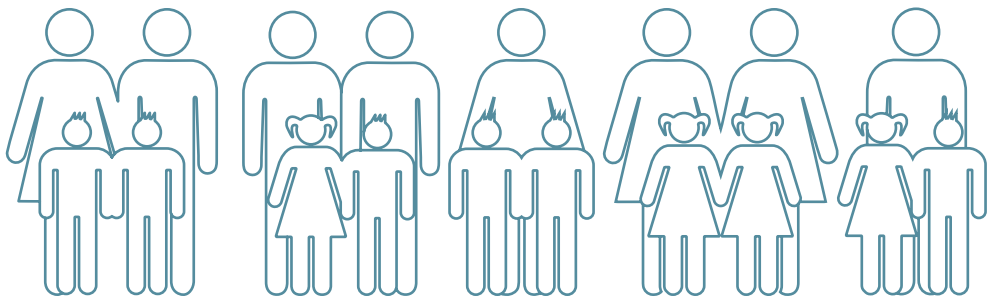


Home Again

Strengthening New York's Families
through Home Visiting

NYS Citizen Review Panels
2018 Annual Report



Home Again

Strengthening New York's Families through Home Visiting

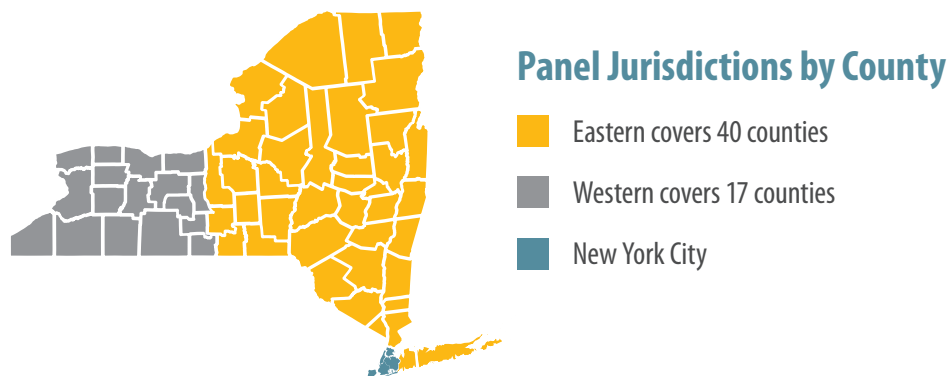
NYS Citizen Review Panels 2018 Annual Report

The New York State (NYS) Citizen Review Panels (CRP) for Child Protective Services (CPS) are important conduits for public sentiment and offer an external perspective on the efficacy of New York State's child protective policies, practices, programs, and fiscal priorities. The Panels, appointed by the Governor or the NYS Legislature, are composed of volunteers with a breadth of experience and knowledge in child welfare practice and law, social work, education, and technology, among other areas. Each of the three Panels has up to 13 members. Of those members, the Governor appoints seven, and the Senate President and Assembly Speaker appoint three each.

The Western Panel covers the 17 counties in the western region of the State. The New York City Panel covers the five boroughs of New York City. The Eastern Panel covers the remaining 40 counties.

The Panels are authorized by both state and federal law to examine the policies, procedures, and practices of the state and local social services districts and, where appropriate, the outcome of specific cases. The Panels evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities and are authorized to hold public hearings. They have reasonable access to public and private facilities receiving public funds to provide child welfare services within the Panel jurisdiction. In addition, the Panels advocate for important legislation that can have a positive impact on child welfare services in NYS. (See the inside back cover for more information on the Panels' roles and authority.)

For summaries of Panel activities and a list of Panel members, refer to the Appendices.



"We must do whatever is in our power to promote the safety and well-being of the State's children and families and to maintain a safe and healthy New York."

Foreword

As a member of the New York State Assembly, I experience the urgency and difficulty of balancing funding priorities. Educating the general public and the state's policy makers on the compelling research on the effectiveness of Home Visiting is imperative. We must do whatever is in our power to promote the safety and well-being of the State's children and families and to maintain a safe and healthy New York.

