



**Wyoming Citizen  
Review Panel**

SAFETY • PERMANENCY • WELL BEING

## 2008 Annual Report

*We've got traction  
in the right direction...*



**JUNE, 2008**

## **WHAT IS THE WYOMING CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL?**

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel (WYCRP) is a federally mandated group of volunteer citizens who are responsible for determining whether state and local agencies are effectively discharging child protective responsibilities pursuant to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and subsequent amendments. Through a review of policies and procedures, research and reviews of child protective and juvenile service cases the purpose of the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel is to promote child safety, permanency and well-being for children and families.

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel also partners with other organizations on collaborative efforts that ultimately support and/or improve the child welfare system.

## **OUR MISSION**

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

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Preliminary findings from the 2008 Federal Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) in the outcome areas and systemic areas are reported in this year's annual report. According to the preliminary findings, "Wyoming has traction in the right direction..." A full reporting is expected in late 2008 or early 2009.

Four rounds of Mini CFSRs have been completed by the WYCRP and are statistically shown by county. After reviewing approximately 400 cases, trends over the four rounds of Mini-CFSR reviews can be noted. Since the first federal CFSR in 2002, ACF has raised the bar of measurement. Subsequently, statewide results have declined slightly over the past 6 years. The CFSR is not a pass/fail process, but a quality assurance tool for the Department of Family Services (DFS) and others to use to improve services to youth and families. Unlike the federal CFSR, the Mini-CFSR process reviews case samples from the entire state. The Mini-CFSRs indicate demographic strains on certain communities influence services and trends.

What are the citizens saying about child welfare services in Wyoming? From the WYCRP online survey, Wyoming citizens report some positive interactions, but generally would like more involvement and participation in the child welfare system. A comparison is made between last year's survey responses and this year's survey responses.

A very worthwhile initiative is unfolding in juvenile services. This results from recently passed Senate File 0066 and the vision of DFS Director Tony Lewis to improve services to at-risk youth at the local community level. The initiative involves central intake and assessment; diversion and detention standards; continuum of non secure services, and local sustainability.


In past annual reports the WYCRP has recommended changes primarily at the local DFS offices; this year we focus on changes that DFS administration should consider.

SYNC, a new collaborative effort between the WYCRP and Wyoming Department of Health, mental health and/or substance abuse services unit is being created and tested to review access to services, quality of services including recovery support and coordination of providers.

The Wyoming Child Major Injury and Fatality Review Team, that WYCRP administers, encourages collaboration among organizations and agencies and development of programs that prevent injuries and fatalities.

Finally, Wyoming has been selected to be the host of the National Citizen Review Panel Conference in May of 2009.





## LETTER FROM WYCRP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KELLY J. HAMILTON

The title of our 2008 annual report is: *"We've got traction in the right direction..."* Purposely, we did not finish the sentence. Through our findings and subsequent recommendations in this report, we are asking the Wyoming Department of Family Services (DFS) to lead the effort in Wyoming to complete the sentence.

There are two reasons we chose this title. **First**, it sums up the hard work of many in the Wyoming child welfare community; efforts that have been discovered and documented from the Mini CFSR (Child and Family Service Review) process and stakeholder meetings around the state.

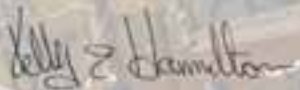
**Second**, this statement was quoted from and was the overarching finding by our federal review partners during the 2008 Federal CFSR held in June 2008.

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel suggests that Wyoming child welfare can be viewed as a vehicle; it is a proven classic with sturdy construction and components. But like anything, our child welfare vehicle needs some maintenance. We have chosen the DFS administrative shop on the third floor of the Hathaway Building for those repairs this year and have tailored our findings and recommendations to DFS administration in Cheyenne. Wyoming does not need a new child welfare vehicle; we need one that is reliable and consistent. Wyoming needs a vehicle that has clean windows for those doing the work to see out of as it traverses our state, and for citizens to see in. We ask that the "DFS administrative mechanics" supported by the Wyoming Legislature in some instances "tune up" this vehicle for a smooth, reliable ride for Wyoming children and families.

