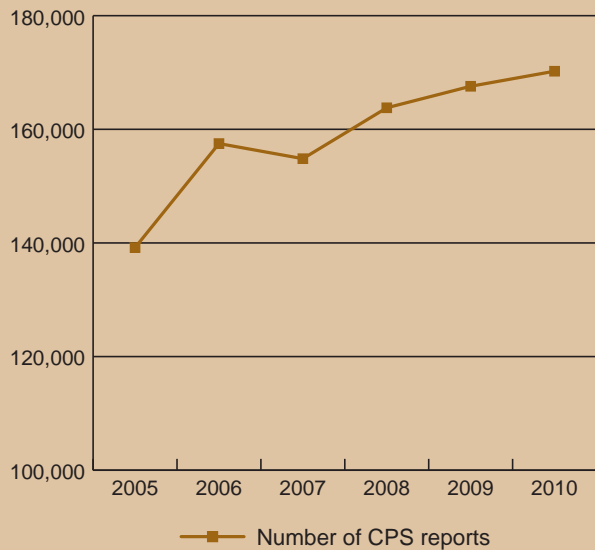
Maintain open-ended, uncapped reimbursement and return to a 75% state /25% local share for primary prevention and intervention services.

Panel members reiterate their 2010 recommendation for funding these important services with the goal of reducing the number of entries into costly foster care and to hasten reunification for those placed in foster care. Even as the number of reports to the SCR increased over the past few years, the number of children in foster care continued to decline. In 2000, the number of children in care totaled 42,921.¹⁰ By 2007 the number dropped to 25,062. For 2010, the number of children in care totaled 22,804, a decrease of 9% over the past three years of the recession even though the number of reports to the SCR increased by 10% in that same time period.¹¹ The decline in out-of-home placements is a direct result of an increased emphasis on, and funding for, community-based and in-home services to meet the needs of families.

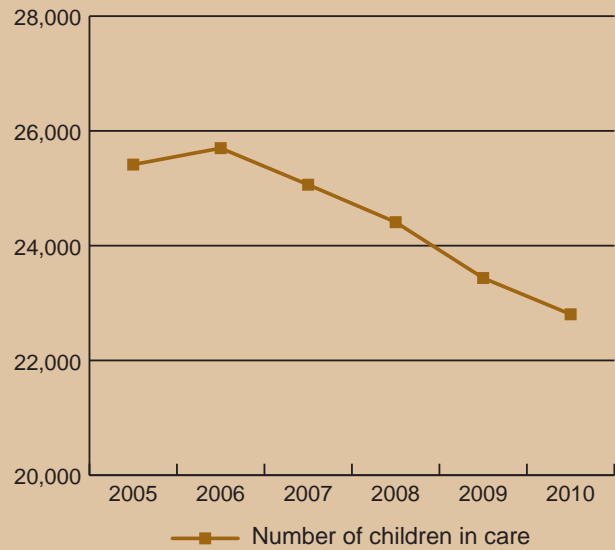
The funding supports protective, preventive, adoption, aftercare, and independent living services with the aim of reducing repeat maltreatment and re-entry into the system. High-quality prevention services are needed to build parental resilience and social connections, provide knowledge about parenting and developmental needs, address children's social-emotional development, and provide concrete supports. These services are part of the Strengthening Families Program, an evidence-based program that works by giving families the resources they need to succeed so they will not need costly interventions.^{12 13} Uncapped preventive funds are essential to avoid more costly placements into foster homes or residential care.



Number of CPS reports increased over the past six years



Number of children in foster care continues to decrease



It is absolutely critical that this funding remain uncapped. Further, Panel members recommend funding these services at a 75% state /25% local share, returning to the state/local partnership adopted in New York's 1979 Child Welfare Reform Act. New York State currently requires counties to bear 38% of the costs for preventive services, shifting an undue burden onto local communities. County budgets are under stress and local districts can no longer support this increased share. Spending for preventive funding rose from just over \$274.5 million in the 2000-01 Budget to over \$663.7 million in the 2007-08 Budget, fueling the decrease in the number of children in out-of-home care. However, expenditures decreased to \$576.6 million in the 2009-10 Budget, the same time period when localities were required to pick up a larger share of the costs for these services.¹⁴ In addition, a cap on property taxes was enacted in the 2011 legislative session, limiting localities' ability to raise additional funding. Local districts need this predictable and stable funding source that offers them the opportunity to respond to local needs. Not surprisingly, the number of children receiving these services declined by 13% in the past two years.

