

NYS CRP Joint Panel  
Minutes of the Meeting  
June 10, 2011

*Attendees:*

Ellen Kennedy	Paula Mazur	Stefan Perkowski
Augusta Welsh	Christine Schnars	David Lansner
Mathea Rubin	Wayne Ho	Jorge Saenz De Viteri
Sania Metzger	Elba Montalvo	Ed Blatt
Carrie Jefferson Smith: by phone		
<i>OCFS Staff:</i> Renee Hallock	Laura Velez	
<i>SCAA Staff:</i> Diane Mastin		
<i>Guests:</i> Melissa Baker	George Ortiz	Assemblywoman Amy Paulin

*Handouts:*

Agenda

Family Assessment Response Counties Map

NYS CRP Membership lists

2011 Child Welfare legislation “Same As” Bills

Travel Claim form

BASSICS: Building a System of Sustainable Supports for Child Welfare Supervisors

A Parent For Every Child – Fact Sheet

Reduced Operating Capacity Approvals 2010-11

OCFS Voluntary Agency Licensed Beds, November 2005 and November 2010

Articles:

Drake, B.; Jolley, J.M.; Lanier, P.; Fluke, J; Barth, R.P.; and Johson-Reid, M. (2011).  
Racial Bias in Child Protection? A Comparison of Competing Explanations Using National  
Data. *Pediatrics* (127) 3

Sedlak, A.J.; Mettenburg, M.B.; Petta, I.; Greene, A., and Spencer, L. (2010). *Fourth National  
Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS-4) Report to Congress Executive Summary*.  
Washington DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children  
and Families.

Presentations from the National Citizen Review Panel Conference, May, 2011:

*You Can Legislate It! Using the Legislative Process to Improve Child Protection Systems –  
Examples from 2006-2011 State Statutory Reforms*. Howard Davison, J.D., Director, ABA  
Center on Children and the Law.

*How July 2010 HHS Fostering Connections Guidance & Dec. 2010 New CAPTA Requirements Might Impact Your Work.* Howard Davison, J.D., Director, ABA Center on Children and the Law.

*Action Planning for the Trip Home.* Blake Jones, University of Kentucky College of Social Work.

Casey Family Programs Publications:

- *Ensuring Safe, Nurturing and Permanent Families for Children: Foster Care Reductions and Child Safety.* May 2011
- *Ensuring Safe, Nurturing and Permanent Families for Children: The Role of Accountability in Child Welfare Finance Reform.* April 2011
- *Ensuring Safe, Nurturing and Permanent Families for Children: The Need for Federal Finance Reform.* May 2010 (Revised September 2010)
- *Ensuring Safe, Nurturing and Permanent Families for Children: The Need to Reauthorize and Expand Title IV-E Waivers.* May 2010
- *Going Beyond the Vision, A report on child welfare in America.* May 2011

The joint panel meeting began with a welcome and introductions. Laura Velez, OCFS Deputy Commissioner, Child Welfare and Community Services provided panel members with an update on funding for OCFS programs and services in the 2011-12 Budget. Healthy Families NY funding was fully restored in the budget when many non-mandated programs were cut substantially. Of particular concern is kinship or relative care funding which was cut from \$2.7 million to under \$400,000 over the past two years. She reported that Family Assessment Response legislation was enacted recently making FAR permanent and allowing New York City to offer the response. Foundation work is necessary in the city to move FAR forward. OCFS remains interested in changes to educational neglect reports and a recommendation for change in statute is included in the Governor's mandate relief package. OCFS' work on Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR) continues with the original pilot counties and additional counties. Kinship Guardianship Assistance program began implementation on April 1, 2011 and New York has its first approved family in the program. Ms. Velez highlighted additional work OCFS is conducting to implement recommendations from the Ten for 2010 report including Family Finding, A Parent for Every Child, family engagement tool kits and cross systems collaborations.

She reported on some instability in the foster care system due to decreased residential placements. A few residential organizations have closed with little notice; others are taking in children who are placed out of state. Still others are taking children they are not equipped to handle. Placements continue to decrease at a time when the number of reports has increased.

Of particular importance, the Child Welfare Financing Law is due to sunset in June, 2012. OCFS has convened a small group of experts to discuss changes that will increase flexibility, be more responsive

to local needs, and incentivize preventive programs and services. Recommendations will be submitted to the governor.

Caseworker workloads remain problematic. OCFS is looking at mandate relief, limiting court-ordered investigations and FAR as means to reducing workloads. In addition, OCFS received a federal grant in 2010 to address development of supervision skills in child welfare. Improvements have also been made to tracking CFSR data and child fatalities.

Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, Chair of the Assembly Children and Families Committee, met with panel members to discuss the 2011 session and priorities of the Assembly's Children and Families Committee. Of particular interest are the destitute child bill and the chapter amendment to FAR legislation. This summer and fall, she plans to convene various parties, including schools and the courts, to discuss changes to the reporting of educational neglect. There is both support and opposition to changes to the statute. She expressed interest in finding solutions that address needs earlier. She is also giving priority to the Child Welfare Financing Law which sunsets next year.

Melissa Baker, Director, Strategic Consulting Casey Family Programs, discussed Casey's interest in safely reducing the number of children in foster care by 50% by 2020 and making reinvestments into child welfare. Casey Family Programs is an operational foundation that provides strategic consulting to public child welfare systems, both state and local, to improve outcomes and drive change. The New York City program office works in 14 states. In New York, Casey Family Programs supports OCFS' FAR, DMR, educational neglect work, Ten for 2010 forums and the Financing advisory group. They are also bringing into the state someone with expertise on children with disabilities to work towards the provision of services without coming into the foster care system. In NYC, Casey supports the One Year Home initiative and a pilot using legal interns to help meet the 60 day time period for the courts. Vera Institute has been hired to do an operational review of the court process. Other work includes a small project with substance abuse families in the Bronx, a faith-based initiative and using data for accountability.

Ms. Baker gave a national perspective and discussed HHS Children's Bureau Commissioner Bryan Samuels' concerns that the system needs to be more responsive to today's problems. More emphasis needs to be placed on in-home care, child well-being, and improved outcomes for children. Support for family engagement strategies, FAR, new assessment tools, addressing social and emotional development, better use of data, and a focus on older youth will lead to improvements. The use of waivers may drive innovations if legislation is passed at the federal level.

Each panel chair or vice-chair provided updates on their work and interests over the past year. Panel members agreed to develop a report similar in scope to their 2010 report. The 2011 report will highlight the passage of FAR and include their recommendations and list of activities. Attendees offered suggestions for recommendation topics to be discussed at individual panel meetings. Panel chairs agreed to reach out to panel members who have not attended meetings in an effort to remove any barriers to attendance that exist. All panel members are asked to offer suggestions for membership to the panels. Panel members expressed interest in participating in any discussions regarding educational neglect.