Home Visiting programs prevent child abuse, reduce foster care placements, increase early literacy and save money at both the state and the local levels. Ample research clearly demonstrates that these programs stabilize families with young children now and in the future, and avert the very tragedies that occupy so much of our time and state resources.

Yet these prevention programs don't get the attention or the funding they need and deserve. It's estimated that only about 1% of potentially eligible families have access to these vital and effective services.

I invite you to join the New York State Citizen Review Panels in their efforts to raise the awareness that Home Visiting actually impacts the long-term success of our most vulnerable children and families and reduces far more expensive options.

Sincerely,



New York State Assemblymember Patricia Fahy



Executive Summary

The challenges faced in crafting an effective governmental response to child abuse and neglect are well known:

- The number of indicated reports of child abuse and neglect is steadily rising;
- The opioid crisis plagues too many New York State families and is largely progressing unchecked;
- The child welfare system is facing a workforce crisis; and
- There are numerous demands on the state's financial resources.

With these factors considered, the NYS Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services once again make the singular, carefully considered recommendation to the Governor, Legislature, and state agencies to devote increased support and funding to evidence-based home visiting programs by investing \$40.5 million in the 2019-2020 State budget. Home visiting is a cost-effective, proven strategy for strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect. In addition, home visiting programs have been shown to promote numerous positive outcomes for both the child and family served, such as a reduced reliance on government financial support and improved behavior at school. Home visiting programs yield savings by avoiding costlier services such as foster care.

This recommendation includes funding for evidence-based home visiting programs, the Home Visiting Coordination Initiative, and the First 1,000 Days on Medicaid Home Visiting Pilot. The Panels recognize the competing interests and constraints placed on the State budget and are making investment recommendations to strategically make the most of the money that is available.

While NYS allotted some funding for home visiting programs in the 2018-2019 budget, it continues to be inadequate to meet the need. **Only about 1% of the potentially eligible families in NYS receive home visiting services, placing NY as the 42nd state in the nation for percentage of potentially eligible families served.** This is simply not acceptable.

NYS should make a smart decision to strengthen NYS families and make NYS children safer—by investing \$40.5 million in home visiting programs and supports.

"The NYS Home Visiting Coordination Initiative is a platform for information, education, and conversation. The intent is to provide cutting-edge information, build cross-program relationships, and offer additional opportunities for cross-systems operations. Ultimately, it aims to help programs increase staff retention and serve more families."

*Jenn O'Connor
Director of Policy
and Advocacy
Prevent Child Abuse NY*



2018 Annual Report

Each year, the NYS Citizen Review Panels (CRP) for Child Protective Services (CPS) honor their commitment to improve NYS' child welfare system by issuing an annual report which includes recommendations to the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), the NYS Legislature, the NYS Division of Budget (DOB), and the Governor's office. In previous years, the Panels have issued a number of recommendations based on: prior child welfare knowledge; presentations and discussions at Panel meetings; research; and convenings with other child welfare partners.¹ The Panels remain committed to previous recommendations.

In the 2017 Annual Report, the Panels made the singular, carefully selected recommendation to "substantially increase funding for the proven, primary prevention program of home visiting by investing \$108 million over three years."² The Panels chose this focus because:

- The benefits of home visiting go well beyond preventing child abuse;
- The efficacy of home visiting programs is well researched; and
- The impact on family well-being is broad including a reduction in low birth weights, improved school performance of children, and increased economic stability for the family.

While the Panels' total funding request was not fulfilled in the current budget, a lesser amount of funding was dedicated to home visiting programs. The Panels appreciate the investment made by the Governor and NYS Legislature. However, a more robust investment is required in order to improve the sustainability of home visiting programs, as well as increase the number of NYS families served.

This year, the Panels continue to request that the Governor, NYS Legislature, and NYS agencies devote funding and support to evidence-based home visiting programs by investing \$40.5 million. This funding dedicated to home visiting programs will strengthen NYS' families, protect NYS' children, and save NYS money.

What's Home Visiting?