Allow flexible funding for targeted services for at-risk populations without the need for a report to the State Central Register.

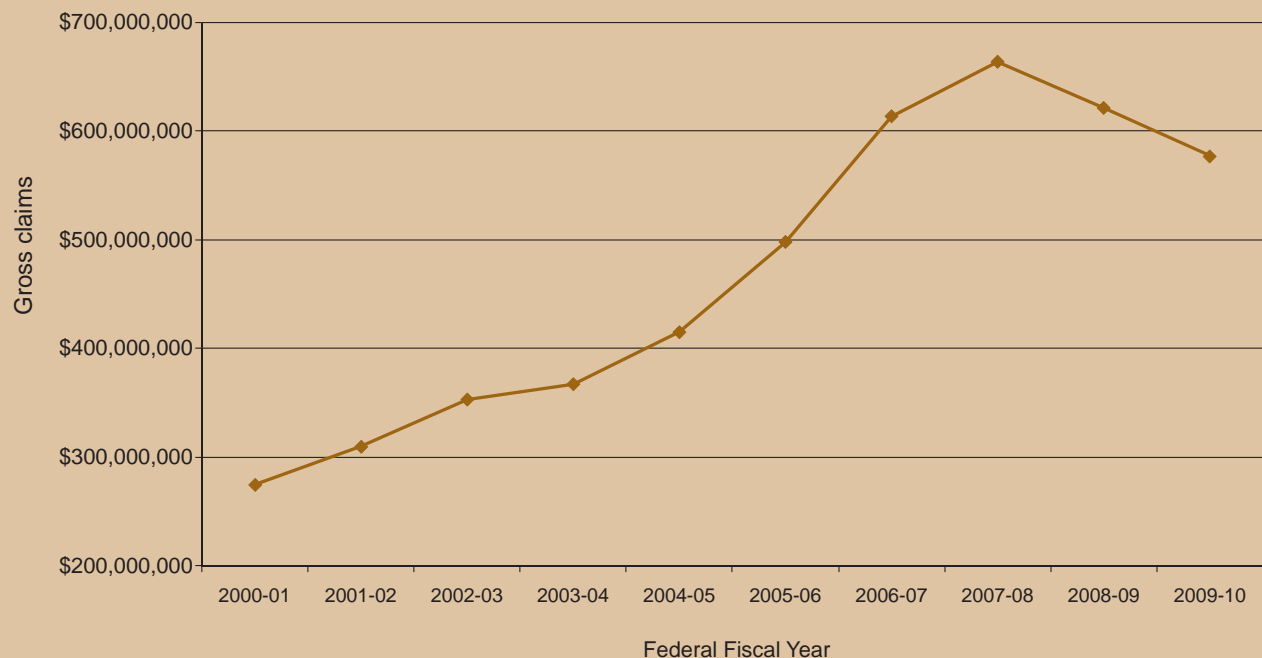
The Panels call for funding within the Child Welfare Financing Law that can be used by local departments of social services (LDSS) to meet the needs of targeted populations identified as at-risk of placement into foster care,

without making a report to the SCR. Such funding would allow LDSS to create an effective system of care using wrap-around services not easily met through existing funding streams. Funding must allow for integrated services to meet the needs of children and their families across systems with shared outcomes between state agencies.

While the child welfare system is charged with safety, permanency and well-being outcomes, these outcomes cannot be the province of the child welfare system alone. The commissioners of all child-serving state agencies recognized this joint responsibility when they issued the 2008 *New York State Children's Plan*.¹⁵ The 2010 update of the plan calls for continued expansion and improvement of comprehensive early intervention models and the development and strengthening of the community-based care network.¹⁶ An integrated funding strategy is needed, one which allows for a continuum of care beginning with primary prevention programs. These include support for home visiting and parent education along with appropriate mental health services, access to substance abuse treatment, and services that meet the developmental needs of children and youth at various ages and stages of growth and maturity including preparation for successful adulthood.