Any maintenance is only as good as the quality assurance element the follows it. Round V of the Mini CFSRs will commence in August of 2009. In the interim, we will refine our procedure and welcome a new DFS quality assurance manager into the process. Additionally we will work with local DFS offices on completion of the Mini Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) and collaborate with DFS and others on the community juvenile services boards and related initiatives.

Yes, Wyoming does have traction in the right direction; let's drive it home!

Sincerely,



Kelly J. Hamilton  
Executive Director  
Wyoming Citizen Review Panel

## THE 2008 FEDERAL CFSR TRAVELS TO WYOMING

In June, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF)<sup>1</sup> completed their second<sup>2</sup> federal Child and Family Service Review in Wyoming by reviewing a total of 65 cases<sup>3</sup> in Laramie, Sheridan and Sweetwater Counties. There were few surprises as the systemic findings of strengths and areas of concern mirrored those identified in the four rounds of Wyoming Mini Child and Family Service Reviews as depicted below. Like the Mini CFSR, the Federal CFSR measures seven (7) outcome areas in safety, permanency and well being. How did Wyoming fare in 2008 compared with 2002? Preliminary results indicate the following<sup>4</sup>:

- **Safety (1):** Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
  - 12% decline
  - **Round IV Mini CFSRs predicted a decline.**
- **Safety (2):** Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.
  - 1.67% decline
  - **Round IV Mini CFSRs predicted a decline.**
- **Permanency (1):** Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
  - 26% decline
  - **Round IV Mini CFSRs predicted a decline.**
- **Permanency (2):** The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.
  - 9% decline
  - **Round IV Mini CFSRs predicted a decline.**
- **Well-Being (1):** Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
  - 8% increase
  - **Round IV Mini CFSRs predicted a decline.**
- **Well-Being (2):** Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
  - 16% increase
  - **Round IV Mini CFSRs predicted an increase.**
- **Well-Being (3):** Children receive appropriate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.
  - 15% increase
  - **Round IV Mini CFSRs predicted an increase.**

ACF completed the first round of federal CFSR's in 2002. Since the first federal audit, ACF has raised the standard of measurement for every state. For example, if in 2002 the standard the state needed to achieve was 90%, the standard in 2008 increased to 95%. Since no state in the country achieved the identified standard in 2002, states were

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1 The Administration for Children and Families is part of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. More information may be obtained from: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>.

2 The first CFSR was done in July of 2002 in Laramie, Sweetwater and Natrona counties.

3 Of the 65 cases reviewed, 25 were in-home services cases and 40 were foster care cases.

4 Results provided by the DFS quality assurance unit; a decline in rating would indicate an area needing attention.

required to not only meet the original standard, but meet the new standard. Therefore, statistical results are interesting at first glance; but it is important to note that significant changes increasing the standards of measurement occurred between the 2002 and 2008 federal reviews.

## SYSTEMIC FINDINGS FROM THE 2008 FEDERAL CFSR

In addition to the seven (7) outcome areas reviewed, there are seven (7) systemic areas that are reviewed in the Federal CFSR process: Information system capacity, case review system, quality assurance system, training, service array, agency responsiveness to community and foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment and retention. General systemic findings and recommendations as reported at the debriefing, which will be reported in much greater detail in the Federal CFSR report, include the following:

- The Wyoming Department of Family Services (DFS) quality assurance system, through a partnership with the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel, effectively identifies opportunities for improvement.
- Wyoming should continue their Mini CFSR program with a greater emphasis on monitoring of individual office program improvement plans.
- Improvement in periodic case reviews and permanency hearings were noted. However, it is undetermined if hearings are actually moving children to timely permanency.
- Multi-disciplinary team meetings are often substituted for family partnerships; they are not the same and are designed to serve two entirely different functions.
- The child protective services core training was noted as a strength, but ongoing training, juvenile services training and supervisory training was noted as a need. Less didactic training and more “hand’s on” training would be beneficial.
- Termination of parental rights (TPR) continues to be an issue in Wyoming that needs attention, specifically consistency across the state in filings and movement of cases. While the state attorney general’s office is helping to address a backlog, unless the process is streamlined for cases coming into the system moving towards TPR, the backlog is likely to re-appear. Court dockets are also full and the demand for judges is great at the district court level. In addition, the quality of case work, and case documentation, needs to be excellent in order for others to proceed forward with TPR.
- Consistency, both internal and external to DFS, across the state with regards to service provisions was noted; improvement is seen on the surface but when actual cases are reviewed and findings noted the consistency is lacking.
- A nontraditional reimbursement structure is lacking from DFS as well as providers not being paid timely causing the loss of service providers in the state.
- The DFS computer system, known as WYCAPS<sup>5</sup>, was noted for being “rich with data” but somewhat difficult to navigate and operated on outdated, poor hardware.
- When used, the family centered practice model appears to be quite successful.

