

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel's mission is review of our child protective system across agencies offering summaries and recommendations for improvements benefiting children and families.

Wyoming



Citizen Review Panel, Inc.

Board of Directors

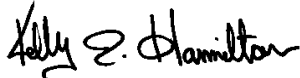
Brenda Oswald, *President*
Lisa Gossert, *Vice President*
Carla Thurin, *Treasurer*
Tara Ackerman, *Secretary*
Rose Kor. *Member at Large*

Kelly J. Hamilton
Executive Director

“The story behind the data, through the eyes of citizens”

DATE: November 1, 2006

TO: Ed Heimer, District Manager - Child Protective Services
Bob Quick, Regional Manager - Juvenile Services

FROM: Kelly J. Hamilton, Wyoming Citizen Review Panel 

RE: October 2006 Mini CFSR Review; District 5 and Region 1

Safety:

The outcome of safety is divided into two subcategories: “Safety 1” (children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect and “safety 2” (children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate).

Permanency:

The outcome of permanency is divided into two categories: “Permanency 1” (children have permanency and stability in their living situations” and “permanency 2” (the continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children).

Thermopolis case – Independent living skills were needed by the young man, but none appeared to be available.

The language we use with children as we move them towards permanency is often times misunderstood and misused giving the child a feeling of no permanency.

Well Being:

The outcome of well being is divided into three categories: “Well-being 1” (families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs), “well-being 2” (children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs) and “well-being 3” (children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs).

Contributing Factors:

It is the intent of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel to do more than just highlight data: The CRP looks for various observations that are worthy to note and may help to explain the story behind the data in an effort to promote best practices throughout the state.

Conclusion:

D5232 CPS/FC/Hispanic

- 10/04
- 15 yoa girl, sexual abuse
- Non relative foster home then into kinship, now back in first placement
- 18 in March
- 4 other siblings in home, remained in home
- No priors

D5233 CPS/FC/NRC/Caucasian

- Failure to thrive child
- Rawlins case

D5236 CPS/FC/Caucasian

- Born with meth in system
- National Case
- Judge dismissed case in 10/05, never adjudicated, fetus at the time and not a person; august, September part of oct

D5238 CPS/FC/Caucasian

- Worland

D5239 CPS/FC/Caucasian

- Thermopolis
- Good process for child transitioning from youth to adult in system
- Developmentally disabled

R1234 JS/FC

- Child in Denver selling crank and pimping girlfriend
- Chaotic family
- Bad boy while staying with grandparents and took all grandparents cars out joyriding
- Fremont County Group home X2; NSI, graduated at 18
- Trade school in Denver and checked out and vanished
- Caseworker did good work with what she had to deal with
- Should mom have been held accountable for neglect? Do JS cases start out as CPS cases?

R1235 JS/HIS/Caucasian

- The caseworker held everyone accountable in the family; and did not take sides.
- Good crisis management skills of caseworker; helped family learn how to manage their own crisis.
- JS case with CPS issue; great coordination
- Great services provided to keep child in family
- This is an example of what case workers can do with manageable case loads; 15 case loads
- Education, this issue transcends this child with regards to children obtaining education; the system failed this child.

- DFS unable to continue a case with family at mom's request in order to finish schooling