Further, the recent passage of The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (S1542/HR2883) directs states to describe in their Child and Family Services Plans (Title IV-B plans) how they identify which populations are at greatest risk of maltreatment and how they will target services to those vulnerable populations. This is a new requirement under the Promoting

Public funding for preventive services decreased in the past two years (based on claims made)



Safe and Stable Families portion of Title IV-B Subpart 2 of the Social Security Act. The Act also provides states new opportunities for Title IV-E waivers with the aim of reducing time spent in foster care, increasing positive outcomes for children and families, and preventing abuse, neglect and re-entry into care.¹⁷ The Panels encourage OCFS to explore these opportunities to innovate and achieve better outcomes for children and their families.

Fund Kinship Guardianship Assistance as an uncapped permanency option with the same state/local share as adoption subsidies.

In 2010, New York adopted a law that offers Kinship Guardianship Assistance, a new option for Title IV-E funding reimbursement under the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act. Implementation began on April 1, 2011. Now, a relative (kin), caring for a child in an approved foster care home for six months, may apply to the LDSS for this permanency option.¹⁸ The financial assistance offered under Kinship Guardianship is important to families to continue to adequately care for the children in their household. In the *2011-12 Budget*, funding for Kinship Guardianship Assistance was provided through the Foster Care Block Grant; however, this funding stream is fully utilized by all counties to meet the needs of children in foster care. Another funding solution must be found. Panel members recommend

that Kinship Guardianship Assistance be funded at the same rate as adoption subsidies as both methods represent viable permanency options. Also, relatives should be informed about the kinship guardian program and that they will only qualify to be kinship guardians and receive a stipend if they are first foster parents.

EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT

The Panels reiterate their 2010 recommendations calling for the elimination of educational neglect as a basis for child protective reports for children 13 and older; strengthening instruction of SCR staff and mandated reporters; and increasing schools' responsibility for identifying and reducing absenteeism.

“Educational Neglect is considered to be the failure of a parent to ensure that child’s prompt and regular attendance in school or the keeping of a child out of school for impermissible reasons resulting in an adverse affect on the child’s educational progress or imminent danger of such an adverse affect.”¹⁹ Many reports investigated for educational neglect involve situations where teens choose not to attend school even though this is a scenario not included in the definition of educational neglect. In 2010, 24,758 educational neglect reports were accepted by the SCR,

representing 15% of all reports. Of those educational neglect reports accepted in 2010, 60% were for teens 13 and over.^{20 21} Most of these youth are at low risk of maltreatment.²² Due to this low risk, all counties offering a FAR option are addressing educational neglect with this alternative response. Still, it is a problem that requires a response that goes beyond local social services districts.

The Panels continue their support for the Vera Institute's recommendation to "Seek statutory change to achieve new standards for youth demonstrating truant behavior where parental responsibility is not in question."²³ A more effective option is needed for engaging students who are chronically absent from school. Making this change will also free scarce child welfare resources for those cases where there is serious concern for a child's safety. Importantly, the SCR would continue to accept reports for all other allegations for teens 13 and older.

Schools should increase their efforts to identify and link struggling students and families to in-school education supports and community-based services before absenteeism leads to compromised learning. To build increased understanding between the education and child welfare systems, Panel members ask that each LDSS send a letter to the school districts in their county informing them of the availability of community services workers who are willing to meet to provide information about the role of the child welfare system. Through such outreach, understanding and working relationships can be strengthened.

Add a question to SCR's screening of educational neglect allegations about whether a student under age 13 has an Individualized Education Plan, assuming legislative change in the previous recommendation is made.

There are many reasons why students do not attend school, no matter what effort parents make to assure their attendance. Students may not be on grade level with their classmates; may lack sufficient credits to graduate on time; may be threatened by violence; or may have special education needs that have not

been identified or addressed. Some have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) that have gone unmet. At this time, there is little information about IEPs including which services are provided to students; whether or not those services are successful; and how many parents of students with IEPs are reported to the SCR. Asking a question at the SCR about IEPs is a starting point to understanding the needs of special education students and improving their outcomes. This question should be asked for all reports of educational neglect.

Develop and implement more effective approaches to chronic absenteeism without the need for a report to the SCR. This response should combine blended funding with a multi-disciplinary approach at the local level to meet the complex service and education needs of struggling students to improve educational outcomes.

