



FINAL

DHS Children, Adults and Families Division
Child Welfare Advisory Committee
September 8, 2010

Members

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|---|--|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dana Ainam | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cindy Burlingame | <input type="checkbox"/> Jamie Hinsz | <input type="checkbox"/> Jerry Moore | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christine Stolebarger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Janet Arenz | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pamela Butler | <input type="checkbox"/> Jean Lasater | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rem Nivens | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruth Taylor |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Balter | <input type="checkbox"/> Leslie Currin | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leola McKenzie | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pam Patton | <input type="checkbox"/> Nan Waller |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Iris Bell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Darland | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Debbie Moberly | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Angela Sherbo | |

DHS Staff

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|---|--|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Erinn Kelley-Siel | <input type="checkbox"/> Mickey Serice | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lois Day | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bill Bouska | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bruce Baker for
Debbie Kraus-Dorn |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jerry Waybrant | | | | |

Minutes recorded by Pam Pearson

MINUTES

The July 14, 2010 CWAC minutes were approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Data Reports – Dashboard

- Balter: For illustration, he referred to a previous question asked by CWAC regarding whether the Oregon Safety Model (OSM) had an impact on teens. There was a perception that the OSM placed an emphasis on young children. It was asked if teens were being driven out of the child welfare system and how would we know if that were so.
- Patton: The concern had to do with the definition of vulnerability in the OSM and the desire to prevent a repeat of historical issues of “Level 7.” CWAC requested six month data updates. One difficulty was that we could see data only for founded cases because the data is not collected for unfounded. More recently, a CIRT, regarding the death of a teen who did not get into the child welfare system, raised the issue of vulnerability for teens.
- Balter: CWAC has asked for special data reports such as this one for teens. These reports may be of interest to only a small number of members. How long do we continue to request updates for these special data reports? The CWAC Future Issues Work Group (FIWG) discussed this during its last meeting. CAF collects a lot of data. How can CWAC look at data already collected to find answers to its “how do we know” questions instead of asking CAF to prepare

special reports? FIWG asked CAF what its normal stream was for data collection. If CWAC could access that data, then those members with a high interest could dig deeper on their own and the rest of CWAC could get a high-level summary. Erinn Kelley-Siel mentioned the Dashboard to FIWG and so today we have requested a general orientation. If we want more, we can get a more detailed tutorial during our November meeting.

- Waybrant: In CAF we have managers that are data friendly and some that are data adverse. We produced a Dashboard similar to how a car's dashboard gives you a broad picture at a glance. It also allows those with the interest to dig deeper. It includes Child Welfare and Self Sufficiency data. For CWAC there is some cross over, such as data on the transition of children from Self Sufficiency Programs into foster care. We view Self Sufficiency programs as family stabilization programs. The Dashboard gives us the ability to manage to key performance measures, conduct comparisons between districts and look at trends. It is produced monthly and all staff can access it.

Example: Face to face contact with children every 30 days. Our target was 80%. The statewide rate was 82.6% in June 2010. For districts that fall below the statewide rate, the district manager has a responsibility to provide an analysis explaining why. Challenges to meeting this rate could include furlough days, the hard hiring freeze and/or the amount of travel required when children are in residential care far from their home.

- Patton: Could you prepare a data chart on face to face visits that excludes children in residential care?
- Waybrant: We could but chose not to. We are aligning the data reports to our key performance measures and required federal data. It can be drilled down to worker level so a manager would be able to see data for a residential care caseworker, an intake worker, etc. For every measure that falls outside the statewide rate, the district manager has to develop a plan. District size can have an impact. Small districts can show a large fluctuation.
- Balter: The challenge for CWAC is to decide at what horizon we will look at the data to give advice and if the current measures in the Dashboard are the rights ones. If our four priorities¹ are indeed the most important things on

¹ CWAC Four Priorities:

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

which we wish to give advice, then is the data CAF collects meaningful to those priorities? Does it inform on the actions the agency is taking to improve on these four priorities? Our job is not to drill down to the worker level.

