

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.

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D1R3 (Laramie) December 4-5, 2007 Mini CFSR Report

Case Ratings:

#D1250

- Perfect scoring case; good family preservation and strong family partnerships.

#D1251

- Perfect scoring case; therapeutic foster care placement in home community; placed there as a "step down from residential placement.

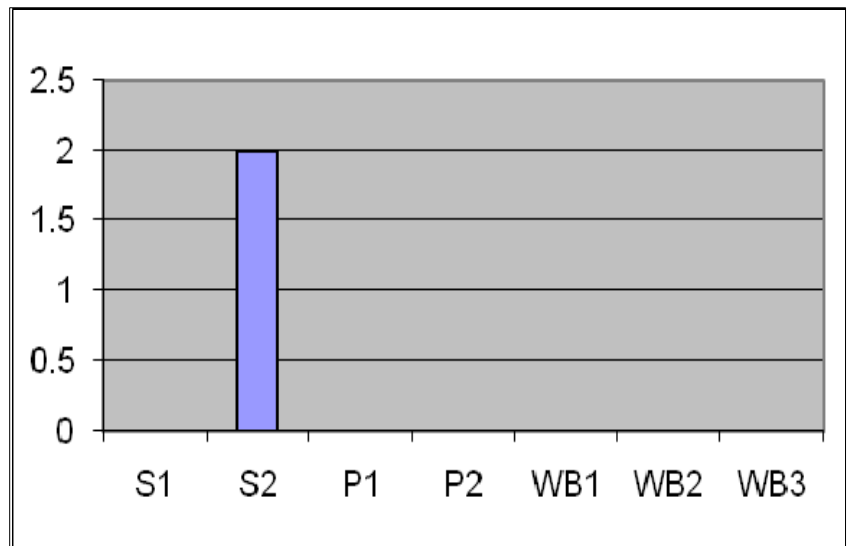
#R3248

- Perfect scoring case; great casework and follow thru by the Department of Family Services (DFS); concern with school system, see ownership items assumed by Citizen Review Panel.

#R3249

- Two areas needing improvement: #3 - services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal and #4 - risk of harm to children. Law enforcement and DFS child protective services (CPS) unit did not communicate who was following up on the matter.

The graph to the right shows the number of items rating as "areas needing improvement" in the broad outcome categories of safety 1 and 2, permanency 1 and 2 and well-being 1, 2 and 3. For definitions of items comprising these categories, visit <http://wycrp.org>.



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

- “Does DFS need policy on safety issues that are discovered in juvenile service cases with regards to when and how child protective services are notified and become involved?”
- “Distribution of MDT meeting minutes (voting members get a copy)”

Local DFS Office issues:

- “Does DFS need policy and protocol for follow thru with law enforcement and be notified when law enforcement is not going to pursue a matter?”
- “Regional Manager Shad Bates is going to have CPS training done for JS unit with regards to safety issues mentioned above”

Issues requiring DFS administrative level attention:

- “It might help if managers and supervisors at DFS would understand that family partnerships do not have to be big, drawn out affairs; also maintenance family partnerships are ok”

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

- “In R3248 the school did not recognize or treat the child with ADHD appropriately”

Strengths:

- Advocacy:
 - “Relentless involvement by caseworker”
- Consistency:
 - “Reunification was the goal and DFS kept it”
 - “DFS case workers were accessible”
 - “Good relationships between DFS and other agencies”
- Documentation and adherence to procedure:
 - “Good family partnership meeting”
 - “DFS responded promptly”
 - “DFS was willing to do another family partnership without opening a case”
 - “Case was well managed”
- Effective use of service array
 - “Good relationships between DFS and other agencies”
 - “Good therapeutic foster care (TFC) support”
 - “Agency looked at vocational planning for mother; she got good housing; good support and family services”
- Engagement of the child:
 - “Child participated in the homework club or he was at the DFS office doing his homework with the case worker”
- Family involvement:
 - “Mother had caseworker on speed dial”
 - “DFS supported mother and boys throughout the case and encouraged communication”
 - “Mom was reluctant to speak to agency, but did and it was a success”
 - “With input from family, DFS helped developed a great plan”
- Successful Outcomes:
 - “Mom was working with private counselors but then had great success with DFS”
- Preserving connections:
 - “Boys and mother are together”

Additional contributing factors:

- “Police spoke to child but did not really follow through with investigation; matter involved child being thrown against a pickup, sustaining a broken rib and being chained to the bed by dad; case was never assigned for an intake; risk assessment may have been necessary”
- “Family thinks child is ‘getting away with murder’ with no consequences; this juvenile case did involve abuse, however, early on”
- “Dad did seek out help from an infomercial and signed a behavior contract with his son”
- “Child sees being on probation as a safety thing and does not want to come off for fear of his dad”
- “If dad had been substantiated the first time around, would have the whole matter been different and this may not have not happened again”
- “When the physical abuse to child happened, it may have not been prosecuted due to the child’s advanced age of 16”
- “Mom recognized the need to add new members to her family partnership team”

Opportunities for improvement:

- Case Planning:
 - “Safety assessment and safety plan needed”
 - “Child did not feel safe at home but case was being treated as a juvenile services case”
 - “Improved documentation in the case file; indicators were in the case file that needed expanded narrative”
 - “Child felt that family partnership may have been focused more on mom than child”
 - Family partnership teams change; maybe explain that and account for it up front”
 - “A juvenile services (JS) case had child protective elements that needed to be dealt with; this caused the case to score poorly in the area of safety.”
- Communication:
 - “Communication between CPS and JS has information slippage”
 - “Better communications; proactive communication rather than reactive communication”
 - “Mental health worker was going in a different direction with the case than everybody else due to a communications failure”
 - “Case worker might have had more interaction with other children in the family as well as the target child”

Systemic Barriers:

- Coordination and Communication:
 - “Child protective services never received the case back from law enforcement; law enforcement never informed DFS of what the status was on the matter”
 - “Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) met early on in the case, but did not meet again for about a year and a half”
 - “Mental health provider had a very distinct plan but it has not been communicated to others on the team”
 - “Assistant county attorney felt it was difficult to determine who was in charge of the case”
 - “Disjoint between DFS and education system; note passing ‘this is bullshit’ on the note when in a meeting with education person speaking”
 - “MDT meeting minutes do not get the distribution as might be necessary and useful”
 - “MDTs did not go well”
 - “Negative comments do not help anything when providing services to children and families”
- “Mom had initial reluctance to interact with DFS based on prior work with system and was scared that she would lose control”

- Education:
 - “School (junior high) failed to meet his educational needs, special education teachers did not follow the individual education plan (IEP), student was publicly humiliated when in school; some feel that junior high contributed to his delinquent behaviors by the way he was treated”
 - “IEPs need to be followed up on with the schools”
- “County Attorney feels the MDTs and family partnerships need to be intertwined and integrated”
- “People wanting to rescue the children from the family; hard work to keep family reunification going”

Review process dynamics and considerations:

- Citizen reviewers in this review consisted of:
 - The DFS Protective Services Administrator;
 - a quality assurance manager at the Wyoming Girls School;
 - the director of Wyoming Casey Family Programs, and
 - the director of Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming.
- The period under review was October 1, 2005 through March 31, 2006.
- Training was held for reviewers on December 4, 2006.
- Education question in instrument really only looks at DFS; not the system.
- 0 out of 0 (0%) review samples were biracial.

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