Students who are chronically absent from school often need assessments of their learning difficulties, tutorial support to help remediate skill deficits, literacy support, and other interventions—rather than a report to the SCR. The child welfare system is ill-equipped to address these educational deficits. In addition, parents who are reported to the SCR for educational neglect may feel punished for something that may be beyond their control, especially if they are already seeking help and support for their children. Schools are better positioned to address teens' education deficits, and they should be required to regularly report and be measured on chronic absenteeism. This is not just an education problem or a CPS problem, but a community problem that requires collaborative efforts due to its varied and complex causes. An alternative response to educational neglect without the need of a report to the SCR would bring together multiple systems to address the community-wide problem of absenteeism. Collaborative efforts could include police and probation departments, offices of mental health, and community-based organizations in addition to education officials and departments of social services.



2011 PANEL ACTIVITIES



New York City Panel

MARCH 4, 2011 MEETING

Greg Owens, OCFS Director of Special Projects in the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development, Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Deputy Commissioner Jan Flory, Nigel Nathaniel in the ACS Office of Community Partnerships and Mark Lewis, ACS Immigrant Services met with Panel members to provide an update on their efforts to address the disproportionate representation of minorities in child welfare. ACS formed a task force in 2006 to raise awareness, develop cultural competence within the agency and to reduce the disparities across child welfare. OCFS now has a pilot project with seven counties in the state to address disparities.

MAY 17, 2011 MEETING

Panel members met to review the *2011-12 Budget*, the proposed NYC Human Services Budget, legislation of interest introduced in the 2011 Session, and implementation of the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program. They reviewed the *Children's Services Planning Group Final Report* with recommendations related to casework practice and improving outcomes for medically fragile children.

SEPTEMBER 13, 2011 MEETING

Senator Diane Savino, Chair of the Senate Children and Families Committee, joined the Panel meeting to discuss child welfare legislative interests and priorities for 2012. Benita Miller, Founder and Executive Director of The Brooklyn Young Mothers' Collective, discussed her work with families and the need for more training in the child welfare workforce on developmental needs and the importance of young mothers' education. Renee Hallock, Director, OCFS Child and Family Services Review, provided an overview of OCFS' response to the Panels' 2010 recommendations. Members received updates and discussed their ideas for recommendations for their 2011 report.

NOVEMBER 1, 2011 MEETING

Recently appointed Administration for Children's Services Commissioner Ronald Richter met with Panel members to discuss his priorities and challenges for New York City's child welfare system. Panel members reviewed decisions made at the October 6th Joint Panel meeting and planned for 2012 meetings and activities.

Eastern Panel

FEBRUARY 4, 2011 MEETING

OCFS Associate Commissioner for Regional Operations and Practice Improvement Sheila Poole and Claire Strohmeier from the OCFS Continuous Quality Improvement unit provided an update on the new child fatality report system implemented in October, 2010. The system will improve timeliness of reports and provide consistency in the information contained in reports written by OCFS regional staff across the state. OCFS will now have the capacity to analyze statewide data to identify trends and target prevention efforts.

MARCH 18, 2011 MEETING

Columbia County Commissioner Paul Mossman, Greene County Commissioner Kira Pospel, Schenectady County Commissioner Dennis Packard, and Albany County Commissioner Colette Poulin joined Panel members in a discussion about the impact on the budget within their departments of social services and difficulties meeting the needs of children and families. Commissioners discussed the challenges of doing more with fewer resources, frustration with competing regulations, and lack of funding flexibility to match services that are needed for families.

AUGUST 1, 2011 MEETING

Laura Velez, OCFS Deputy Commissioner for Child Welfare and Community Service, provided Panel members with information about the 2011 GAO Report, *Child Maltreatment: Strengthening National Data on Child Fatalities Could Aid in Prevention*, OCFS Response to the 2010 Panel Report and Recommendations, and workgroups meeting to discuss reauthorization of the Child Welfare Financing Law. Panel members discussed areas of interest for their 2011 recommendations.

SEPTEMBER 23, 2011 MEETING

Greg Owens, OCFS Director for Special Projects in the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development, provided a detailed update on OCFS' work with pilot counties to reduce the disproportionate minority representation that exists in child welfare. Twelve counties in New York State now participate in this targeted effort. He also discussed the *Fourth National Incidence Study (NIS-4) of Child Abuse and Neglect Report to Congress* and the national dialogue that continues about its results. Members received updates and discussed their ideas for recommendations for their 2011 report.