Home visiting programs are a proven strategy for strengthening families of parent(s) that are expecting or with children under the age of five, when they are the most in need of or receptive to services. Services are delivered in the family's home or other environments accessible for the family such as shelters, and are based on the program's model and family's needs. The services, such as parenting coaching, can be provided directly through the home visiting program or by connecting the family with other appropriate services such as health, mental, dental, or behavioral health services.

Participation in home visiting services is completely voluntary, requiring active participation from the family. The purpose, frequency, duration, eligibility requirements, and type of service differs by each home visiting program model and is based on the needs of the family.³ The staff conducting visits range from paraprofessionals to registered nurses and therapists, resulting in varying delivery costs.

New York is home to several evidence-based or evidence-informed home visiting programs.⁴ Evidence-based programs have been demonstrated to be effective through peer-reviewed study, while evidence-informed programs use the best available research in the development of the model.⁵ Some examples of evidence-based or informed programs in New York include:

"They helped to prepare me and make me feel I wasn't alone in this situation."

*HFNY participant*²⁴

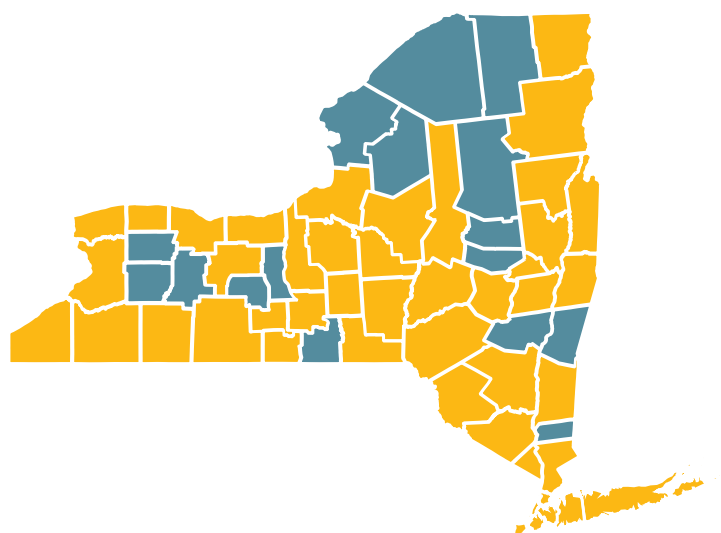
Home visiting programs are a proven strategy for strengthening families of parent(s) that are expecting or with children under the age of five, when they are the most in need of or receptive to services.



- ✔ Attachment Bio-behavioral Catch-up (ABC/Power of Two)
- ✔ Early Head Start
- ✔ Healthy Families New York (HFNY)
- ✔ Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)
- ✔ Parents as Teachers (PAT)
- ✔ Parent Child Home Program

Some localities have also developed their own, community-based home visiting programs.

These programs are currently funded through a complex mesh of federal, state, local, and private dollars through grants and trusts.⁶ Despite the numerous funding sources, home visiting programs continue to be drastically underfunded and unable to benefit all potentially eligible families. This is especially prominent in regions of the state that are less densely populated, resulting in rural and semi-rural areas being even more underserved.⁷ A rural or semi-rural county may have no home visiting program at all or a singular program may cover a vast geographical area, making service delivery challenging.



Underserved in Home Visiting

Regions of the state that are less densely populated receive less home visiting services than the more populated areas.²⁵

● No home visiting programs

● At least one home visiting program

New York State Still Needs Home Visiting

The need for home visiting has not diminished in recent years. In 2017, there were 47,541 indicated reports of child maltreatment in NYS, a 6% increase from 2016.⁸ In fact, the number of indicated reports has been steadily climbing since 2015.⁹

In addition, of NYS families with a child that is 6 years old or younger:¹⁰

- 27% are a single mother household
- 19% have a child under the age of one
- 26% are considered to be low income

These are factors that have been shown to be correlated with increased risk of child maltreatment.¹¹ While not all of these reports involved families eligible for home visiting services, primary prevention services like home visiting and other programs could have prevented later maltreatment.¹²