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5 WYCAPS is the DFS case computer management system. The acronym stands for: Wyoming Child Assistance and Protection System.

## WHAT ARE WYOMING CITIZENS SAYING ABOUT THE CHILD WELFARE HIGHWAY?

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel uses a continuous on-line web survey for people to constructively express their thoughts on the child welfare system in Wyoming; this is just one of several ways information is collected.<sup>6</sup> Below are the survey results for the period July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. When percentages do not equal 100% this means that the field may have been left blank by participant(s). Additionally, in some instances, the question may not have been answered, but a comment may have been left. Due to the volume of participants only the most constructive comments or portions of comments that support systemic findings in this report have been included, for each question.<sup>7</sup> The comments are interesting and informative but the reader should remember that this is simply a web based survey and no effort has been made to accommodate the “other” side of the story. 2007 percentage responses are in (parenthesis) for comparison purposes.

### 1. How are you associated with the Wyoming child welfare system?

- |                                  |       |         |
|----------------------------------|-------|---------|
| › Consumer of services:          | 22.2% | (0%)    |
| › Community based organization:  | 0%    | (35.7%) |
| › Department of Family Services: | 33.3% | (14.3%) |
| › Legal community:               | 0%    | (0%)    |
| › Provider of services:          | 11.2% | (21.4%) |
| › Other:                         | 33.3% | (28.6%) |

### 2. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, was the system responsive to you or your family's specific needs?

- › Yes: 57.1% (76.9%)
- › No: 42.9% (7.7%)
- › Comments:
  - *“I was in care from 2 months until I was 18 years old. The first time I saw my DFS worker was at 15 and only because I was getting in trouble.”*
  - *“DFS treats our foster child like a number rather than the precious child that he is. They are more anxious to get the case closed than to ensure his well being.”*
  - *“I think the agency is missing the boat on the underlying family problems; single mother with mental health issues. I also don't think anyone explained how the system works to the child.”*

### 3. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, do you feel referrals were made when appropriate?

- › Yes: 71.4% (57.1%)
- › No: 28.6% (35.7%)

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6 To participate in this survey, please visit [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org).

7 All comments may be reviewed by contacting the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel at [wycrp@wycrp.org](mailto:wycrp@wycrp.org).



› Comments:

- *“The court ordered a psych evaluation which did not take place until over five months after the order...”*
- *“...law enforcement in this case seemed to get the picture quickly and made appropriate decisions on how to funnel the case to juvenile authorities.”*

**4. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, do you feel commitments were followed through with in a timely fashion?**

› Yes: 33.3% (50.0%)

› No: 50.0% (42.9%)

› Comments:

- *“There has been such a shortage of staff here in Natrona County that several of my cases have not had timely visitation schedules due to a lack of workers to supervise visits or transport children.”*
- *“Child has been in system for 8 months and still no case plan.”*
- *“After I turned 15 and started getting involved with my own care, but before then, no.”*

**5. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, do you feel phone calls were returned in a timely fashion?**

› Yes: 57.1% (53.9%)

› No: 42.9% (38.5%)

› Comments:

- *“Most case workers and supervisors in Natrona County return phone calls within 24 hours.”*
- *“Phone calls to caseworker and supervisor are rarely returned.”*
- *“There appears to be a long lag time in the juvenile justice probation system. Too many cases, not enough hours in the day maybe?”*

**6. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, do you feel you were notified of multi disciplinary, case planning, family partnership meetings and court hearings?**

› Yes: 42.9% (78.6%)

› No: 42.9% (14.3%)

› Comments:

- *“We often do not receive notice of hearings or MDT’s until a few days prior to the meeting, or occasionally with only a few hours notice. This creates difficulty in turning in our court reports prior to the 5-day deadline.”*
- *“Although we were notified, many times it was last minute which did not allow for pertinent parties to attend.”*
- *“I didn’t attend or know about MDTs until I was 17 and then only got to be phoned in once.”*

**7. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, do you feel you were able to participate in the planning and decision making process of the case and do you feel you were heard?**

- › Yes: 42.9% (57.1%)
- › No: 42.9% (21.4%)
- › Comments:
  - *“They didn’t care about what I thought.”*
  - *“Natrona County DFS is excellent at including CASA advocates in the planning process. They listen to our concerns and are willing to utilize our ideas and the knowledge that we gain from our time spent with the child and family.”*
  - *“As the foster parent, I feel that my concerns are rarely taken into consideration and that DFS at times makes decisions contrary to the team.”*

**8. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, do you feel you or those you served were culturally respected?**

- › Yes: 83.3% (71.4%)
- › No: 16.7% (21.4%)
- › Comments:
  - *“I have even seen DFS workers and GAL’s be willing to travel out of state with a child so that a child could participate in cultural activities within their tribe.”*

**9. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, have you ever been involved in a family partnership?**

- › Yes: 28.6% (50%)
- › No: 57.1% (50%)
- › Comments:
  - *“The family partnership was created to keep the biological father from participating in the decision-making process of the child’s future.”*
  - *“...I don’t think this approach was even considered in the case I’m familiar with.”*

**10. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, please tell us about any barriers you may have encountered:**

- *“Resources are limited. More positions are needed within agencies to meet the needs and demands of our communities.”*
- *“DFS ignored allegations of abuse when I was 6-12 and being molested. As long as I was not causing problems...”*
- *“The main barrier I have seen here in Natrona County is the high rate of turnover of staff. From my understanding, the senior ongoing worker has been with the agency for a year and a half, and most workers have only been there a few months or even weeks. One of my cases has had three different case workers in the past year.”*
- *“Lack of case plan. Lack of professionalism by local DFS.”*

- *“I felt that the caseworker was not in control of the case as the GAL made all decisions and the caseworker (very young and very new) always deferred to the GAL. This was the GAL’s first case and she came from a very privileged background and does not relate to lower income people at all.”*
- *“No communication between service providers; kept getting passed off.”*

**11. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, please share with us some of the things that work particularly well with the system:**

- *“Family partnerships.”*
- *“When I was in trouble, my DFS worker always went to bat for me.”*
- *“DFS supervisors are responsive to our concerns. They meet with CASA staff monthly to address concerns, provide updates, and to keep lines of communication open.”*
- *“Community resources; school counselor, teacher and principal were all very supportive. Good GAL advocating for the child.”*
- *“Adoptions. Those happen a lot and it seems that caseworkers are really good at telling foster parents that they want to adopt a child.”*
- *“My son ended up in jail; so nothing.”*

**12. As a participant in the Wyoming child welfare system, is there anything else you would like us to know?**

- *“Just because it is a child, it does not mean that their opinions are not valid or worth listening to...”*
- *“There is a shortage of foster families. I feel that this is an additional barrier for children, as it is difficult to find placements for them when they cannot be at home for a time. However, I have also seen case workers really step up their efforts to place children with extended family and do quick home studies when there are not other placement options, so this is a good thing.”*
- *“The Mini CFSR report listed on your website for Rawlins does not reflect the feelings and experiences shared by foster families who participated in your Citizens Review Panel Meeting on September 4, 2007.”<sup>8</sup>*
- *“Too many kids are taken into custody and the caseworker is so busy trying to get the kid adopted that they don’t really work reunification. A caseworker actually said “I don’t’ think parents should get the child back if they have done something to have the child removed” Another caseworker said, “I’m at a point that I just hate the parents. I don’t like to work with them and I don’t want to waste time trying to.” Try being a foster parent. You will learn a whole different side to DFS. I have also heard caseworkers say, “We’ll probably be terminating on this one” when the kid first comes in the system! How is that trying to keep the family together?”*

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<sup>8</sup> The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel agrees with this comment and apologizes for not accurately reporting stakeholder comments in the debriefing report. It is the intent of the WYCRP to conduct foster care stakeholder meetings throughout Wyoming in early 2009 to better capture and document trends in Wyoming foster care.