- Darland: Does the Dashboard show how many moves a child experiences when in foster care?
- Waybrant: Yes.
- Balter: How do we use the data we already have?
- Darland: As an educating tool.
- Patton: Data can be misinterpreted when it becomes public. Asked that there be an interpretation of the data for CWAC, the public and media.
- Kelley-Siel: There are many useful things about this conversation. The Dashboard is intended as a monthly data report that reflects trends and is primarily a management tool for CAF. She appreciated FIWG acknowledging the importance of using current data because CAF Research is short staffed. We have not filled vacancies in Central Office since a soft freeze began over a year ago. And we are now in a hard freeze. That is a very real reality. She appreciated the focus on data already produced and how to make that data meaningful for CWAC.

A major university will be releasing a web based sharing tool that will allow anyone to interact with our child welfare data, perform queries and produce output. It will not be able to provide the interpretation, but it will add research capacity without an additional workload impact on our staff.

- Barker: Given the resource problem we all have, suggested picking out the measures on the Dashboard that relate specifically to the CWAC four priorities.
- Balter: Yes, that is where we are headed – to select measurements already collected that inform us on one or two of our priorities to start. Erinn and Jerry have said that any citizen has access to a lot of the detailed data and with the Dashboard tutorial a CWAC member will be able to look through that detail on their own. Are the measures in the draft tutorial the right ones for CWAC? If so, CWAC could maybe get quarterly or 6-month reports on how to interpret those measures.

- ACTION:**
- **CAF will come back in November to present the tutorial on the measures currently in the draft.**
 - **CWAC will no longer receive 6 month updates of the report on Child Abuse/Neglect Victims by Age, Race/Ethnicity and Gender.**

BRIEFINGS

Legislative Activity

See report from Mickey Serice in agenda packets.

RULE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

At this point in the meeting, time was set aside for CWAC to serve as a Rule Advisory Committee for OAR 413-010-0055.

- Kelley-Siel: CAF policy says that for any rule change (unless it is a temporary rule) we will engage a Rule Advisory Committee. Today we are engaging CWAC to serve as a RAC for the rule under which the DHS Director or legislators can convene a Sensitive Review Committee. Legislation has been in place, but we have not had rules to authorize the department to act on the statute's authority. At a later time we will write procedures to support the rule. A Sensitive Review Committee allows legislators to review a child welfare case in great depth and produce a report on recommended improvements. We have one SRC going on right now. In the past the DHS Director has convened and selected the membership.
- Balter: What is the action requested of CWAC?
- Burnell: This is an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed changes to the OAR before the rule's public hearing in the formal rulemaking process. We are also asking for comment on the draft fiscal impact information: Do you agree with the answers? If not, what impact will the changes to the rule have?

Comments:

- McKenzie: The Sensitive Review Committee process has been going on already and seems to be working.
- Darland: The Foster Care Safety Team was similar to, but not an SRC.
- Day: An SRC is called by the DHS Director at the request of the legislature. We called the Foster Care Safety Team together as a result of a CIRT. An SRC is unique and does not happen often.
- Kelley-Siel: Knows of two SRCs: The Allred case and the current one.
- Balter: Can members contact Caroline after today's meeting?
- Burnell: Yes. After the RAC, the rule will go through the formal public hearing process between October 15 and November 22. Information on the public hearing can be found on the Secretary of State's website:

<http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/banners/rules.htm>. Caroline provided her phone number if members wished to contact her directly.

- Balter: Expects CWAC may be asked to serve as a RAC periodically because of the collective group we are. In this role, we will provide advice as individuals, not as a group.

Federal Policy Discussion

- Kelley-Siel: Shared CAF's advocacy papers on Title 4-E, TANF and child welfare refinancing reform with CWAC (March 2010 CWAC meeting). They have not been updated. She has met with each member of Oregon's congressional delegation. They have made statements of commitment to tackle these issues in 2011.

Casey Partnership 2010 Plan

- Day: CAF hired a new project manager, Judith Moore. We shifted the workload so that Catherine Stelzer is focusing on how to carry the child welfare program to the other counties. The pilot counties will be coming together in November and the permanency roundtables will be completed in October.