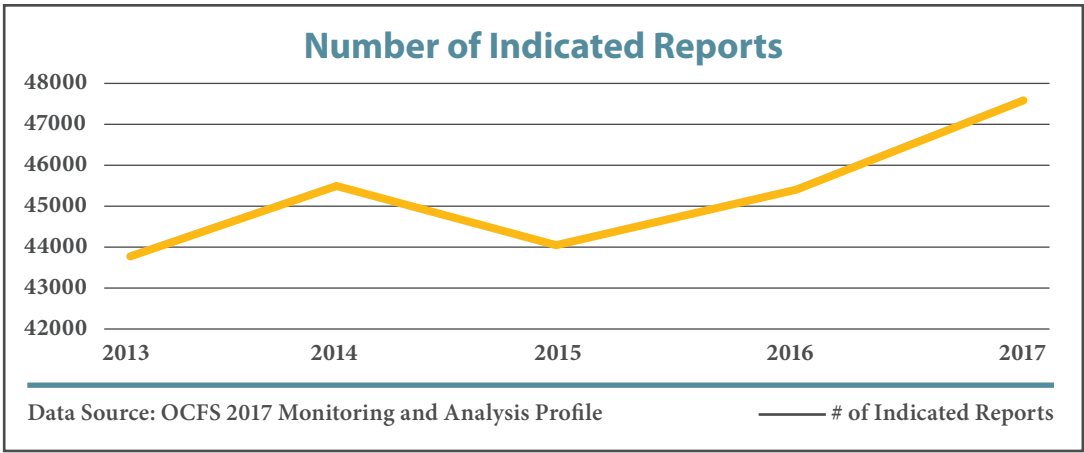


Home visiting saves

\$ = SAVINGS

\$ = COST

The cost of providing home visiting for an **entire family** for one year is approximately 10% to 15% of the cost of placing **one child** in foster care for one year.¹⁵



Home Visiting Strengthens Children and Families

Home visiting programs have the potential to engage at-risk families prior to contact with the child welfare system or after to prevent additional or future instances of child maltreatment. A seven-year longitudinal study of families enrolled in Healthy Families NY (HFNY) recently concluded that by the child’s seventh birthday, the mother enrolled in a HFNY program was half as likely to be the confirmed subject in an investigation for child maltreatment.¹³ That is a 50% reduction in child maltreatment, avoiding half of the trauma and cost associated with an investigation.

In addition to preventing child maltreatment, research shows that home visiting provides other potential positive outcomes for both children and families including:¹⁴

- Reduced dependence on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and other financial supports;
- Increased financial independence, security and stable employment;
- Reduced number of babies born with low birthweight;
- Increased time between pregnancies; and
- Improved school performance for children including fewer behavioral issues and increased graduation rates.

Home Visiting Saves Money

Investment in home visiting yields future savings for NYS of approximately \$1.75 to \$5.70 for every dollar spent by reducing the cost of child protection services, special education and retention services, temporary assistance, and criminal justice services.¹⁵ The cost of providing home visiting for an entire family for one year is approximately 10% to 15% of the cost of placing one child in foster care for one year.¹⁶

Home Visiting Can Help More Children and Families in NYS

Estimates show that there are approximately 1,038,100 pregnant women or families in NYS with a child under the age of six and not yet in kindergarten that could benefit from home visiting services.¹⁷ Compared with the 11,147 families that received home visiting services in 2017, New York is falling short, serving only 1% of potentially eligible families.¹⁸ New York ranks 42nd in the country for percentage of eligible families accessing home visiting services.¹⁹

The New York State motto “Excelsior” means ever upward, a symbol of New York’s commitment to strive for excellence for its children and families. **Is serving only 1% of potential families and a rank of 42nd striving for excellence?** The Panels believe New York State can do much better for its children and that the families of New York deserve much better.

Challenges and Changes for Child Welfare in New York State

Although the number of potentially eligible families currently receiving home visiting services is negligible, the Panels acknowledge the challenges and changes facing child welfare services and the many competing priorities in this year's state budget. Increasing funding for home visiting services has the potential to influence current major challenges.