## LETTER FROM WYCRP CHAIRPERSON, LISA GOSSERT

Because the theme of this year's annual report is, "*We've got traction in the right direction*," I started thinking of the poem by Robert Frost entitled, "The Road Less Traveled." The last line in the poem states: "And I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference." The Department of Family Services (DFS) decided approximately 4 years ago to take the "road less traveled" by allowing ordinary Wyoming citizen's a chance to examine the child welfare system first hand through the Mini Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) process. Wyoming's dedication to transparency and reflection has "made all the difference." In June 2008, Wyoming completed the second federal CFSR. While some of the results indicated Wyoming has some areas of challenges, there were also areas of significant improvement. In September 2008, the Legislative Services Office released their official audit of Wyoming Child Protective Services. In both reviews, Wyoming received praise for their commitment to transparency of the system. Wyoming's commitment to involving Wyoming citizens in the quality assurance process is an example of the agency's commitment to Wyoming families.

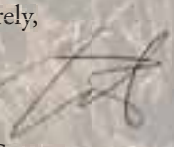
Wyoming continues to be challenged by establishing timely permanency for children in out of home care, a high rate of out of home placements, high case worker turnover/retention, issues related to safety and risk assessments, and preserving family connections. Despite these challenges, Wyoming has shown improvement in the well being areas. From Mini CFSR reviews and the Federal CFSR, Wyoming has improved in helping families meet their identified needs, addressing the child's health, and meeting the educational needs of the child in care.

While Wyoming has adopted a family centered approach to case management, Family Partnerships are often underutilized or not used at all. Wyoming continues to struggle with timely termination of parental rights freeing children for adoption when appropriate. Finally, DFS's data system and hardware is outdated and cumbersome.

In the coming year, Wyoming will be challenged to clarify the dual track system, identify and develop opportunities for prevention to reduce the high number of young people living in out of home care, improve the data system, and refine family centered practice.

Wyoming DFS is on the right track. However, DFS cannot be on the road alone. The WYCRP encourages all Wyoming citizens that impact the life of a Wyoming child or family to partner with DFS meet the challenges on the road less traveled!

Sincerely,



Lisa Gossert  
WYCRP Chairperson



## **CHANGING THE EQUATION THROUGH COMMUNITY CENTERED PRACTICES: WYOMING COMMUNITY JUVENILE SERVICES BOARDS**

The Wyoming Legislature took a giant step forward in the 2008 session by creating a mechanism for communities to address juvenile service concerns. Information regarding the enabling legislation can be viewed on the Wyoming Legislative website at: <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/2008/Enroll/SF0066.pdf>.

There are four cornerstones in this initiative:

1. Central intake and assessment;
2. Diversion and detention standards;
3. Continuum of non secure services, and
4. Local sustainability.

The Department of Family Services, collaborating with the Department of Health and Department of Education, has a clear vision for implementation of this legislation through DFS Director Tony Lewis. Detention standards in Wyoming are an issue that the WYCRP has been concerned about, based on the findings in the Mini CFSRs and reports from the media. Some children placed in privately owned and operated for profit detention facilities in Wyoming have been hurt and this is unacceptable. A privately owned and operated facility whose profit margin is based on the number of “beds filled” is fraught with opportunity for abuse on many different levels.

