Goal 4: To advise DHS on the practice of the Oregon Safety Model (OSM).		
Objective: To evaluate the effectiveness of OSM in supporting the CWAC priorities to: ▪ Reduce over-representation of children of color in the child welfare system. ▪ Prevent foster care placement. ▪ Assure that children placed in foster care are safe and thriving. ▪ Provide permanency for children in a timely manner.		
Some Suggested Strategies	**Strategy Leader(s)**	**Time Frame**
▪ Create a sub-committee to evaluate the effectiveness of OSM practice. ▪ Use the sub-committee to facilitate the discussions among the full membership at regular intervals over the next year regarding their findings.		

From March 2010 CWAC draft minutes

Data Report – Teen Access to DHS Child Welfare Services

- Balter: A question was asked about 18 months ago if the Oregon Safety Model (OSM) drove out teens. CWAC requested a review of the victims of founded dispositions and has received the data report every six months. The data shows no significant change. We will continue to receive this report because a recent CIRT finding indicates a further question.
- Day: In a recent CIRT of an incident in which a teen was killed by her parents we found we have some work to do around vulnerability and teens. The initial CIRT report has been published and the second report will be out soon. In the data report Mike references it appears the OSM did not negatively or positively impact the number of teens accessing DHS Child Welfare services, but the report does not answer if we are serving the right number of teens.
- Patton: To clarify the question CWAC asked: The question was if the OSM definition of vulnerability affected teens' access to DHS Child Welfare. It was found that the only data available was on founded dispositions and we could not get an answer to the question asked. We requested to receive the report every

six months to see if the number of founded cases was affected by the OSM out of concern for the previous "level system" and the length of time it can take to change the mind set of people that teens are less vulnerable because they can "run away" from the dangerous situation. The agency is now looking at unfounded cases after the CIRT, but it begs the question of whether it took a child's death to make that happen. Looking at unfounded cases is just as important as looking at founded, even if it is only a one-time look.

- Day: Disagreed with the notion that it took a child's death to look at unfounded.
- Patton: It felt that way because it was in a CIRT recommendation.
- Day: The issue is where in the life of a case you assess vulnerability. The OSM strengthened the look at older children because it requires a face to face to asses vulnerability. At screening, the screener is to ask why the reporter believes the child is vulnerable. Then the vulnerability is assessed by the field worker face to face with the victim. Teens that are challenged in certain ways can be more vulnerable than some younger children that don't have those challenges and that can only be determined with a face to face. The assessment is not to occur at the screening. We will make sure the field is clear on that and that we are appropriately applying the OSM.
- Patton: The policies may be in place, but training is needed so workers can overcome their predisposed beliefs about who is vulnerable and who is not.
- Day: Agrees absolutely.
- Balter: Goal 4 of the CWAC Work Plan is to advise DHS on the practice of the OSM with the possibility of a CWAC subcommittee.

From August 2009 FIWG Minutes:

A small group of CWAC members will be needed to develop the specific steps in this strategy. The work of the Teen Issues in Child Welfare Subcommittee illustrated the challenge of getting data that will answer the questions we have. CWAC had recommended the CWAC chair receive updates on the data set prepared for the subcommittee every six months to see if there has been any change in access to DHS child welfare services for teens after the OSM was implemented. A six-month update is being prepared at this time and will be sent to Interim Chair Benjamin Hazelton soon.

OREGON SAFETY MODEL EVALUATION.

DATA ON DISPROPORTIONALITY

- Waller: CWAC did not have an opportunity to provide input when the Oregon Safety Model (OSM) was first developed and may want to when it is revised.
- Kelley-Siel: Likes the idea of CWAC taking on a role of evaluating and identifying issues in the OSM.
- Sherbo: While it may be true the OSM reduces foster care placements, she is not aware of evidence that this type of model reduces foster care and disproportionality.
- Kelley-Siel: No such cause and effect is implied. Our 2007-2008 data shows foster care was reduced by 10% and the reabuse rate was down significantly. These measures show children are safer. First placements with relatives are up 22% from the previous year. Adoptions of children of color increased. These are positive statistics to celebrate. A future CWAC conversation with our research team and Katharine Cahn's researchers could be to discuss ways to measure the impact of the OSM.
- Kahn: Currently the data cannot link the OSM to the positive trends. A research question would be to see if such a link can be found and measured.
- Waller: If one does not have good baseline data, then percentage reductions become illusive. We need to continually ask if the data is what we want it to be. For example, the issue of individuals who identify themselves as multi-racial and "other." Many of us represent other child-serving systems. Is it implicit in the strategies that there is on-going collaboration with those groups?
- Murphy: That is occurring in the Child Welfare Equity Task Force (CWETF) and they could provide some input as it relates to the decision-point analysis with Dr. Cahn. Data-based decision-making is critical as we move forward.
- Waller: We need agreement as to how we collect data and develop of a protocol. Then train people so there is consistency across systems. I hope you will call out continued connections we're all seeing and identifying opportunities to leverage different systems.
- Arenz: Need a preamble/affirmative statement to the strategic plan that directly states which mandates are overlaying all of the initiatives (ex: disproportionality, wraparound, transformation, gender specificity, Casey, etc.).
- Bell: Wants specifics so that we can track where efforts are "embedded."
- Arenz: Identification of measurements and targets is one way to get at tracking.
- Patton: How do we incorporate that we're going to work with partners so there is as much consistency as possible around data collection/measurement; by age, by gender, etc?
- Day: Angela Long and the Office of Program Performance & Reporting will help us get more specific around our measurement as the program pieces

become more solid. In that process, it is important to look at partners and opportunities for meaningful benchmarking that can cross-systems.

- Lasater: Recommends including the term "developmentally sensitive" (in addition to culturally sensitive) in strategies and actions. It is critical in the design of children's services that the services respond to age and gender. Stressed the importance of the local infrastructure, the systems and relationships that help keep children safe – how connected local DHS folks are to their communities in terms of resources. Need to look outside the internal functioning of the agency.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

4. <u>Oregon Safety Model implementation.</u>

- Some CWAC members are interested in focusing on teens. There was discussion about CWAC's completed work on the impact of the OSM on teens' access to DHS Child Welfare services and the possible need to continue to track statistics for any change.
- There was discussion about where there would be an opportunity to have a role in the evaluation of the OSM as a whole.
- Some CWAC members continue to have varying concerns about the model, some fully embrace it. There is no uniform CWAC position. It was suggested that CWAC evaluate the OSM against the four CWAC goals[1] to see if the OSM supports the goals. If any concerns are found, then CWAC should have a conversation with CAF. CWAC's goals and the agency goals are closely aligned so any concern that the OSM is not aligned with a CWAC goal should be an agency concern also. The conversation would be to look at the concerns, review the data together and decide if the agency will make a practice change or not. If the agency decides it is not comfortable making a change at the current time, the concern could be placed in a parking lot for CWAC to continue to keep an eye on.

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[1]
1. Preventing foster care placement;
2. Assuring that children placed in foster care are safe and are thriving;
3. Providing permanency for children placed in foster care in a timely manner; and
4. Identifying strategies to reduce over-representation of children of color in the child welfare system.