- **An unstable workforce** is a costly and chronic problem in child welfare, impacting the quality of service for children and families. Child welfare workforce turnover is alarmingly high, estimated to be between 20 and 40%, well over the optimal turnover rate of 10 to 12%.²⁰ High workloads and caseloads, among other factors, have been associated with an increase in turnover.²¹ Home visiting services have the potential to reduce workloads and caseloads by intervening with at-risk families prior to initial involvement in the system or the next child maltreatment report.
- **The opioid crisis** is a growing public health concern in New York State as well as across the nation. From 2005 to 2014, in New York State, the rate of prescription opioid overdose deaths tripled, while the rate of heroin overdose deaths increased by 20 times.²² Both the human and financial costs of this epidemic are significant. "Home visitors are uniquely poised to facilitate timely, quality care-coordination in both the prenatal and postnatal periods, identify substance use and risk for substance use, and ensure that pregnant and parenting caregivers and their infants are connected to quality services and interventions to meet their needs."²³

Recently enacted federal legislation provides new opportunities to expand resources for home visiting programs. The Family First Prevention Services Act [PL 115-123], signed into federal law this year, will impact the financial structure of the child welfare system in New York State. This new law offers financial incentives for states to increase use of evidence-based prevention services, such as home visiting, among other things. The main objective of the law is to keep children at home with their families whenever it is safe and possible. This may create additional financial support for home visiting programs and a significant shift in the child welfare system structure in the state.

Limited Funds Means More Strategic Investment

Ideally, home visiting services should be available to all eligible families in NYS, requiring a yearly investment of approximately \$5 billion. Given the current outlook for the next state budget, the Panels recognize the need to be more strategic with the use of limited available funds. So rather than asking for a significant investment to drastically increase the number of families served as in the 2017 report, the Panels strongly support:

- The state funding asks forthcoming from the evidence-based home visiting programs;
- Additional investment in the NYS Home Visiting Coordination Initiative; and
- Continued support of the First 1,000 Days on Medicaid Initiative Pilot to explore the use of Medicaid dollars to pay for home visiting services.

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PR — #53

Where does New York State rank?

A comparison of the percentage of potentially eligible families served by home visiting programs across most states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Tribal-Led Organizations (TLO).²⁶

Home visiting programs have the potential to engage at-risk families prior to contact with the child welfare system or after to prevent additional or future instances of child maltreatment.

**STUDY
SHOWS
HFNY
PROGRAM
POTENTIAL**



The breakdown of this ask is as follows:

- ✓ \$1.5 million for ABC/Power of Two
- ✓ \$6 million for Nurse Family Partnership
- ✓ \$3 million for Parents as Teachers
- ✓ \$25.8 million for Healthy Families New York, an increase of \$2.5 million from last year
- ✓ \$2 million for Parent Child Home Program
- ✓ \$200,000 for the NYS Home Visiting Coordination Initiative
- ✓ \$2 million for the First 1,000 Days on Medicaid Home Visiting Pilot

Therefore, the NYS Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services recommend a total investment of \$40.5 million to fund and support home visiting programs in NYS. Each of the evidence-based home visiting programs serves a specific population of potentially eligible families and plays an important role in the continuum of home visiting services. The Home Visiting Coordination Initiative will strengthen collaboration between programs, through cross-system operation and training. And finally, the First 1,000 Days on Medicaid Home Visiting Pilot provides an exciting opportunity to examine the potential of funding home visiting services through Medicaid, a more long-term sustainable source of dollars. Each of these funding requests is an essential component to strengthening home visiting programs across New York State.

Home visiting strengthens families and saves money. The Panels urge NYS to make a smart investment in home visiting services.



Appendices



Summary of Panel Activities

New York City Panel

December 5, 2017

Panel Chair David Lansner convened the meeting. CRP Coordinator Jennifer Goldman provided updates from WRI and also shared written OCFS updates on behalf of Lisa Gordon, who was unable to attend. Several staff members from ACS joined the meeting for discussion and updates. Senator Martin Golden then led a discussion on legislative advocacy for home visiting. Representatives from the Council on Accreditation described the benefits of accreditation and the accreditation process. Panel Chair David Lansner thanked guests and adjourned the meeting.