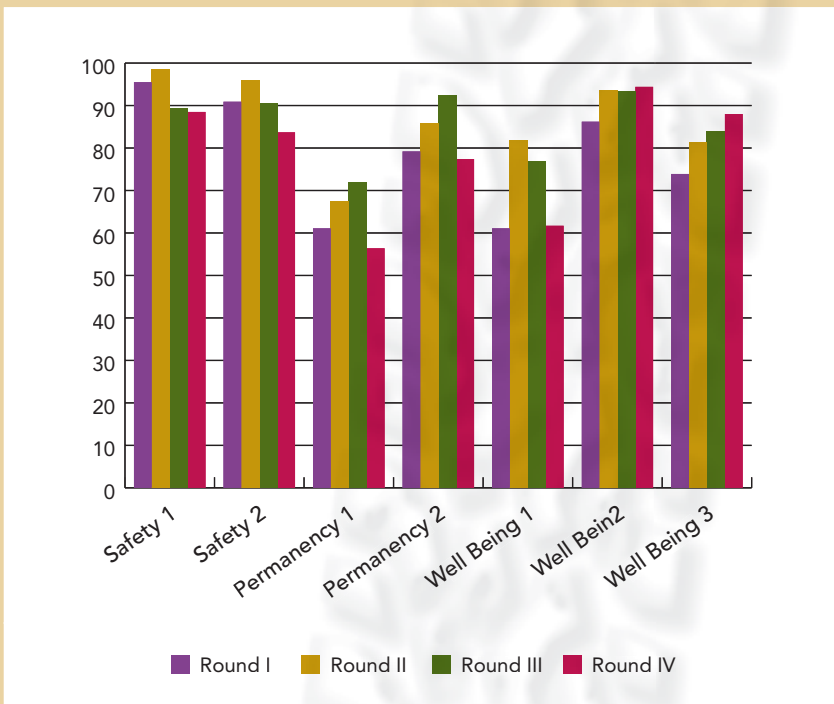
The WYCRP encourages local communities to form joint powers boards, assess their needs and to begin to address the four cornerstones listed above. Some of these conversations are going to have to be “courageous conversations;” anytime the words detention and juvenile are used in proximity of one another, strong emotions are evoked. However, it is a discussion that needs to occur in Wyoming sooner rather than later.



## AFTER FOUR ROUNDS OF MINI CFSRS, WHAT IS THE DATA SAYING?<sup>9</sup>

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel (WYCRP), collaborating with the Wyoming Department of Family Services (DFS) quality assurance program, has applied the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) instrument to almost 400 randomly selected cases between 2004 and 2008. Using a computer generated, stratified sample, the cases reviewed measure safety, permanency and well-being outcomes in both in-home service cases and foster care cases from samples drawn from child protective services and juvenile services. Cumulative statewide results, for the four rounds<sup>10</sup> of Mini CFSRs are shown in the following table and graph. Definitions of the outcome areas of safety, permanency and well being are also shown.<sup>11</sup>

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	95.5	98.4	89.2	88.5
Safety 2	90.9	95.9	90.4	83.7
Permanency 1	61.1	67.5	71.8	56.4
Permanency 2	79.2	85.7	92.3	77.4
Well-Being 1	61.1	81.8	76.9	61.7
Well-Being 2	86.2	93.6	93.3	94.4
Well-Being 3	73.9	81.4	84	88



<sup>9</sup> Information comes from DFS quality assurance statistics and debriefing reports which are compiled after a Mini CFSR has been completed. Please go to [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org) and read the story and reasons that contributed to the statistical findings for each DFS office.

<sup>10</sup> Round I = 2004-2005; Round II = 2005-2006; Round III = 2006-2007, and Round IV = 2007-2008.

<sup>11</sup> Information on the individual items that make up these broad outcome areas can be found at [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org).

**Safety 1:** Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.

**Safety 2:** Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

**Permanency 1:** Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

**Permanency 2:** The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

**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.

**Well Being 3:** Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

With close to 400 Mini CFSRs completed to date, the WYCRP feels that it is useful to view trends by county in the seven outcome categories listed previously.<sup>12</sup> Many variables contribute to these trends; the following scores combine and report both in home services and foster care services from case samples reviewed from both juvenile services and child protective services. Before drawing any conclusion for a trend, it must be understood that the Mini CFSR review process uses DFS cases as a "conduit" of sorts to access and measure services provided by many in the child welfare system. Like the federal CFSR, the Mini-CFSR measures the entire child welfare system, which includes the educational system, the mental health system, the court system, and any other "system" that is interconnected with the child welfare system. Each one of these "systems" has a tremendous impact on children and families seeking and/or receiving services by DFS. The Mini-CFSR is not only an evaluation of how DFS is meeting the needs of families and youth in Wyoming; the Mini-CFSR, like the federal CFSR, evaluates how all state and private agencies work together to effectively meet the needs of Wyoming families. If you are reading this report, there is a good chance you even have some ownership of these results!

