



Welcome!

Dates to Remember..

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14th Bi-Annual American Bar

Association National Conference on Children and the Law

Date/Location: July 15-16, 2011 Washington DC

The Conference will address a range of child welfare issues with an emphasis on improving skills of attorneys, judges, and advocates. It will also feature emerging child welfare policy and systemic reform issues, most importantly their effects on practice, children and families.

National Conference

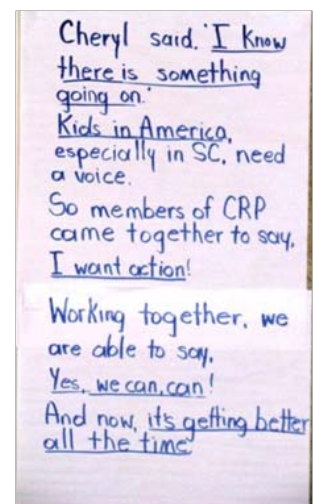
We hope everyone will join us at the Tenth Annual National Citizen Review Panel conference in **Charleston, SC on May 18-20, 2011**. The theme this year is "A Force for Change" and the goal is for everyone to come away from the conference refreshed and with new ideas about how to improve the lives of families and children in your state! Go to <http://www.uky.edu/SocialWork/crp/conference.htm> for more information.

This newsletter is written by Blake Jones and produced by the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services, a service of the Children's Bureau.

South Carolina Updates

The last quarter of the year was an eventful one for the **South Carolina** Citizen Review Panel (SCCRP). The Upstate Citizen Review Panel hosted a Clergy Mandated Reporter training in October. The group made arrangements to train ministers during one of their annual conferences. This provided a ready and captive audience for the training. There were approximately 50 ministers who were trained. The Upstate Panel was following up on a survey conducted during the previous year concerning ministers' awareness of mandated reporter duties. The survey indicated that there was a need for training. The group decided to take action and coordinate the training. The training was funded by the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) and served as an example of how collaboration can yield results. Two more trainings are scheduled for 2011 with CRP Panels as hosts.

The South Carolina Citizen Review Panel held its annual retreat on October 28th, 2010, in Columbia SC. The event was planned by panel members and was a huge success. It included an icebreaker, by Hattie Greene. Ms. Greene, with the Midlands CRP opened the Fall Retreat with an icebreaker designed to get participants comfortable with one another and to get them energized for the day. Her successful activity involved participants choosing song titles to come up with an advertisement about the SCCRCP. It entailed members working collaboratively to come up with an idea and presenting it to the group. See sample below:



We also used our time to review SMART Objectives. Caroline Davis, a trainer with The Center for Child and Family Studies led the review. This concept was discussed in relationship to the SCCRCP 2010 DSS Recommendations. Members worked in small groups with Caroline's assistance to write their recommendations so that they met the SMART objective which meant the recommendations were written so that they were specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic with a time for completion.



South Carolina Updates Cont. & Indiana

The group also presented its first annual CRP Person of the Year award to Dr. Kathleen Hayes, State Director for the SC Department of Social Services. Carolyn Dorrell, Midlands CRP chair, made the presentation commenting on Dr. Hayes' ability to lead in tough times and thanked her for her collaboration with the SCCRP. Dr. Hayes was presented with flowers, a plaque and a cake. This presentation was a surprise to Dr. Hayes and she was deeply moved and grateful to the membership for recognizing her with this honor.

Troy Strother with Parents Anonymous® of South Carolina, Incorporated, treated the group with an inspiring motivational speech entitled: Fathers Make a Difference. His humorous accounting of his experience as a son and father emphasized a father's importance in the lives of their children. His presentation was well received by the audience.

The group also heard presentations about SC legislative initiatives, the Kinship Navigator and Family Group conferencing projects being conducted by SCDSS.

Lastly, SCCRP formed a planning committee for the upcoming **National Citizen Review Panel Tenth Anniversary Conference** and opened registration for this informative and fun event.

Please plan to attend and register early! We are looking forward to seeing you in historical and sunny Charleston, South Carolina May 18-20th. Perhaps plan to bring your family. It is a wonderful vacation spot with much to see, learn about and enjoy.

The CRP's in **Indiana** are intensifying their efforts this spring. A year ago we reorganized our foster care system with the hopes of serving the families and children in our system and foster families more effectively, and the CRPs were a part of that process.