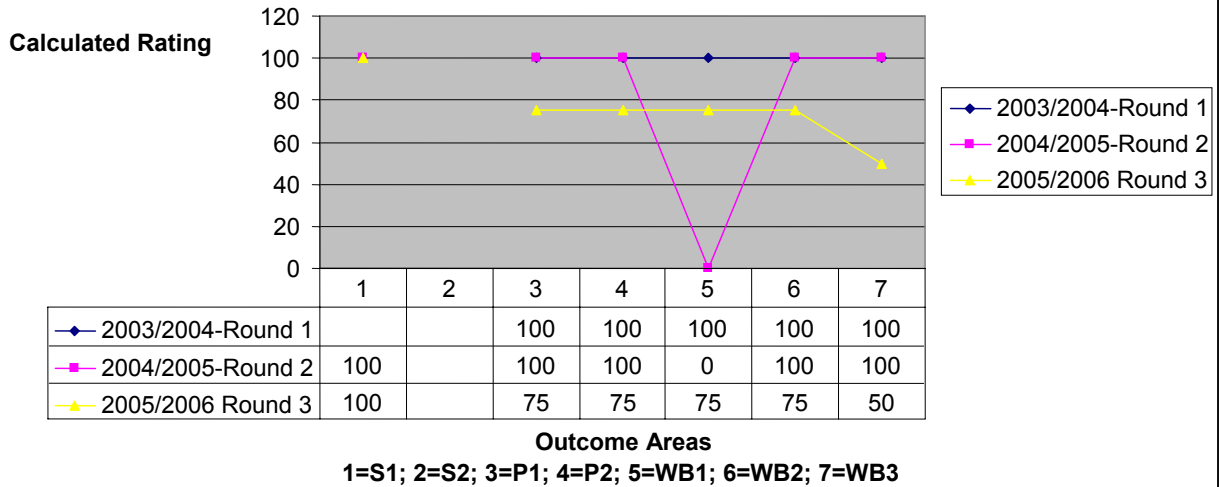
R1237 JS/FC/Caucasian

- CHINS that turned into a probation case
- Voluntarily placement April 2003
- Couple months later adjudicated as a CHINS
- 11/09/04; child made allegations that boyfriend sexually abused him
 - Sheriff's office declined to pursue the matter

