

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel's mission is to review our child welfare procedures throughout the system offering summaries and recommendations for improvements benefitina children and families.

Wyoming



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D10R2 March 19-21, 2007 Mini CFSR Report

Afton/Evanston/Jackson/Kemmerer/Pinedale

Case Ratings:

#D10290 (Evanston)

- Three areas needing improvement: Item 7-Permanency goal for child; Item 9-Adoption; Item 18-Child and family involvement in case planning. "Diligence of workers to establish permanency for the children"

#D10291 (Evanston)

- One area needing improvement: Item 22-Physical health of the child. "Case reflects good family partnership practice"

#D10292 (Kemmerer)

- One area needing improvement: Item 18-Child and family involvement in case planning. "Mother was extremely motivated"

#D10296 (Jackson)

- Case was dismissed due to new allegations

#D10297 (Pinedale)

- One area needing improvement: Item 22-Physical health of the child. "Recognize that permanency goal needs to change."

#R2288 (Evanston)

- Perfect scoring case. "Everyone was working towards one common goal for the child."

#R2289 (Evanston)

- Perfect scoring case. "Good relationships among all entities"

#R2293 (Afton)

- Two areas needing improvement: Item 18-Child and family involvement in case planning and Item 23-Mental health of the child. "Worker contact made the difference in the case"

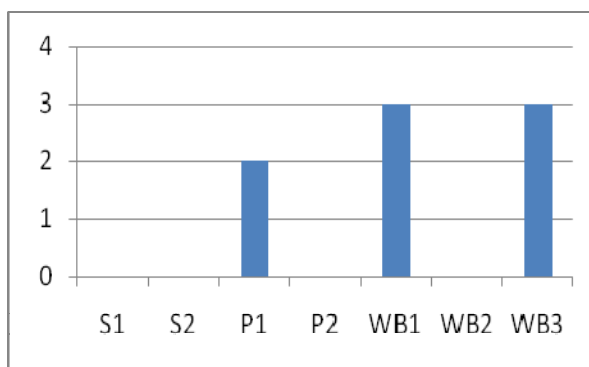
#R2294 (Jackson)

- Perfect scoring case. "Community has rallied around a displaced Hurricane Katrina family."

#R2295 (Jackson)

- Perfect scoring case. "Child made the turn around and wants to go to the University of Wyoming; educational system is making it difficult for him to achieve this goal."

The graph to the right shows the number of Mini CFSR instrument items rating as "areas needing improvement" in the broad outcome categories of safety, permanency and well-being.



Department of Family Services (DFS) has taken ownership of the following policy issues:

- When to fast track when there has been a previous termination of parental rights (TPR); timeframe to wait on a newborn with an unmotivated mother
- Inconsistent and catch all use of coding; such as with youth and family services (YFS) designation

Local DFS Office issues:

- Case plans should be done and updated in a timely fashion
- Case file should include copies of medical records; also, get copies from foster parents after medical visits

Issues requiring DFS administrative level attention:

- Case worker turnover causes lack of consistency in the case progress

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel has taken ownership of the following systemic issues and/or community issues:

- The system may need to provide clients with time management skills; recommendation for annual report
- When it is a school of choice the full array of services should be available to that child.

Strengths:

- Advocacy:
 - “Language translator provided by the DFS office”
 - “Support of county attorney was good; appreciated the work of the DFS worker; county attorney did an early intervention with the child to prevent further problems”
 - “Dean of students at the high school was very helpful for the child in college application process”
 - “Community wrapped themselves around the entire family who were disenfranchised from Louisiana due to Hurricane Katrina”
 - “Principal helped family get into the correct school for the children”
- Consistency:
 - “Social worker had almost daily contact with the family”
 - “Both boys were placed in the same facility which facilitated consistency and family involvement”
 - “Worker did a good job keeping the case consistent despite court filing in two different counties”
- Documentation and adherence to procedure:
 - “Good case file documentation”
 - “Relationship with worker was very positive for family and child; held child accountable; child felt he was listened to during the case”
 - “Good face to face contacts”
 - “Good case file”
 - “Good child and family involvement in the case planning”
 - “Case worker went beyond and above what would be expected”
 - “Good coordination between DFS and others in the case”
 - “Great contact by DFS worker with all involved in the case”
 - “Good contact by case worker; facilitated the case moving forward”
- Effective use of service array:
 - “Wide array of services provided for child to address mental health needs, physical needs and educational needs”
 - “Both mother and child are in counseling and both have had psychological evaluations”
 - “Mom’s mental health issues are being addressed”
 - “Psychological evaluation done; counseling follow-up”