The Washington County Child Protection Team/CRP is working on ideas to help keep children safe from predators in their neighborhoods, parks and malls. Once they have something concrete, they will suggest we look into ways to adapt it for statewide use. The Marion County CRP is looking at services that are provided to our children and the practices involved in deciding what services are best for them. Our State Fatality Team/CRP is a "constant" in reviewing the way our system handles those grave situations we must deal with too frequently, as well as making recommendations to impact prevention. The Lake County CRP is in the process of "growing." We had nine new members join the group in November. They are all very enthusiastic about the work before them looking at our foster care system and how it can work in rhythm with the other units involved in a DCS case.

Indiana looks forward to continued work with and feedback from our CRP's as we strive to provide the "best practice" our case workers and service providers can offer.



Arizona Updates

Members from all three **Arizona** Citizen Review Panels (ACRPs) in northern, central and southern Arizona were involved in drafting the 12th Annual Report summarizing the accomplishments, activities, findings, and recommendations of the panels. The report was submitted in December to the Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Children, Youth and Families (ADES/DCYF).

Throughout 2010, the panels increased in diversity as new members representing schools, hospitals, faith-based organizations, law enforcement, courts, and adoptive and foster care parents were added. The ACRPs also engaged in activities that resulted in a variety of actions taken by individual panel members, DCYF staff, and system partners. For example, panel members reviewed a Child Protective Services (CPS) case record of an investigation of potential neglect with an infant whose sibling died from Shaken Baby Syndrome approximately one year prior. Based on the panel's concerns, a new investigation ensued and the child was taken into CPS custody immediately.

The ACRPs' continuous improvement process involved CPS case record reviews. A total of twenty-four cases are reviewed each year (two cases are presented at each regional panel meeting). Panel members requested that quarterly case selections focus on themes including cultural diversity, potential barriers impacting families, coordination of services to meet the unique needs of infants and toddlers placed in foster care, and the joint investigation process.

The annual ACRP survey was conducted at the end of the year to provide the coordination staff with information on panel members' level of satisfaction, suggestions for improvement, and ideas for trainings, workshops or guest speakers. Of the panel members that completed the survey, 71% indicated their regional panel was comprised of diverse community representation; 81% reported satisfaction with content of meetings; 67% stated satisfaction with case record presentations; 95% indicated that staff provided effective administrative support; and 81% reported sharing information on the ACRPs within their community and other organizations.

The ACRP meetings and events planned for 2011 include presentations on trauma informed care; the *Never Shake a Baby* program; and sustaining placements and reducing disruptions in foster care. Case record review themes will involve youth aging out of the CPS system; teen parents; and adopted youth returned to CPS. New training for panel members will focus on assessing strengths and risks; the impact of blended families on child welfare and domestic violence; trauma training for foster parents and CPS supervisors and staff; foster care services and ethics; criteria for child abuse prosecution; and child abuse prevention strategies and resources. The DCYF staff will also continue to provide quarterly updates on activities related to panel recommendations.



New Mexico Updates

I have written before about the **Statewide Advisory Committee (SAC)** of the **New Mexico CRP/CRB** and their work. SAC has four subcommittees that provide input and assistance in moving CRP/CRB forward in completion of our duties. The committees include: training and education, reports and publications, Friends of Foster Children, and Legislative.

I have also written before about the **Legislative Subcommittee of SAC** but I would like to expand a bit more about the work of this very important subcommittee, particularly in these times of dwindling resources and increasing challenges. The legislative subcommittee's main goal is to educate CRP/CRB volunteers so that they can help raise awareness and educate legislators and the public about issues impacting children in foster care. The subcommittee assists in developing tools and documents to empower volunteers to engage the public in discussions about efforts to help foster children.

In just the past two to three years, the legislative committee has: (1) updated and refined the CRP/CRB brochure to help raise awareness of the work and to recruit volunteers around the state; (2) developed and distributed CRP/CRB Data Cards illustrating the characteristics and needs of foster children and the system itself to each legislator (personalized data cards with their counties and districts), governor, the Children, Youth, and Families Department administrators and managers, Children's Court Judges, and others; (3) wrote eleven articles to raise awareness to the issues and challenges that foster children face through the eyes of one child (soon to be available on the National CRP website); and (4) currently developing strategies and tools to educate and assist volunteers to interact with legislators during legislative sessions and building relationships between sessions when legislators have more time.