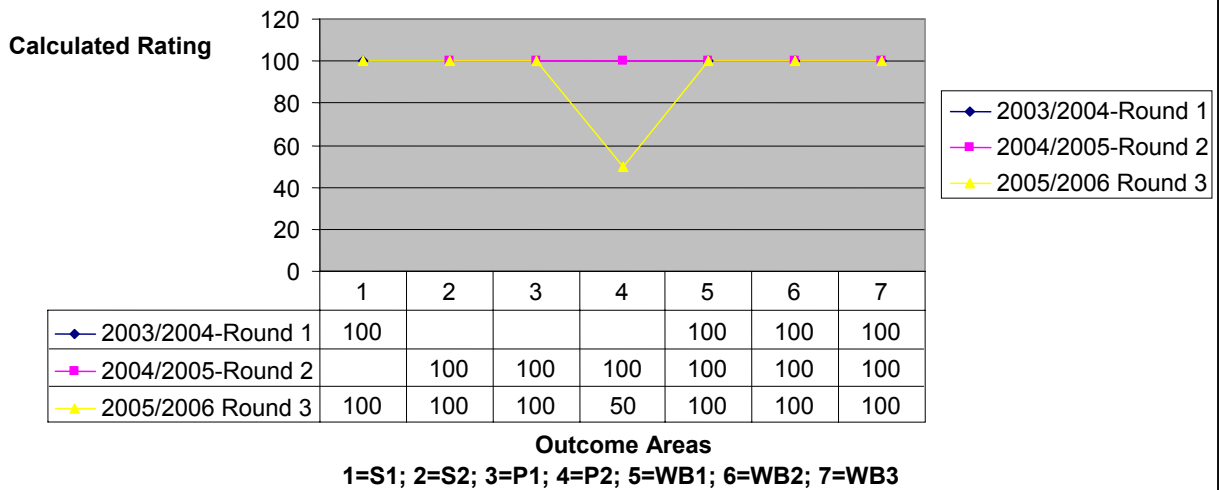
- This Area Left Blank Intentionally -

Appendix A

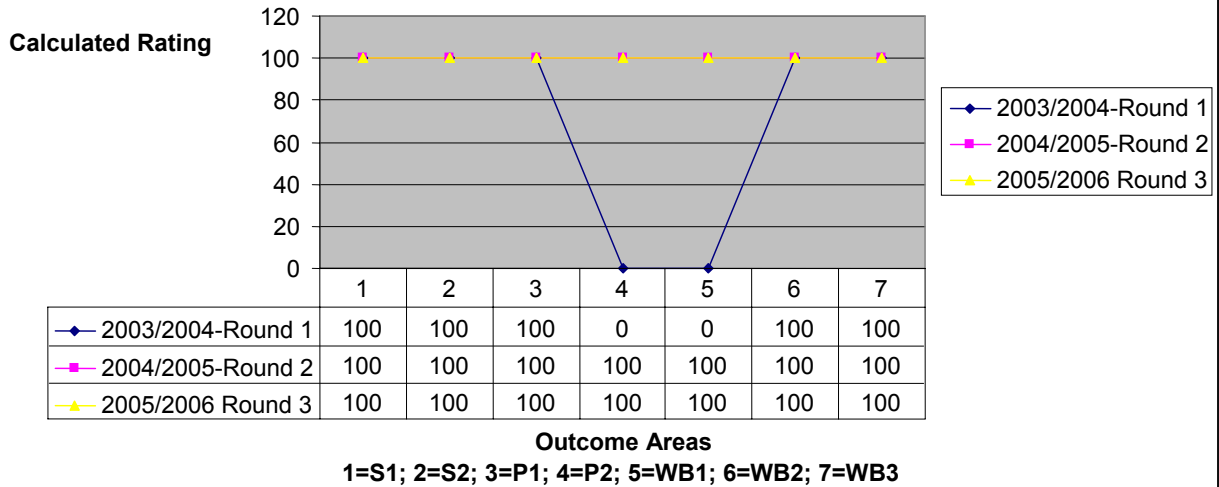
Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round - Lander Juvenile Services



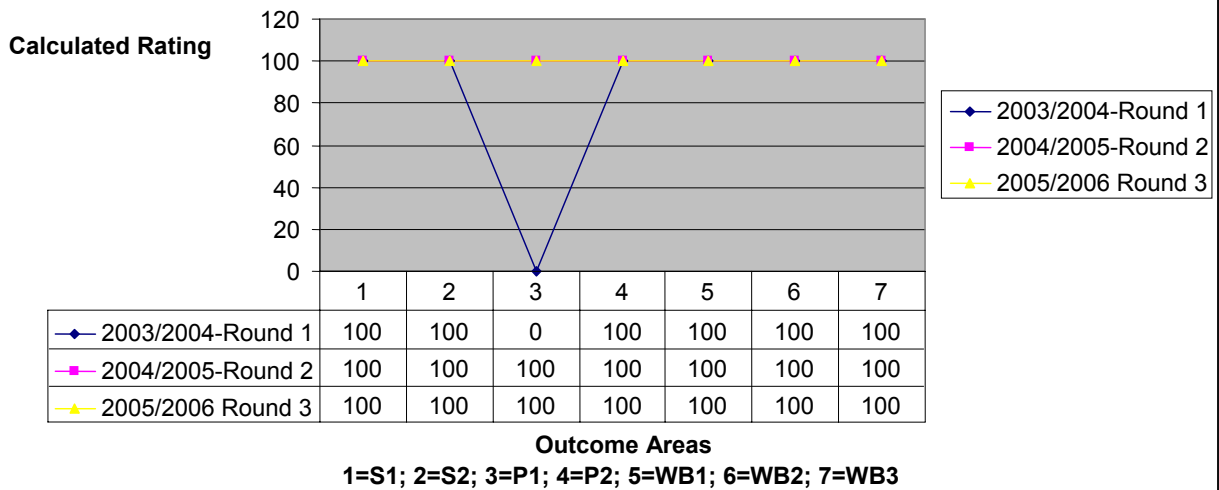
Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round - Riverton Juvenile Services