March 20, 2018

Panel Chair David Lansner convened the meeting. Panel Co-Chair Stanley Capela debriefed Panel members on the CRP Advocacy Day, mentioning the positive feedback on the Panels' singular recommendation of increased funding for home visiting programs and the suggestion to start the advocacy process earlier in the budget cycle. Staff from the NYC Administration for Children's Services joined the meeting to provide various updates requested by Panel members. Stephanie Gendell, Associate Director of the Citizens' Committee for Children, attended via phone to provide an update on the status of child welfare funding proposed in the NYS budget and also the advocacy work of the NYS Child Welfare Coalition. The Panel members received OCFS updates from Lisa Gordon, OCFS Director of the Bureau of Program and Community Development, and WRI updates from Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator.

Jenn O'Connor, Director of Policy and Advocacy at Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY), joined the meeting via phone to provide an update on the home visiting training coordinator proposal as well as discuss initiatives at PCANY. Panel Chair David Lansner adjourned the meeting.

May 1, 2018

Panel Chair David Lansner convened the meeting. Staff from the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) joined the meeting to provide updates on topics requested by the Panel including status of the Predictive Analytics Advisory Committee, utilizing retired police officers to assist with complicated or serious Child Protective Services (CPS) cases, NYC's Anti-Human Trafficking program, media response to coverage of child fatalities, incident patterns in CPS reports, feedback to mandated reporters, photograph protocols, and child welfare financing in NYC. Lisa Gordon, OCFS Director of the Bureau of Program and Community Development, and Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from OCFS and WRI, respectively. The Panel discussed topics for the next meeting. Panel Chair David Lansner adjourned the meeting.

September 18, 2018

Panel Chair David Lansner convened the meeting. Stanley Capela provided a debriefing on CRP August Advocacy Day. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI. Lisa Gordon, OCFS Director of the Bureau of Program and Community Development, provided updates from OCFS. Panel members then discussed future plans for regional advocacy efforts and next steps. Panel Chair David Lansner adjourned the meeting.

Eastern Panel

December 8, 2017

Panel Co-Chair Mary McCarthy convened the meeting. Panel members discussed distribution and advocacy plans for the upcoming release of the annual report. WRI Executive Director Darlene Ward shared the results of the Eastern Panel Operations Survey. CRP Coordinator Jennifer Goldman agreed to create and distribute a short online survey to help panel members narrow the focus of meeting topics. OCFS provided updates. Jennifer Goldman provided updates from WRI. Deb Czubak from OASAS and John Lockwood, OCFS Albany Regional Director joined the meeting to discuss regional efforts to combat the opioid crisis and lessen its impact on child welfare. William Gettman, CEO at Northern Rivers, shared a voluntary agency perspective on the challenges currently facing child welfare in NYS. Panel Co-Chair Mary McCarthy thanked all the presenters for their time and adjourned the meeting.

March 8, 2018

Panel Chair Ed Blatt convened the meeting. Mr. Blatt and Panel Co-Chair Mary McCarthy debriefed Panel members on the CRP Advocacy Day held on February 13, 2018. Mr. Blatt and Ms. McCarthy shared that Panel Chairs and Co-Chairs received positive feedback on the Panels' singular recommendation of increased funding for home visiting programs and discussed starting advocacy efforts earlier to be timelier with the budget process. The Panel members received OCFS updates from Amy Papandrea, OCFS Program Specialist, and WRI updates from Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator. Paige Pierce, Chief Executive Officer of Families Together NYS (FTNYS), joined the meeting to discuss FTNYS initiatives and also discuss ways in which FTNYS and the CRPs can work together to achieve common advocacy goals. Panel members discussed future plans for Eastern Panel advocacy. Panel Chair Ed Blatt adjourned the meeting.

