

Joint Panel
Minutes of the Meeting of the Eastern, Western, and New York City Panels
October 18, 2007

Attendees:

<i>Panel members:</i>	Stacy Alvord	Jocelyn Brown	Yvonne Hutchins-Plummer
	Ellen Kennedy	Mary McCarthy	Dianne Meckler
	JoAnn Merriman	Sania Metzger	Gerard Papa
	Mathea Rubin	Danny Sklarski	Julia Smead Bielawski

By Phone:	Eric Brettschneider	Christine Schnars
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<i>OCFS Staff:</i>	Thomas Hess	Terry Palumbo	Jane Lynch
	Sheila Poole	Jamie Greenberg	

<i>SCAA Staff:</i>	Karen Schimke	Robin Christenson	Diane Mastin
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<i>Guests:</i>	Khatib Waheed	Dennis Whalen	Lloyd Laquwan
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Handouts:

Meeting Agenda

Speaker Bios

Speakers' PowerPoint Presentations

2007 Recommendations Worksheets

Draft content pieces for Panels' 2007 Report

Publications:

A Call to Action: An Integrated Approach to Youth Permanence and Preparation for Adulthood, by Casey Family Services

The Annie E. Casey Foundation 2007 Kids Count Essay and Data Brief, State Profiles of Child Well-Being.

Meeting began with a welcome and introductions followed by presentations on the topic of Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality and Disparities. Presenters included Khatib Waheed, Senior Fellow at the Center for the Study of Social Policy, Sania Metzger, Director of Policy for Casey Family Services and NYC Panel member, and Greg Owens, Director of Special Projects in the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development for the NYS Office of Children and Family Services.

Mr. Waheed gave an overview of the five Casey Foundation – Center for the Study of Social Policy's Alliance for Racial Equity in Child Welfare work to ensure that all children and families receive fair treatment, support and achieve good outcomes from the child welfare system, regardless of their race. He emphasized that the race of a child/family really does matter and provided statistics to reinforce the point. He also provided information on places to watch, highlighting promising practices in Guilford County, North Carolina, King County, Washington, Ramsey County, Minnesota, and Woodbury County, Iowa.

He reported that the National Incidence Study found that there are no significant racial differences in incidence of maltreatment and that the average African American child is not at greater risk for abuse and neglect than the average Caucasian child. Yet, African American, Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander children have a disproportionately higher rate of maltreatment investigations when compared to Whites. Additionally, African American and American Indian/Alaska Native children are twice as likely as white children to be substantiated as abused or neglected when investigated. According to a recent GAO Report, New York State's Disproportionality Index for African American children is 2.63 higher than the national average of 2.26.

Ms. Metzger followed with an overview of the Breakthrough Series Collaborative in 13 jurisdictions. This work promotes effective policies at the federal, state, and local levels that can help reduce and eventually eliminate disproportionality and disparities. She specifically highlighted the work in Michigan and Texas. She also provided an overview of the recently released report by the GAO (U.S. General Accountability Office), *African American Children in Foster Care: Additional HHS Assistance Needed to Help States Reduce the Proportion in Care* (GA)-07-816). This report identifies the factors that have influenced the proportion of African American children entering and remaining in foster care, the extent to which states have implemented corrective strategies, and the way in which key federal child welfare policies may have had an influence. Contributing factors include poverty, challenges in accessing support services, racial bias and difficulties in finding permanent homes. Recommendations include authorizing subsidized guardianships and assisting states in reducing their disparities.

Mr. Owens followed with specific information on disparities in New York State and the formation of an OCFS workgroup in 2002 with progress made to date. All presentations and reports referenced can be found at the panels' web site.

Panel members discussed specific content for their 2007 report and made decisions regarding their 2007 recommendations. They choose several recommendations for consideration: Community Child Protection integrating differential response and family case conferencing within and added funding, adaptations to Connections to accommodate differential response, system reform, educational neglect, disproportionality and disparities, home visiting, parent education, continuum of care for youth aging out, financial support for kinship care providers, staff qualifications, competency skill testing, caseload reductions, accountability, and sustained support for Multi-disciplinary Teams, Child Advocacy Centers, and CHAMP.

Panel members indicated their interest in the Undoing Racism conference. Operating guidelines were tabled until each panel's first meeting in 2008.