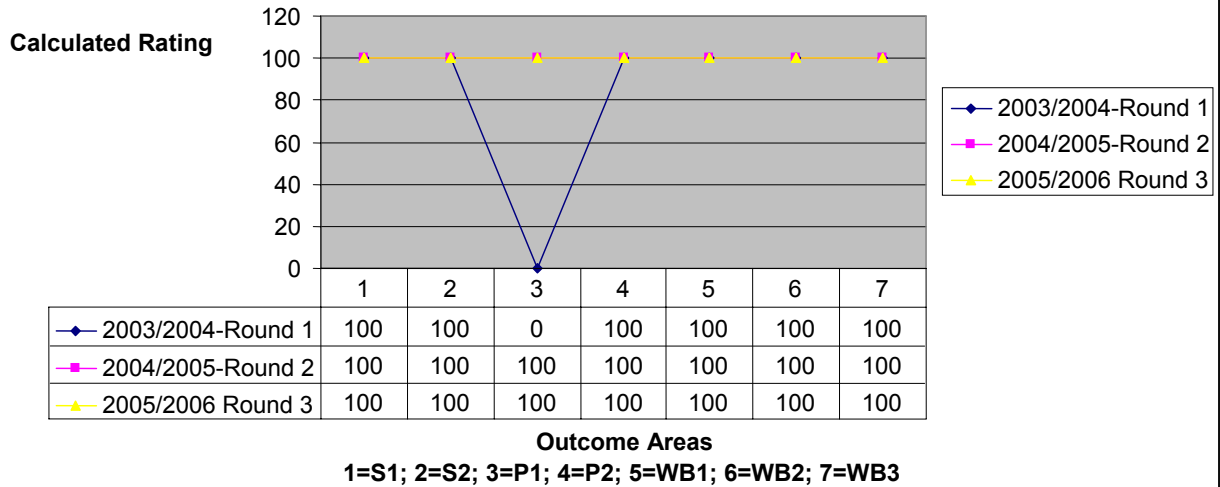
Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round - Lander Child Protective Services



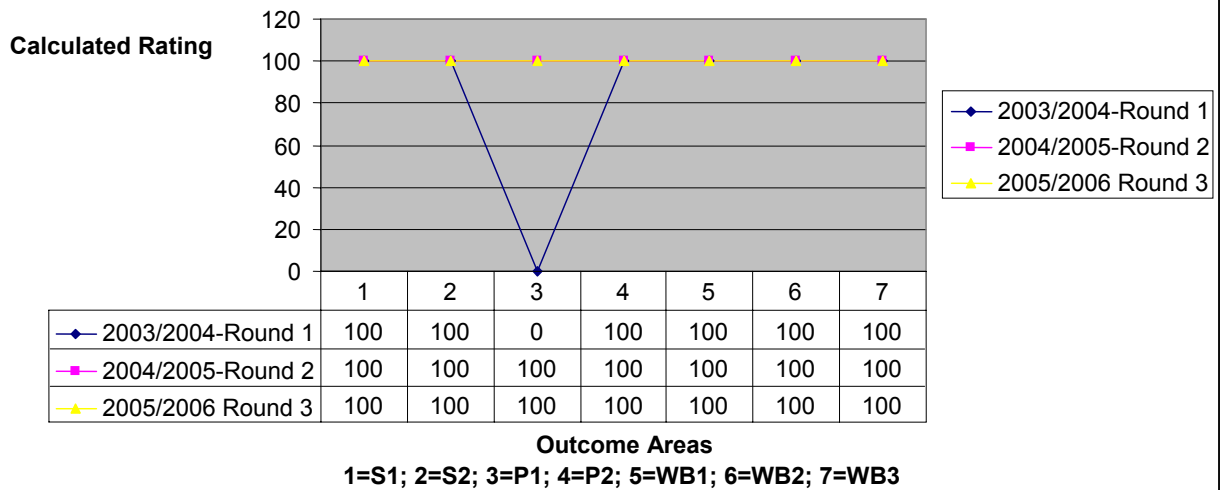
Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round - Riverton Child Protective Services



Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round - Thermopolis Child Protective Services