May 3, 2018

The Eastern Panel dedicated the May meeting to meet with legislators from their region to build relationships and discuss expanded funding for

home visiting. Panel Chair Ed Blatt and Co-Chair Mary McCarthy met with Assemblymember Patricia Fahy, Assemblymember John McDonald, and Assemblymember Mary Beth Walsh. OCFS and WRI updates were shared electronically.

September 20, 2018

Panel Chair Ed Blatt convened the meeting. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided a debriefing on CRP August Advocacy Day and WRI updates. Amy Papandrea provided updates from OCFS. Panel members then discussed future plans for regional advocacy efforts and next steps. Panel Chair Ed Blatt adjourned the meeting.

Western Panel

December 15, 2017

Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy convened the meeting. CRP Coordinator Jennifer Goldman provided updates from WRI. Legislative staff from several local legislators joined the meeting to discuss advocacy efforts for home visiting in the Western region. Panel members then discussed a potential press event to coincide with the release of the annual report. Lisa Gordon joined the meeting via conference call to provide updates from OCFS. A panel of local opioid experts joined the meeting to discuss the opioid crisis in the Western part of the State. Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy thanked the guests for their time and adjourned the meeting.

March 16, 2018

Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy convened the meeting. Ms. Kennedy debriefed Panel members on the CRP Advocacy Day and shared that there was positive feedback on the Panels' singular recommendation of increased funding for home visiting programs. The Panel discussed starting advocacy efforts earlier to be timelier with the budget process. Child Protective Services workers from Erie, Genesee and Niagara counties joined the meeting to discuss their first-hand experiences of the impact of the opioid crisis on CPS cases. Lisa Gordon, OCFS Director of the Bureau of Program and Community Development, and Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from OCFS and WRI, respectively. Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy adjourned the meeting.

May 18, 2018

Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy convened the meeting. Foster care workers from Erie County, Genesee County, and Niagara County joined the meeting to discuss the longer-term implications of the opioid crisis on foster care caseloads. The panel members and caseworkers discussed implications including increased volume, complexity and seriousness of cases, and the availability of foster homes and services for both children and parents. Kari Sidiqqi and a graduate intern from the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy joined via phone to discuss an ongoing project exploring the potential for home visiting to help curtail the opioid crisis in child welfare. An OCFS Rochester region staff member joined via phone to provide an update on a highly publicized child fatality in Monroe County and its implications for the county's Family Assessment Response program. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI and verbally shared updates provided by OCFS. The panel discussed topics for the next meeting. Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy adjourned the meeting.

September 28, 2018

Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy convened the meeting. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided a debriefing on CRP August Advocacy Day and WRI updates. Amy Papandrea provided updates from OCFS. Panel members then discussed future plans for regional advocacy efforts and next steps. Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy adjourned the meeting.

Joint Panel

January 22, 2018

Panel members voted on and approved revised CRP Operating Guidelines to include language to address electronic communications. CRP Coordinator Jennifer Goldman provided an update on the status of the annual report and reviewed the results of the meeting topic survey. Panel members then discussed plans for advocacy in February and March.

February 13, 2018

CRP Panel Chairs and Co-Chairs met with staff from the NYS Legislature as well as staff from the NYS Division of Budget to present the 2017 CRP Annual Report and the recommendation for a statewide increase in funding for home visiting programs. WRI scheduled meetings and provided support materials for the meetings.

June 14, 2018

Eastern Panel Chair Ed Blatt convened the meeting. Each panel chair provided brief updates of panel activities. Consultant Lee Lounsbury joined the meeting to facilitate a discussion on the future plans and priorities of the panels. Panel members discussed both what didn't work and what did work, and where the panels currently are and where they would like to be. Panel members agreed on action steps, including forming a subcommittee to draft a strategic plan. OCFS Acting Commissioner Sheila Poole and Deputy Commissioner Laura Velez joined the meeting to provide OCFS updates. Panel members then debriefed and summarized next steps including the subcommittee to draft a strategic plan and conference call to discuss the draft plan and set priorities and actions. Meeting was adjourned.