*“Ah! What would
the world be to us if
the children were no
more? We should
dread the desert be-
hind us worse than
the dark before.”*

*~Henry Wadsworth
Longfellow*

New Mexico CRP/CRB is pleased that a group of our volunteers have taken on such a challenging task and are taking advocating for children to new levels!

Patricia Briggs, Project Director
NM Child Abuse & Neglect Citizen Review Board



Delaware and Hawaii Updates

Education and awareness has recently become a central focus for **Delaware's** Statewide Citizen Review Panel, the Child Protection Accountability Commission ("CPAC"). In fiscal year 2010, CPAC developed *How to Identify and Report Child Abuse and Neglect in Delaware* to provide a uniform message to every citizen who is required by law to report child abuse and neglect. This training mirrors that of the one developed previously for medical professionals entitled, *Child Abuse Identification and Reporting Guidelines for Delaware Medical Providers*. The first objective of these trainings was for mandated reporters to understand the law and their reporting requirements, while the second objective was to assist them in the identification of abused, neglected, and dependent children. Additionally, recent legislation increased the need for these trainings statewide. Since October 2009, these trainings have been provided to various members of the community, including hospitals, private family practices, local schools and wellness centers, non-profit agencies, and early education centers. More recently, CPAC has undertaken the task of making both trainings available online to reach a larger audience.

Additionally, to complement the Mandatory Reporting Training, CPAC partnered with the Child Death, Near Death, and Stillbirth Commission ("CDNDSC") to embark on a statewide media campaign to raise awareness on how to recognize and report child physical and sexual abuse – an initiative still in the planning stage at the close of FY 2010. Since then CPAC and CDNDSC finalized the first phase of the campaign in January 2011, which was to launch its *Stop Child Abuse* logo and a series of public service announcements surrounding the issue of reporting child abuse. In addition, CPAC and CDNDSC also unveiled the campaign's website, [I See the Signs.Org](http://ISeeTheSigns.Org), for state specific laws and resources on identifying and reporting child abuse. Future endeavors to raise community awareness will continue through the ongoing efforts of CPAC and CDNDSC's media campaign.

On January 21, 2011, **Hawaii** launched its Statewide Citizen Review Panel, which will be chaired by Jeny Bissell. The Panel will focus on the Hawaii's Program Improvement Plan and find ways to connect their work with it over the coming year.





Wyoming and Michigan Updates

The **Wyoming** Citizen Review Panel will be opening a Prevent Child Abuse America Chapter in Wyoming thanks to funding from the Wyoming Children's Trust Fund and United Way of Laramie County. The prior chapter closed its doors at the end of 2009 after many years of service. The chapter will operate as a program of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel, Inc. "It is our intent to use the findings from our review of child welfare services in Wyoming and apply that information to effect early child maltreatment prevention across the state" according to Kelly Hamilton, Executive Director of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel. In the first year of operation the program will focus on their "ACE model": Awareness, coordination and education.

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel is now operating as the fiscal agent for Wyoming Kinship Advocacy or WYKA. WYKA is a program run by Alice Carter and works with grandparents raising their grandchildren with a goal to keep the children safely out of the system. In Wyoming, WYKA has improved the lives of hundreds of children and is recognized statewide as an incredibly valuable resource to children and families.

Also, the Northern Arapaho has appointed an individual to administrate the newly forming citizen review panel with the Northern Arapaho Tribe. James Trospen, administrator of the Northern Arapaho Department of Family Services feels strongly that the involvement of citizens is essential to his department's delivery of services and created the position.

Michigan

CRP on Prevention:

The Citizen Review Panel for Prevention is exploring the use of the Strengthening Families and protective factors framework in child welfare. In particular, the CRP is learning how other states have incorporated the framework into their child welfare systems.

CRP on Children's Protective Services, Foster Care and Adoption:

The CRP on Children's Protective Services, Foster Care and Adoption is continuing their work on a Youth Bill of Rights for foster children, as well as mandated reporter training and legislation.

CRP on Child Fatalities:

The CRP on Child Fatalities continues to review child death cases and make recommendations for systems changes to prevent child deaths.



Minnesota Updates

In **Minnesota**, the five Citizen Review Panels are tackling issues that are pertinent to their county child protection systems and communities.

Chisago County: Panel members are interested in budget reduction implications, especially as they relate to truancy and educational neglect programs and services in Chisago County. They want to:

- Find out if and how children and families involved in truancy and educational neglect are impacted by the budget cuts.
- Educate members of the community, policy makers and legislators by learning and sharing if and how truancy services in Chisago County have been impacted by budget reductions.
Promote the coordination of efforts of social services, courts, county attorney's office and the schools to provide consistent services to help children and families involved with truancy and educational neglect.