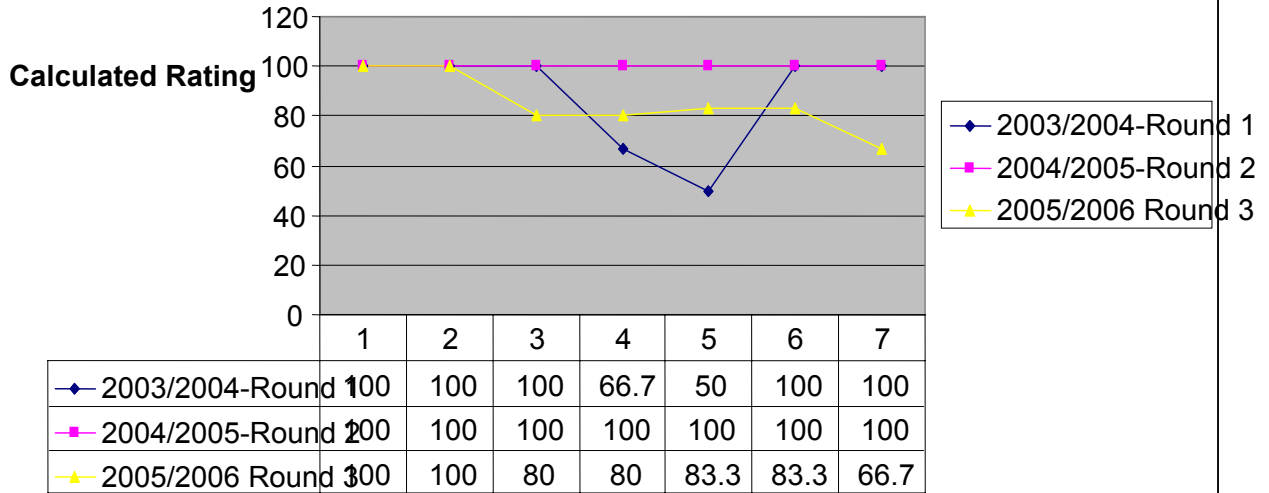


Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round - Worland Child Protective Services



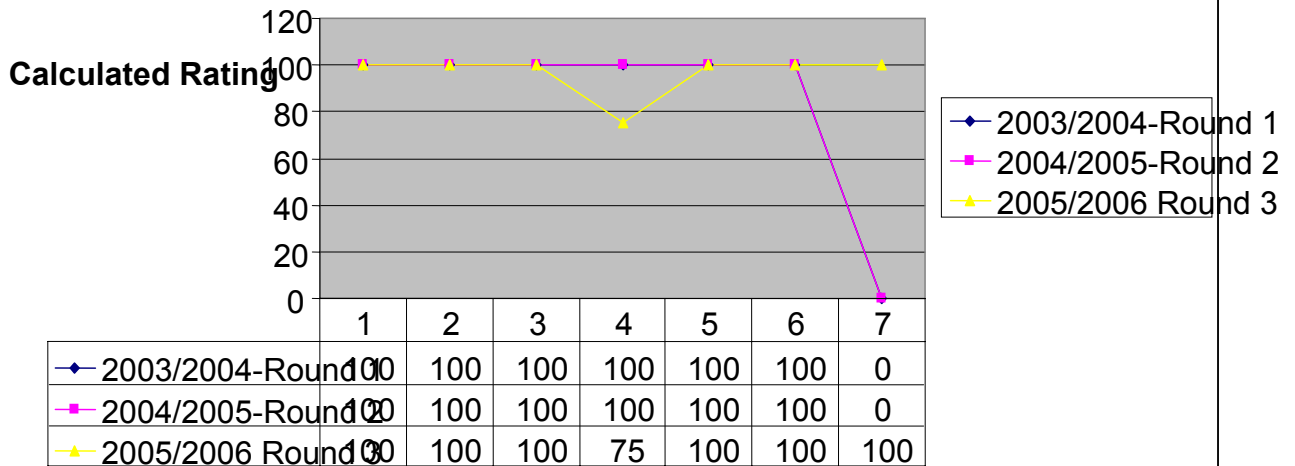
Gaps in graph and blanks in table indicate ratings of N/A, not 0%

Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round – Lander Child Protective Services and Juvenile Services Combined



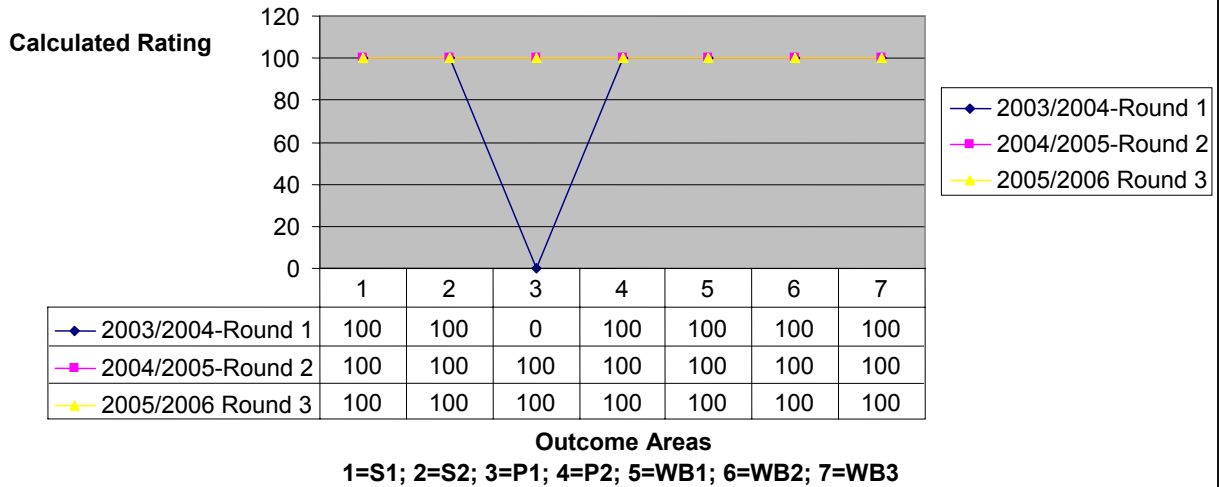
Outcome Areas
1=S1; 2=S2; 3=P1; 4=P2; 5=WB1; 6=WB2; 7=WB3

Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round - Riverton Child Protective Services and Juvenile Services Combined

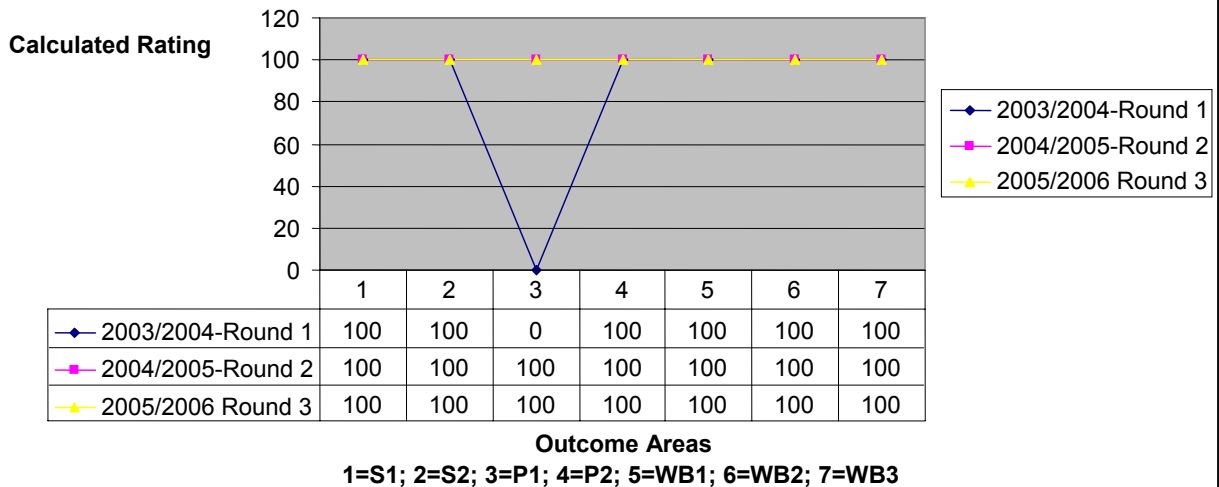


Outcome Areas
1=S1; 2=S2; 3=P1; 4=P2; 5=WB1; 6=WB2; 7=WB3

Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round - Thermopolis Child Protective Services