August 27, 2018

CRP members met with Assemblymember Patricia Fahy, staff for Senator George Amedore, republican senate staff as well as staff from the NYS Division of Budget to discuss recommendations in the 2017 Annual Report for a statewide increase in funding for home visiting programs. WRI scheduled meetings and provided support materials for the meetings.

October 11, 2018

The Panels jointly hosted a Fall Home Visiting Symposium open to the public. Assemblymember Patricia Fahy kicked off the event with opening remarks. Eastern Panel Co-Chair Mary McCarthy was the moderator. Program experts and advocates discussed the benefits of home visiting and how the child welfare system can work together to expand its use to more at-risk families. Audience members asked questions at the conclusion of the event.

Citizen Review Panel Members 2018

Eastern Panel Members

Edward Blatt, PhD, Panel Chair
Consultant
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Mary McCarthy, Panel Co-Chair
Director, Social Work
Education Consortium
School of Social Welfare
SUNY Albany
Appointed by the Senate

Nadia Allen (resigned 2018)
Executive Director
Mental Health Association in
Orange County, Inc.
Appointed by the Assembly

Angela Baris (resigned 2018)
Program Coordinator (retired)
Northeast Parent and
Child Society
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Sharon M. Chesna
Executive Director
Mothers & Babies Perinatal Network
of South Central New York, Inc.
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Kathleen Thornton Halas
Executive Director
Child Care Council of
Westchester, Inc.
Appointed by the Assembly

Maureen McLoughlin, Esq.
Attorney; Adjunct Professor
Hofstra University
Appointed by the Governor's Office

JoAnn Merriman, MS, PA-C
Physician Assistant
CapitalCare Developmental
Behavioral Pediatrics
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Erin Christopher-Sisk, PhD
Clinical Director
ECS Psychological Services
Appointed by the Senate

Carrie Jefferson Smith
Associate Professor
School of Social Work
Syracuse University
Appointed by the Governor's Office

New York City Panel Members

David J. Lansner, Esq., Panel Chair
Partner
Lansner & Kubitschek
Appointed by the Assembly

Stanley Capela, Panel Co-Chair
Corporate Compliance Officer
Vice President for Quality
Management
HeartShare Human Services
of New York
Appointed by the Senate

Dr. Jocelyn Brown
Director
Child Advocacy
Center at Columbia Presbyterian
Medical Center
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Wayne Ho
President/CEO
Chinese-American Planning
Council
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Sania Andrea Metzger, Esq.
Director of Policy
Casey Family Services
Appointed by the Assembly

Mathea C. Rubin
Parent
New York City
Appointed by the Senate

Jorge Saenz de Viteri
Chief Executive Officer
ECE Management NY, Inc.
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Marion White
Senior Program Director
New York Foundling
Child Abuse Prevention
Program (CAPP)
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Western Panel Members

Ellen T. Kennedy, Panel Chair
Associate Professor of Social Work,
Emerita
Buffalo State College
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Sarlyn Tate, Panel Co-Chair
Social Worker
Buffalo Psychiatric Center
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Linda C. Brown, CSW (retired)
Former Assistant Commissioner
New York State Office of Children
and Family Services
Appointed by the Assembly

Melissa A. Cavagnaro, Esq.
Partner
Matingly Cavagnaro LLP,
Matrimonial & Family Law
Appointed by the Senate

Paula Mazur, MD
Associate Professor of
Clinical Pediatrics, Pediatric
Emergency Medicine, and
Child Abuse Pediatrics
Children's Hospital of Buffalo
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Stefan Perkowski
Program Director
Child & Adolescent Treatment
Services
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Danny Sklarski
Auditor; Legislator
NYS Parks and Recreation
Niagara County
Appointed by the Senate

Dennis Walczyk
Chief Executive Officer
Catholic Charities of Buffalo
Appointed by the Assembly

Karl L. Wiggins
Vice President of Youth and
Family Services
Gustavus Adolphus Child and
Family Services
Appointed by the Senate

Endnotes

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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 fewer 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:

- Examining the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local agencies;
- Reviewing specific cases, when warranted; and
- 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 were established to serve Eastern and Western New York.



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

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