Hennepin County: Three committees are looking at the following:

The Racial Disparities Committee has three objectives:

- Understand racial disparities in Hennepin County's Child Protection Services as they impact clients, their families and communities.
- Communicate this understanding to others.
- Advocate for specific, realizable improvements in community engagement, service delivery, etc.

The Permanency Committee

Goal: To study recidivism of families in child protection and explore ideas and options for alternative strategies to improve outcomes for children.

Desired Outcome: For the Hennepin County Child Protection Department to develop a stronger review of cases before closure that will verify safety plans and monitoring systems have been put into place in order to reduce the future risk of children returning to the foster care system.

The Intake Process Committee wants to:

Study the intake process in Child Protective Services to determine if the process and practices are conducive to ensuring the safety of the children from Hennepin County.

In order to:

Understand the Child Protective Services intake process, by gaining first-hand knowledge about the laws and procedures that guide the "triage," referral, and intake decisions and understand the community and agency resources that handle calls to Child Protective Services.



Minnesota Updates Continued

Ramsey County: The Children's Services Review Panel members are looking at ways to improve the Administrative Review process, a review of the appropriateness of the placement of children and youth in foster care. They are also collecting data from the Reviews that relate to child and family well-being outcomes.

Washington County: Two committees were formed by the Citizen Review Panel:

Taking Action to Prevent Child Deaths Committee: The purposes for looking at the deaths and near deaths of children due to abuse and neglect are to:

- Educate and bring awareness to members of the community about child deaths and how to prevent them.

- Foster cooperation among the Citizen Review Panels, other child abuse prevention organizations, other social service, mental and chemical health providers, schools, early intervention and education programs, medical personnel, law enforcement and neighborhood organizations to prevent child deaths.

- Advocate for needed child protection policy changes in the State and county child protection systems to prevent child deaths.

Follow-Up with Involvement of Non-Custodial Fathers in Child Protection Cases:

In 2010 the panel decided to pursue the recommendations made in their 2009 report. The committee is interested in:

- Continuing to keep the safety of children paramount

- Promoting consistency among workers regarding social work practice

- Seeking input from fathers who have been involved in the child protection system

- Adding the names of the father to that of the mother on the case files

- Developing parent information and resources that would be made available to fathers (for example; brochure, pamphlet, folders with resources).

Winona County:

Children with Disabilities or Special Needs Committee: All children are vulnerable; however, those with disabilities and medical conditions may be more vulnerable. The committee will examine the way in which Winona County responds to reports of child abuse and neglect when children with disabilities and special needs are involved, with a special focus on children who are between the ages of birth to through age six. The main goal of the committee is to ensure that children who are vulnerable because of physical, mental, and/or medical conditions are assessed correctly in child protection intake and/or investigations.



District of Columbia Updates

The **District of Columbia** Citizens Review Panel engaged in the following activities from July, 2010 and January, 2011.

The Annual Report, highlighting the activities of the DC Citizens Review Panel during 2009, was submitted to the DC Child and Family Service Agency. It included suggested recommendations for CFSA. The Report was scheduled to be sent by CFSA to the US Department of Health and Human Services. July, 2010.

In-Town Retreat. On July 31, 2010, the DC Citizens Review Panel held an In-Town Retreat. Presentations were given by Howard Davidson, Esq., from the American Bar Association, Center for Child Abuse on "National Perspectives on the Citizens Review Panels"; Gayle Samuels, from the Center for the Study of Social Policy on "Update on LaShawn vs Fenty", (an ongoing legal case); Loren Gano, from the DC Child and Family Services Agency, on the Role and Responsibility of the Child and Family Service Agency; Rashida Brown, from DC Citizens Review Panel, on "Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Authorizing Legislation for Citizens Review Panel" Also there was a networking panel of organization representatives who work with similar populations as those served by CFSA. They were Todd Liebbrand, founder and board president of Best Kids; Margie Cholofsky from the Foster and Adoptive Parent Advocacy Center and Nadia Moritz from the Young Women's Project. Each organization spoke about his or her organization, with an eye on ways each might collaborate with the DC Citizens Review Panel. Planning for the coming year was conducted by Betty Nyangoni, chair of DC Citizens Review Panel. July, 2010.