DECEMBER 9, 2011 MEETING

Panel members met by teleconference to receive an update on FAR implementation in New York State. Members also reviewed data related to anonymous reports and discussed their 2012 meeting plans, advocacy, and activities.

Western Panel

MARCH 11, 2011 MEETING

Jamestown High School Executive Principal Joseph Yelich, Deputy Superintendent of the Niagara Falls School District Mark Laurrie, and Buffalo City Schools Supervisor for Attendance Services John Crabbe discussed their challenges and efforts to reach out to and support children and youth with attendance, behavior and/or mental health issues. The school districts launched several initiatives to improve curriculum, develop community partnerships, and increase out of school time supports to address the needs of their students with the goal of increasing graduation rates. They stated a need for cross-systems training to gain better understanding and working relationships with child protection workers.

MAY 13, 2011 MEETING

Deborah Merrifield, Executive Director of the Joan A. Male Family Support Center, provided an overview of the work at the Center which includes the Western New York Sudden Infant Death Response program, a day care center, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, and Family Voices. In particular, she highlighted the work with court-involved youth who are chronically absent from the Buffalo city schools. Dana Whitcomb, OCFS Buffalo Regional Office Director, met with Panel members to discuss the possibility of developing specialized cross-systems training with school district personnel and child welfare workers. Members received updates on the *2011-12 Budget*, legislation of interest and the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program.

SEPTEMBER 9, 2011 MEETING

Erie County Commissioner Carol Dankert met with Panel members to provide an update on her department's work to reduce disproportionate minority representation in child welfare, implementation of FAR, and impacts of the *2011-12 Budget* on her department's budget, practice, and services. Renee Hallock, Director, OCFS Child and Family Services Review, provided an overview of OCFS' response to the Panels' 2010 recommendations. Members received updates and discussed their ideas for recommendations for their 2011 report.

NOVEMBER 4, 2011 MEETING

Supervisor Gwen Bennett and Dawn Scott, OCFS Region 1 Child Abuse Specialists, met with Panel members to discuss the new system for child fatality reporting by regional offices. For the first time, OCFS is able to compile data statewide to identify trends and target prevention efforts. The Panel reviewed

data regarding infants and toddlers in the child welfare system for the 17-county area of the Western Panel region. Panel members reviewed decisions made at the October 6th Joint Panel meeting and planned for 2012 meetings and activities.

Joint Panel Meetings

JUNE 10, 2011 MEETING

Members of the three New York State Citizen Review Panels met to discuss their work and interests over the past year and to begin discussions regarding their *2011 Annual Report and Recommendations*. Laura Velez, OCFS Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Child Welfare and Community Service, provided updates on progress made toward recommendations contained within the *Ten for 2010 Report, 2011-12 Budget* items, and legislation of importance. Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, Chair of the Assembly Children and Families Committee, met with the three Panels to discuss legislative priorities and interests in convening conversations with interested groups on educational neglect and Child Welfare Financing Law over the next six months. Melissa Baker, Director, Strategic Consulting for Casey Family Programs, discussed Casey's interest in reducing the number of children in foster care by 50% by 2020. Casey is working directly with state and local child welfare experts on various initiatives. Panel members made decisions regarding content for their 2011 report.

OCTOBER 6, 2011 MEETING

Members of the three New York State Citizen Review Panels met to discuss their *2011 Annual Report and Recommendations*. Laura Velez, OCFS Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Child Welfare and Community Service, provided an overview of OCFS' priorities and updates on various initiatives. Sheila Poole, OCFS Associate Commissioner for Regional Operations, provided the Panels with an update on FAR implementation in the state. Panel members approved recommendations for their report and agreed to language and content for those recommendations.

For minutes of these meetings go to:
www.citizenreviewpanelsny.org.