Safety, Permanency, Well-Being Category Outcome Comparison by Round - Worland Child Protective Services



The graph above shows category comparisons in the areas of safety, permanency and well being. It is important to note that the 2002 graph line represents a state average, not a specific local office average. Wyoming Mini CFSR items are listed below for further clarification along with category explanations *highlighted in blue*. Individual item ratings contribute to the corresponding category rating in the review process.

Item 1 = Timeliness of investigation

Item 2 = Repeat Maltreatment

S1 - Children are protected

Item 3 = Services in home/prevent removal

Item 4 = Risk of harm to children

S2 - Children are safely maintained at home

Item 5 = Foster Care

Item 6 = Stability of foster care placement

Item 7 = Permanency goal for child

Item 8 = Reunification/Guardianship/Relative

Item 9 = Adoption

Item 10 = Other planned living

P1 - Children are stable in placement

Item 11 = Proximity of foster care placement

Item 12 = Placement with siblings

Item 13 = Visiting w/parents and siblings/fc

Item 14 = Preserving connections

Item 15 = Relative placement

Item 16 = Relationship of child w/parents

P2 - Family relationships are preserved

Item 17 = Needs/services

Item 18 = Child/family involvement in plan

Item 19 = Worker visits w/child

Item 20 = Worker visits w/parent(s)

WB1 - Families can provide child's needs

Item 21 = Educational needs of the child

WB2 - Educational needs met

Item 22 = Physical health of the child

Item 23 = Mental health of the child

WB2-Physical and Mental health needs met

For further definition explanations, the entire Wyoming Mini CFSR instrument is available for review and downloading at <http://www.wycrp.org/page9.html>.

Appendix B

Strengths

- Good coordination with DFS and caseworker
- Caseworker did a great job
- Many services offered for the child and family
- Child received his high school diploma
- Probation officer did a great job of keeping
- Child was in only one placement
- Good attempts at identifying all relatives for possible placement options
- Frequent visits between caseworker and child
- Great in home services for family
- Lifenet came in three hours per day to help mom learn how to keep a house
- Children's nutritional and health needs were being provided
- Good process for child transitioning from youth to adult in system
- Great health assessments
- Meticulously done case
- Good services provided (assessments) knowing that child would need some assistance in adulthood
- Great communication between team members working for child
- Great enrichment services through Casey Family Programs
- Narrative entries were right on target and timely
- Case file was complete
- Great exploration of resources
- Nearly monthly MDT's good communication between all members of the MDT and continued email contact amongst them
- Good consistency of providers
- Same counselor throughout the case
- Good contact with family
- Child benefited from the small town environment resulting in many good things being done for the child
- Child was able to stay connected to the community thanks to being placed in kinship care
- Great MDT work looking at needs of child and mom
- Mom received dental care and dentures
- Mom received medical assessments; placed on anti-depressants
-

Additional contributing factors

- Child aged out in care, but still felt that he could contact his parents or go come if necessary
- Does ICWA apply in juvenile services cases? If the child is in out of home, ICWA applies

- Often times when attorneys become involved, the matter gets so convoluted the child is forgotten about
- TPR is in process and dad is going to relinquish
- Need to work on IL program and get it more universal throughout the state
- High staff turnover with DFS offices
- State would benefit from increased number of foster families in Wyoming
- Teacher stepped forward and became a foster home
- Step siblings aunt stepped forward and became a foster home
- Great connections between foster homes and original residence
- Great partnering between bio parents and foster parents
- Mom said MDT was the greatest benefit in the case
- Because of Judge Hartmans leadership, the family is heard and their considerations, when appropriate, are incorporated into the decisions that are made; a great example of the benefits of family partnerships.