- “Good assessments, YFS, psychological assessments done”
- “Counselor at the treatment facility was very good and listened”
- “YFS, SASSI, other psychological assessments done”
- “Child individual and family counseling provided”
- **Engagement of the child:**
 - “Child and parent were involved in the “nurturing parent program””
 - “DFS did a good job engaging the child; the difference in the child’s behavior now is night and day”
 - “Child understood what he had to do and has done hundred’s of hours of community service”
- **Family involvement:**
 - “Grandmother was a major strength in the case”
 - “Good consideration of other family members for placement”
 - “The lack of involvement by the bio-logical father was actually a contributing factor”
 - “Good family support; helped with goal planning”
 - “Mom was willing to accept help and was grateful for it”
 - “Even though dad is gone, he is still very vested in child”
- **Foster care services:**
 - “Child in one placement and was ultimately adopted by that family after returning home and being placed again”
 - “Foster care placement was immediate”
 - “Foster parents allowed biological mother to work closely with them and the child in the foster home”
- **Preserving connections:**
 - “LDS church was a very good support for the family during the case”
 - “Siblings were placed in treatment together”
- **Successful outcomes:**
 - “Grandmother feels that the DFS caseworkers need to be sainted”
 - “The mother reported that if not for the worker, she would be dead”
 - “Mother very much appreciate the DFS caseworker and all she did”
 - “Mom feels child is in the right placement”
 - “Child is off of probation, has gone to a trade school and has been offered a job with Audi Automotive”

Additional contributing factors:

- “Both parents had drug problems; methamphetamine appears to be more important to dad than children”
- “Mother blames everyone, but does not take any ownership of any of the family problems”
- “Inconsistency of mother’s desires caused problems in the case”
- “Child has post traumatic stress syndrome from Hurricane Katrina”

Opportunities for improvement:

- **Case planning:**
 - “Case plan needs to be updated; court orders reflected changes in case, but case plan was not current”
 - “Case record needs to contain medical records; no indication of medical services provided”
 - “Mother reported that she was not involved in case planning; only received case plans in the mail”
 - “Mother reported that she had never heard of family partnerships”
 - “Notes that medical services had occurred; but no forms in the case record”
 - “Case plan was not updated when the permanency goal changed”

- “Immunization records and initial health screening were not included in the case file; initial screening did not make the thirty (30) day time frame policy (child was placed in a facility)”
- “Child, who was in treatment, did not know the name of the new case worker (turnover in the Pinedale office)”
- “No health records in the case file”
- “No initial case plan was done in the case”
- “No multi disciplinary team (MDT) or pre-dispositional report (PDR) in the case file”
- Collaboration:
 - “School guidance counselor was not very helpful encouraging the boy and felt that the boy’s university level application was too “lofty””
- Family involvement:
 - “A more targeted effort with the biological father may have been helpful”
- Support services:
 - “Foster care support services; foster mother felt she need support services on how to deal with children who are placed in homes with special needs”

Systemic Barriers:

- Legal system:
 - “Lack of clarity from court whether child was to attend drug court or just be assessed; child did not attend drug court and was subsequently sentenced to Wyoming Boys School”
 - “Drug court hoped for better communication among all, including district court”
 - “MDT recommended one thing; court did another”
 - “Case planning among multiple court jurisdictions can be difficult to make effective”
- “Visitation policy at treatment center for mom prohibited child’s visitation early in the case”
- “Mother reported that she did not understand how to access systems that she needed for her children, for example one of her sons was college bound and she needed help working through the application process”
- “Communication between school district and others need to be improved; the school system did not feel as if anything was being done by other agencies, but it in fact many services were being provided”
- “Interstate issues; Idaho did not recognize Wyoming’s requests with regards to helping determine biological father and delayed home studies”
- “When a child is labeled as being on an individual education program (IEP); some school counselors dismiss the child’s college potential”

Review process dynamics and considerations:

- Citizen reviewers in this review consisted of:
 - 2 WYCRP panel members (1 of whom is a CASA volunteer);
 - social worker from the Northern Arapahoe Nation;
 - social worker from the Northern Arapahoe Nation;
 - social worker from the Eastern Shoshone Nation;
 - Casey Family Programs statistical analyst;
 - foster parent;
 - child advocate;
 - developmental disability worker from the Wyoming State Hospital
 - Jackson Hole SAFE house representative, and
 - University of Wyoming student/DFS intern.
- The period under review was January 1, 2006 through June 30, 2006.
- 1 out of 9 (11%) review samples was a child of color