CROSS OVER REPORTS

Foster Care Safety Team

- Day: Each FCST recommendation has a lead and target completion date.
- Darland: One recommendation addresses the tasks of foster care certifiers. He recently attended a two-day training on "safe home studies." He reflected that these home studies require an incredible workload. With the hiring freeze, he sees the difficulty the agency will have to implement the FCST's recommendations on certifying a home.
- McKenzie: Do you have a workload study on how long the "safe home studies" take?
- Day: No, but the workload study is included in the recommendation. Yes, the safe home study does take longer than our previous home studies.
- Darland: If done appropriately, it results in a great home study, but it takes a long time to conduct five separate interviews with the family and it takes a certain type of person to do them well.
- Balter: That is the challenge of doing things right.

Child Welfare Racial Equity Task Force

- Balter: Kory Murphy gave an update at the July CWAC meeting. The task force's recommendations will be coming out on October 15. On behalf of CWAC, Mike sent a letter to Kory on 8/24/10 in appreciation for being invited to attend their May 22 meeting and voiced CWAC's commitment to continued support of their efforts and that CWAC sees an opportunity to link this work to the Oregon Safety Model and hopes some discussion of this will happen with the task force. The CWAC has a significant focus on the Oregon Safety Model, and we believe it provides many opportunities for the objectives of the task force. Kory replied on 8/27/10 that the task force concurs with CWAC's perspective of the Oregon Safety Model.

HB 2009 and DHS / OHA Transition

No report at this time.

Juvenile Dependency Interbranch Work Group

- McKenzie: The work group met in July. They decided to keep their three top issues² as priorities. Their work will focus on the early stages of a child welfare case up to the shelter hearing. She will send CWAC the work group's description of their work and process when it is ready.

CJA Task Force

- Balter: Mickey Serice is working on a possible merger of the CWAC and CJA Task Force. He will present it to FIWG in October.
- Darland: Gave a quick update on the task force's recent work. Together with the FosterClub, they developed a coloring book and teen book. The coloring book is to be used by law enforcement, foster parents, caseworkers and other adults to help a young child through the trauma of being placed in foster care. He did not have an update from their OSM subcommittee.

² 1) Maximizing existing resources through interbranch collaboration and cross-training programs.
2) Prioritizing the promoting initiatives and practices with demonstrated effectiveness.
3) Bridging the gap between existing statutory mandates and the rights and resources actually available to children and families at risk of involvement, or involved, in Oregon's child welfare and judicial systems.

- McKenzie: The court subcommittee is contracting with Lynn Travis for a study of relative placements and a bench card for courts to use to help identify relative resources and placements. It was well received at the Judges Conference.
- Stolebarger: Are foster parents trained on how to use the coloring book?
- Darland: It is designed so that it can be used without training.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Report on Workload Staffing Model

No action at this time.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Erinn Kelley-Siel

- Kelley-Siel: Budget is the focus of her report. We've already talked about the hard hiring freeze today. The last Emergency Board asked DHS to take \$10.8 million administrative reductions. Also in CAF for the last revenue forecast, the allotment reduction list comes to \$21-22 million. The first allotment reduction focused on non-mandatory programs in Self Sufficiency. For example we limited Employment Related Day Care to families leaving TANF. For this next allotment reduction, all programs including child welfare will be included. We will publish the list of reductions, but there is a possibility that DHS will be requested to not take the child welfare cuts.

On September 21-22, we will be presenting updates to legislative interim committees on the following topics: Equity Task Force Report/Recommendations, TANF, CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP), Foster Care, and OR-Kids - Oregon child welfare info system. We will provide CWAC with the presentation Powerpoint on the date it is presented. E-Board also meets on September 22 and we will provide them with a full budget update.

Last week, DHS sent its Agency Request Budget to the Governor. It will be posted online next week, as will the 25% reductions list we were asked to submit. When you see where the General Fund dollars sit (primarily in TANF, System of Care and Family Based Services) you will see that the reductions list looks contradictory to our goals for children and families. Budget reductions put Oregon \$3.1 to 3.5 billion under what it would take to keep current service levels.

- Stolebarger: With cuts to subsidized day care, some parents will lose their jobs and be on TANF.