The Finance Project was hired by Child and Family Services Agency as the new facilitator/ coordinator for the DC Citizens Review Panel. The contact person at the Finance Project is Soumya Bhat, sbhat@financeproject.org. July, August, 2010.

The DCCRP designed and is in the process of implementing a **project** with CFSA regarding **quick exits from foster care**. This will entail case reviews. The lead in that project is Josh Gupta-Kagan, Esq., DCCRP member. September 2010-

A **membership** campaign was conducted that so far has resulted in 3 new members joining the DCCRP over the last 3 months. At least 3 others have indicated interest. Ongoing.

"Many things can wait; the child cannot. Now is the time his bones are being formed, his mind is being developed. To him, we cannot say tomorrow; his name is today."

~Gabriela Mistral



D.C. Updates Cont. & New Hampshire

Supported CFSA, by attending a **special screening** of the film, **ExtraOrdinary Life: Journey to South Africa**. This was co-sponsored by Child and Family Service Agency. The film was produced by BET. It is about some DC youth, in foster care in the city, who traveled to South Africa for the 2010 World Cup Games. It was a transformative experience for the participants. They were connected with South African young people who are also in foster care. CRP members might be interested in viewing this film. Information can be found on the web site of Extraordinary Life (google). Extraordinary Life is a charitable organization, established to nurture teen girls in foster care, extra-ordinarylife.org. November, 2010.

The DC Citizens Review Panel **met monthly** to plan and discuss projects and issues related to CFSA. At the January 2011 meeting, representatives from CFSA made a presentation and answered questions from the DC Citizens Review Panel members on children and youth aging out of the system and related matters. It was emphasized that the DC Office of Youth Empowerment, under CFSA, has expanded the staff to include 5 social workers, who are also independent living specialists. The social workers were retooled to offer listening tours instead of skill sessions, where youth are now able to speak about their needs at group homes and are helped on a one-on-one basis. The social workers will also focus on family engagements and achieving permanence for youth. Also at the January meeting, the Child and Family Services Agency representative disseminated the Agency response to the DC CRP 2009 report on "Meeting the Needs of Abused NS Neglected Children: Findings and Recommendations". September, 2010-January, 2011.

The DCCRP will conduct an **assessment** of the CFSA web site training module for **mandatory reporters** of child abuse and neglect. Results will be sent to CFSA. January, 2010-March, 2011.

Submitted by : Betty Nyangoni, Ph.D.
Chair, DC Citizens Review Panel
January, 2011

The **New Hampshire** CRP has merged with the DCYF Advisory Board (the Advisory Board is required by NH statute) to combine efforts and establish a more influential group of citizens and child welfare professionals. Each group has similar interests (Policy, service array and quality improvement initiatives). The CRP will now meet monthly as opposed to every 2 months.

Georgia and Kentucky Updates

Georgia's three citizen review panels have a common focus for 2011 – mandated reporting. The maltreatment sub-committee of the Child Fatality Review Panel is reviewing the state statute on mandated reporting and will propose an amendment to clarify report parameters as well as a possible expanded list of individuals required to report. Also on their agenda for 2011, the committee will develop a proposal for the independent review of maltreatment-related child deaths, especially those where current or prior involvement with a state agency is confirmed.

The Child Protective Services Advisory Committee is examining the handling of reports of suspected child abuse and neglect, from initial report through disposition. Included in their review - current policy, practice and staff training. Of particular interest to this Panel is the relationship between the reporter, reporter training and disposition of reports. Georgia's alternative response system has been a priority and this Panel continues to monitor the state's progress toward the development statewide policy and practice model.

The Children's Justice Act Advisory Committee is looking more closely at the quality of mandated reporter training. In addition to surveying mandated reporters, the task force is reviewing training curricula from the wide variety of professional groups required to report suspected child abuse and neglect for quality and consistency.

Children ask better questions than adults. "May I have a cookie?", "Why is the sky blue?" and "What does a cow say?" are far more likely to elicit a cheerful response than, "Where's your manuscript?", "Why haven't you called?" and "Who's your lawyer?"

- Fran Lebowitz

Kentucky's CRPs hosted a one day min-conference November 18, 2010 entitled "What WORKS in Child Welfare." The event was attended by nearly 100 participants and topics included:

"Creating Organizational Strength by Combating Secondary Traumatic Stress in the Child Welfare Workforce"

"START: Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams: Transforming the System and Achieving Results for Families"

"Introduction to Motivational Interviewing for Children and Families"

"What are Family Team Meetings and Why Are They Important in Child Welfare?"