Endnotes

- ¹ NYS Office of Children and Family Services (9/30/11) Family Assessment Response (FAR) Counties.
- ² Recurrence refers to the children who were victims of an indicated maltreatment report who were victims of another indicated report within a six month period of time.
- ³ *New York State Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services 2009 Annual Report and Recommendations*. Retrieved at http://www.citizenreviewpanelsny.org/documents/2009_crp_annual_report.pdf. Pages 2-4.
- ⁴ New York State Office of Children and Family Services. *Child Welfare Performance Profiles*. Retrieved 10/18/11 from http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/cfsr/cfsrdata/Statewide/S1_New_Investigations.pdf.
- ⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, Intercensal Estimates, 2007-2010, <http://www.census.gov/popest/data/intercensal/state/ST-EST00INT-02.html>.
- ⁶ DeNavas-Walt, C., Proctor, B.D., and Smith, J.C. (2011). *Income, Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010*. United States Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce.
- ⁷ New York State Community Action Association. (2011). *New York State Poverty Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.nyscaonline.org/PovReport/2011/Supplements/povpage.pdf>.
- ⁸ Citizens Committee for Children. (2011). *New York Children and Families in 2010 Statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey*. Retrieved from <http://www.cccnewyork.org/publications/CCCNYYCChildren2010Census.pdf>.
- ⁹ Goldman, J. Salus, M.K., Wolcott, D.I., Kennedy, K.Y. (2003). *A Coordinated Response to Child Abuse and Neglect: The Foundation for Practice*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families. Retrieved from <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/foundation/foundation.pdf>.
- ¹⁰ New York State Monitoring and Analysis Profiles, OCFS Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development, Bureau of Management Information. (2000 to 2009).
- ¹¹ NYS CCRS Data via Multistate Data Center (1/31/10 and 1/31/11).
- ¹² Strengthening Families Program. Accessed at <http://www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org/>.
- ¹³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families. (2011). *Strengthening Families and Communities 2011 Resource Guide*. Retrieved from <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/guide2011/guide.pdf>.
- ¹⁴ The Child Welfare Financing Law of 2002 combined funding for mandated and non-mandated preventive at a 65% state share/35% local share. In 2008, the enacted *2008-09 Budget* cut the state share to 63.7%. *The 2009-10 Budget* cut the state share once again to 62%. *The 2010-11 Budget* made cuts in the state share for adoption subsidies, reducing its portion from 73.5% set in 2008 to 62%.
- ¹⁵ Council on Children and Families. (2008). *The Children's Plan Improving the Social Emotional Well Being of New York's Children and Families*. Retrieved from <http://www.ccf.state.ny.us/initiatives/ChildPlanHome.htm>.
- ¹⁶ Council on Children and Families. (2010). *The New York State Children's Plan Update*. Retrieved from <http://www.ccf.state.ny.us/Initiatives/ChildPlan/cpResources/2010ChildrensPlanUpdate.pdf>.
- ¹⁷ The American Humane Association. (2011). *The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (S1542/HR2883)*. Retrieved from <http://www.americanhumane.org/children/stop-child-abuse/advocacy/child-and-family-services.pdf>.
- ¹⁸ NYS Office of Children and Family Services. (2011). *Know Your Permanency Options: The Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program*. Retrieved from <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/publications/Pub5108.pdf>.
- ¹⁹ NYS Office of Children and Family Services (2008). *Model Policy on Educational Neglect*. Retrieved from http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/news/2008/2008_02_27_mpoen.asp.
- ²⁰ Vera Institute of Justice (2010). *Getting Teenagers Back to School, Rethinking New York State's Response to Chronic Absence*.
- ²¹ NYS Office of Children and Family Services Data Warehouse. (April 6, 2011).
- ²² Vera Institute of Justice (2010).
- ²³ Vera Institute of Justice (2010).

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FEDERAL LAW AND THE CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS

The 1996 amendments to the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) mandate that states receiving federal funding under that legislation create volunteer Citizen Review Panels. The purpose of these Panels is to assess whether state and local agencies are effectively carrying out their child protection responsibilities. The federal statute broadly defines the work of the Citizen Review Panels.

The Panels must meet not less than once every three months and produce an annual public report containing a summary of their activities and recommendations to improve the child protection system at the state and local levels. They must evaluate the extent to which the state is fulfilling its child protective responsibilities under its CAPTA State Plan by:

1. Examining the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local agencies.
2. Reviewing specific cases, when warranted.
3. Reviewing other matters the Panel may consider important to child protection, consistent with Section 106(c) (A) (iii) of CAPTA.

Following the order of federal CAPTA Amendments of 1996, the New York State Legislature passed Chapter 136 of the Laws of 1999, establishing no less than three Citizen Review Panels, with at least one in New York City. The other Panels are in Eastern and Western New York.

Each Panel has up to thirteen members; the Governor appoints seven, with the Senate President and Assembly Speaker appointing three each.

For further information please visit the Panels' website at www.citizenreviewpanelsny.org or contact:

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
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