- Kelley-Siel: Yes, there is not a program that we can cut that doesn't impact another program. We had to consider that. Cuts to TANF can result in increases in foster care placements, which is a more expensive program. There is nothing good in these cuts.
- Patton: A recent news article reported that Governor candidate Kitzhaber made comments on how he plans to make more money for the state and it included reducing foster care. Asked if Erinn could explain what that means. It sounds like he plans to invest dollars earlier in prevention programs so children don't end up in foster care, but the news article described it as taking money from foster care and prisons and putting it in prevention.
- Kelley-Siel: She has not researched Kitzhaber's position. She will look into it.

CWAC WORK PLAN

Goal #1 To advise the Department of Human Services (DHS) on development and administration of child welfare policies, programs and practices related to reducing over-representation of children of color in the child welfare system.

No discussion or action taken.

Goal #2 To expand the representativeness in CWAC discussions.

No discussion or action taken.

Goal #3 To coordinate and leverage state and local efforts to improve policy, program, and practice.

No discussion or action taken.

Goal #4 To advise DHS on the practice of the Oregon Safety Model (OSM).

- Day: Continued her presentation from the July CWAC meeting on the Oregon Safety Model, weaving in the Foster Care Safety Team recommendations and CIRT recommendations. At the end, she will spend some time on the FCST recommendations specific to CWAC. The FIWG will draft a recommendation to bring to CWAC in November on how CWAC will respond to the FCST recommendations.

Three of CWAC's priorities are goals of the OSM. Other states are also adopting safety models.

Comprehensive Safety Analysis:

- Day: Must be completed in 30 days. Safety threat + no protective parent + vulnerable child = unsafe child. A recent CIRT determined that in that case, staff had misinterpreted "vulnerable child." There is no age at which we can say a child is safe based on age. However, age is a factor in a child's cognitive development. A child must be seen in his environment to determine safety. A teen may be unable to protect herself in her specific circumstances.
- Patton: How does a caseworker interpret vulnerability of a teen?
- Day: The assessment is comprehensive, not incident based. The worker is not just talking with the child, but to every child in the home separately, to all the adults in the home, and others such as people in the school system and medical providers. Interviewing the child is the first thing the worker does. The worker verifies what the caller reported. In some CIRTs we have found that the assessment was incident based and not comprehensive. A new practice model takes about five years to implement. The hiring freeze is forcing us to shift workers around because we must go out when we get a call.

If a child is unsafe, we must open a case. The assessment is due in 30 days, with one 30 day extension allowed. If you look in the Dashboard, you will see that the number of overdue assessments is going up. We have asked the district managers if the assessments are actually done but not written up or if there are other reasons.

We are conducting more CIRTs (intentionally). As a result, we get more reports of abuse and have to go out on more calls. We have not said that we will not go out to assess a certain group because we don't have enough staff. If it's assigned as a 24-hour assessment, you have to go. There are some that are given a 5 day response time such as when the perpetrator does not have access to the child. Under the OSM, the number of 24-hour response cases has increased and the number of 5-day response cases has decreased. If we get a call we have to out, which requires a prioritization of work. Branches are asking what they can stop doing.

- McKenzie: Does the comprehensive assessment have to be done in 24 hours or 5 days?
- Day: No, the visit with the child must occur to make a quick assessment to determine if the child is safe. If the child is not safe, quick action must be taken

to make the child safe. That may mean foster care or a relative coming to watch the child. We have to create safety while doing the assessment.

- Balter: The child must be unsafe before CAF opens a case and provides services. Are any support services provided when a child is at risk but safe?
- Day: No, our job is to intervene only when a child is unsafe. We can refer families to community resources, but we cannot do prevention.
- Balter: The perception is that DHS can do something for the at-risk child such as offer homemaker services to the parents.
- Day: We do have some services for families who have adopted a child through DHS and we can also work with families voluntarily. But the list is getting narrower for the families with whom we can intervene. We know early intervention helps, but that is not what DHS Child Welfare is charged with. If we can get a safety plan in place that keeps the child in the home, that is what we need to do.