"Bruises - Accidental or Inflicted?"



New Research on CRPs Published

A new article entitled, "Reflections on Citizen-State Child Welfare Partnerships: Listening to Citizen Review Panel Volunteers and Agency Liaisons" is published in the current issue of *Children and Youth Services Review*. The manuscript was authored by Drs. Valerie Bryan (University of South Alabama), Crystal Collins Camargo (University of Louisville) and Blake Jones (University of Kentucky).

Objectives, Results and Implications are:

Objective: Previous research pertaining to the citizen review panel (CRP) initiative indicates that discrepancies exist between panel member and state agency liaison perceptions of CRP effectiveness in fulfilling the CAPTA CRP mandate. This study explores the impressions of both CRP members and liaisons involving barriers to effective CRP-state child welfare partnerships and recommendations to improve the relationship, provided through narrative survey responses from CRP liaisons from 30 states and D.C. and panel members from 32 states and D.C. Thematic categories which emerged from analyses of these responses are discussed, and a conceptual model and substantive-level theory of the CRP- child protective services (CPS) relationship developed from the results are presented.

Results: The complex nature of CRP-CPS relationships emerged as the central theme among CRP members' and liaisons' responses. Liaisons and CRP members identified a need for CRP members to become more educated globally on child welfare despite the relatively high level of education and experience of much of the sample. Difficulties encountered by panel members in the effort to partner surfaced in themes of mistrust and skepticism about the worth of citizen participation in child protection. Negative agency attitudes, lack of role clarity, and lack of commitment to authentic partnership were cited as negative influences upon the relationship by both liaisons and CRP members. The most important preferred outcome of the partnership was that citizen volunteers would become more knowledge partners who could meaningfully contribute to child welfare efforts. A second desired outcome important to CRP members was to form a shared vision with CPS.

Conclusions: Findings imply that when key components of mutual respect, legitimacy, CPS knowledge, shared vision, authenticity, citizen engagement, honest communication, and a serious, deliberative process are in any way impeded, the partnership is vulnerable to breakdown, and intended outcomes may be compromised.

Implications: Important relational difficulties that have formed barriers between volunteers and CPS agencies have been identified, and results suggest specific issues to target for improvement. These findings can prompt a more informed discourse about the challenges and opportunities presented when attempting to engage citizens in child welfare practice and policy-making, and can lead to new research paths. Suggestions for such efforts are offered.

National CRP Advisory Board Spotlight: Phyllis Fulton



All it took was one class... Prior to the twelfth grade, Phyllis Fulton thought she wanted to be a reporter, horticulturalist, interior decorator, but then she took a class in sociology. "I was hooked then," she said in a recent interview. "I knew that I wanted to go into social work and help people change their lives."

Phyllis grew up in Elizabeth City, NC, a small city close to Norfolk, Virginia. Her father died at an early age, and she found herself being raised by aunts, uncles and cousins. She received an undergraduate degree from NC A&T State University and a MA degree in psychology from the University of Northern Colorado.

Her early introduction into "it takes a village" has served her well as the program coordinator of North Carolina's Community Child Protection Teams. The teams—located in each of North Carolina's 100 counties—are responsible for bringing the community perspective to child protection work. Phyllis said, "This goes back to my early years as a social worker. I had a team of nurses, doctors, teachers, all standing ready to lend me a hand and help me out whenever I had a difficult child protection case."

Phyllis has been able to see much of the world outside of her home in Garner, NC. In 1971, she married her husband, Earnest. He was in the air force, and the couple was fortunate enough to travel all over the world, living in Idaho, South Carolina, Indiana, Thailand, Great Britain, and Germany. Earnest and Phyllis have two daughters; Carson, age 32, has a master's degree in psychology from Boston College, and Shana, age 34 who has a JD from Columbia University. Both daughters have undergraduate degrees from UNC-Chapel Hill. Shana is an attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Reading is a love of Phyllis'—the bookmobile even brought books to her home when she was a little girl—and she enjoys reading romantic histories, travelling, and "playing the piano, but only for myself."

Phyllis hopes that our national network of Citizen Review Panels can affect change in the lives of children, assist child welfare agencies in becoming more integrated with the community, and help the citizens of our nation feel a stronger sense of connectedness in their important work.