Opportunities for improvement

- Child needed to be held accountable
- Petition might have needed to be filed against parents and hold them accountable rather than just concentrating on child
- Mom and dad were not involved in case planning, however it was mom and dad's choice
- It may have been better for the child had DFS been an advocate for filing a neglect petition on behalf of the child
- Sheriff's office declined to investigate allegations of sexually perpetrated by mother's boyfriend of young man
- A search for relatives could have been more diligent
- Relatives were not thoroughly searched out; grandfather (who had legal custody previously) was not discovered until 32 months into the case and was an option for placement; he will be adopting the child
- Case plans need to be completed and in the file
- Family was told what was going to happen, not necessarily involved with regards to meaningful input. The GAL in the matter did not feel that the mother understood what was going on nor did she have meaningful input. Physical presence alone does not constitute parental involvement; because we did not get the parent's buy in and understanding of the case plan, there is a good chance that the family will come back into the system; caseworker acknowledged that "mom" did not get it
- No family partnership held which would have been helpful for the parents
- Listened to mom only and did not search for any other biological relatives.
- Lot of struggle with the independent living program, timeliness and whether these services could have been implemented
- Foster family may have needed more support
- A family partnership at the end of the case might have been helpful to transition the child into adulthood especially in the area of education finish up

- Permanency plan needed to change to reflect the current status of the case; moved to IL or OPLA
- In a six month time frame, there was only one phone call between caseworker and mom
- No documentation of a physical exam when child went into foster care; sexual abuse case
- No documentation of preventative dental care
- Concurrent planning was done and would have been useful in the case; concurrent planning may have been occurring, but was not in the case file
- Use family partnerships to further define the roles of those who are going into the home to provide services

Systemic barriers

- Child dropped out of school and there is nothing to keep the child engaged in the school process
- Difficult to get a county attorney to file a neglect petition on a 16 year old
- We are an incident based system, something must occur before DFS becomes involved...should the system become involved earlier in certain cases?
- Lacking placement resources in Wyoming; placing children with proximity to their families is preferable
- It appears that CHINS are the path of least resistance for prosecuting attorneys as opposed to filing neglect petitions; do we victimize children in the process of using CHINS inappropriately
- Judge dismissed case with baby born with meth in system as a criminal act; county attorney did not file a neglect petition, child was left in a very bad situation and eventually came back into care with a report in between of mom using meth.
- Qualifying a child for adult wavier services are somewhat cumbersome
- Disjoint between IEP and what could happen in that scenario and the adult wavier and what could happen in that scenario
- ICPC request on father might have been done earlier
- Residential treatment was not available for mom in area where child was in foster care; however the other four children were able to go with mom
-

The preceding are comments captured from verbal and written sources during and after the review. They are provided for informational purposes only and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel.

Review process dynamics and comments:

- Citizen reviewers in this review consisted of:
 - Foster parent;
 - Social worker from the Eastern Shoshone nation;
 - Social worker from the Eastern Shoshone nation;
 - Casey Family Programs regional director;

- Representative of youth services
- Foster parent
- Wyoming Citizen Review Panel director
- Question 4; computer questionnaire version, will not allow the “no” to be entered.
- The period under review was August 1, 2005 through January 31, 2005.
- All cases were randomly selected and consent was given by the appropriate party for each case reviewed.
- Training was held for reviewers on October 29, 2006.
- The review instrument that is used looks at 23 specific items in the broad outcome areas of safety, permanency and well-being. The review instrument can be viewed and/or downloaded at <http://wycrp.org>.
- People in audience were asked to take notes, particularly in the area of policy
- Do not rework the case, capture information and move forward
- Limit cases to 20 minutes
- Difficult for citizen reviewers to navigate the case file
-

District and regional goals:

-

Big picture issues:

- The more issues we (DFS) has to deal with locally, the more time we have to take away from doing social work and visiting with families; permanency will suffer.