Child Safety Meeting:

- Day: Conditions for return are not conditions for case closure, but rather they are the bare minimum conditions that need to be in place before parents can parent their child again.
- Balter: What is the percentage of children that are removed and the percentage that remain in their home?
- Day: That can probably be found in the Dashboard.
- Balter: CWAC probably should have a sense of these numbers so we can see if they are too high or too low. Also, we should get a handle of the movement back home from foster care. This data is important for an advisory committee to know.
- Day: She can get that information and send it to CWAC.
- Moberly: Also we should get the number of in-home cases that became foster care placements later.
- Balter: That could illustrate the tension of placing in foster care too much or not enough.
- Day: We anticipated an increase in our in-home cases under the OSM. Placement with a relative is still considered a placement. Once the conditions for return are identified, then the services are crafted.
- Stolebarger: She talked with a parent who, because she had a list of conditions for return, was excited and understood exactly what needed to happen.
- Balter: Can a safety service provider be a CAF employee?

- Day: We generally monitor safety so it would not be the caseworker. There is an array of providers that can include a neighbor, family member or professional.

Protective Capacity Assessment:

- Day: This is not a psychological evaluation or standardized testing.
- Butler: What is being done to decrease caseworker turnover, since the relationship between the caseworker and family is so critical?
- Day: Agrees we change caseworkers and placements too often. Some offices have special teen units and that helps, but that is not statewide.
- Balter: Asked CWAC if the OSM makes sense in your own logic. To him, the model makes sense. It provides systemic reviews and clear choice points. Are there any questions on the principles upon which it is based?
- Stolebarger: It does make sense in theory. It is the same way across the state? Are case decisions always made as a group?
- Day: The model says no independent decisions are made. As for practice and how it is implemented, some CIRTs and quality assurance reviews are showing we have various implementations of the model. Our charge is to make sure workers have the training and support they need to implement the model. No worker should be making these serious decisions alone. They need to be vetted to make sure everything is covered.
- Darland: This safety assessment process does not always happen when the safety threat is in the foster home. The agency already has custody of the child and so a safety assessment does not occur.
- Day: True, when a child is in a foster home, we confirm the safe environment, we don't do a safety assessment. If it is an unsafe foster home, the child will be moved.
- Darland: Then it can be like an incident based assessment and the child is moved because of one event. While rare, it can be a frustrating thing for foster parents. If the foster home is an unsafe environment, then the child should be moved. However his concern is that the agency tends to err on the side of caution and removes a child when the home may not really be unsafe.
- Balter: This illustrates the tension between removing a child to keep him safe and the trauma caused when a child must be moved.
- McKenzie: When a parent has DD issues, it may be difficult to define the safety threats. The expected behaviors may be beyond what the parent is capable of doing. That is something to consider in implementing OSM in those circumstances.

- Day: It takes a special set of skills to assess in those circumstances. Staff need training to know when to bring someone else into the assessment, such as the parent's DD worker.
- Sherbo: She still has some concerns about OSM. For example, while the model is logical from the point of view of one of the multiple entities, it may not work when the time frames of the partners don't coincide with the time frames in OSM. For example: CAF assesses a child as unsafe and removes the child, but then the abuse is determined to be unfounded. That is perceived as illogical to an outsider. She has other concerns but must leave for another commitment.
- Balter: Asked Angela to send any other concerns by email. He wants CWAC to spend more time on the OSM because the model is at a point in its implementation that people may get frustrated with it and want to start over. There should be an effort to focus on the application rather than a redesign. It is a logical model is that under resourced. In tough economic times, the "blanket" gets moved to the cold part of the body, but the blanket is too short. As an advisory body, we should focus on the application of the model. The Dashboard becomes important to show us where it is being applied and is working and where it is not and why. We need to continue to study the model and its application, where it breaks down so we can be better advisors.
- Patton: The OSM is a logical, effective model, but application takes time, training and funds. We need to concentrate our conversations in a way that avoids saying "...if we have more money or staff...it would be fine." Be the voice of keeping the integrity of the model in an under-funded system.
- Balter: What Pam says and how to make adaptations to the model without compromising it are good questions for our November meeting.
- Butler: What about the Foster Care Safety Team's recommendations?

ACTION: FIWG will draft a recommendation regarding if and how CWAC is willing to accept the work the FCST recommends it take on. It will come to CWAC for approval in November.

Meeting adjourned.