Consistency, both positive and negative, is displayed in the following tables. From the table for Albany County, for example, the statistical results consistent through four rounds of Mini CFSR reviews indicate that when the system becomes involved in a child's life, children are in fact safe given the sustained Safety 1 ratings. Conversely, it appears that Permanency 2 was an area needing improvement in Albany County at one time, but that efforts in that area have improved the rating and have apparently been sustained. Before drawing any conclusion consideration must be given to many factors such as demographics and case volume, among others.<sup>13</sup>

A "N/A" is different than a "0"; N/A indicates that there were no cases applicable to be rated in that area during that review round. This is typical in smaller communities where fewer cases are sampled. A rating of "0" means failure.

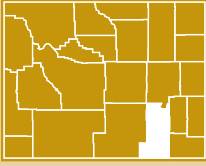
Results for the four rounds<sup>14</sup> of Mini CFSRs are shown in the following graphs for the broader outcome areas of Safety, Permanency and Well-Being.<sup>15</sup>

12 Detailed information on the seven broad outcome areas and the individual items that make up these broad outcome areas can be found at [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org).

13 To view the "story" behind the data, please visit the Mini CFSR link at [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org).

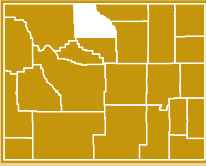
14 Round I = 2004-2005; Round II = 2005-2006; Round III = 2006-2007, and Round IV = 2007-2008.

15 Information on the items that make up these broad outcome areas can be found at [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org).



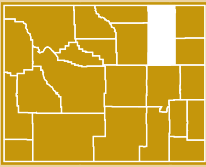
## Albany County • 17 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	100
Safety 2	100	100	66.7	100
Permanency 1	100	66.7	100	75
Permanency 2	50	100	100	100
Well-Being 1	66.76	100	100	83.3
Well-Being 2	100	75	100	80
Well-Being 3	100	50	100	100



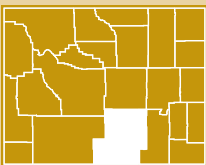
## Big Horn County • 8 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	N/A	100	100	100
Safety 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	100
Permanency 1	100	100	50	100
Permanency 2	100	50	100	100
Well-Being 1	100	50	50	100
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	100	50	100	100



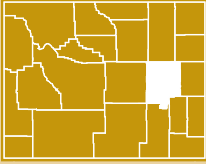
## Campbell County • 26 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	83.3	83.3	60	N/A
Safety 2	100	100	100	100
Permanency 1	80	50	50	50
Permanency 2	100	75	100	75
Well-Being 1	85.7	85.7	66.7	66.7
Well-Being 2	71.4	100	80	100
Well-Being 3	71.4	71.4	100	83.3



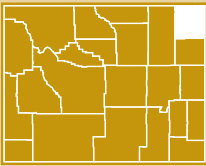
## Carbon County • 15 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	50
Safety 2	100	100	100	50
Permanency 1	100	50	50	50
Permanency 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 1	0	75	75	25
Well-Being 2	66.7	75	100	75
Well-Being 3	0	75	100	75



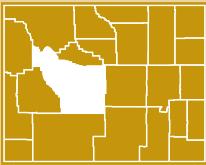
## Converse County • 13 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	100
Safety 2	50	100	100	50
Permanency 1	33.3	100	100	50
Permanency 2	66.7	100	75	50
Well-Being 1	33.3	50	100	25
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	33.3
Well-Being 3	66.7	50	100	66.7



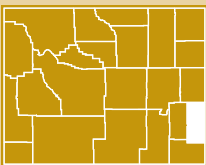
## Crook County • 5 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	N/A	N/A
Safety 2	100	100	N/A	100
Permanency 1	100	N/A	N/A	N/A
Permanency 2	100	N/A	N/A	N/A
Well-Being 1	50	0	0	100
Well-Being 2	100	N/A	100	100
Well-Being 3	100	N/A	100	100



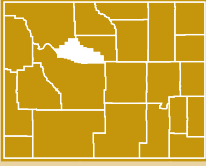
## Fremont County • 27 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	80	50
Safety 2	100	100	80	100
Permanency 1	60	40	60	75
Permanency 2	80	100	100	75
Well-Being 1	75	83.3	100	71.4
Well-Being 2	85.7	100	80	100
Well-Being 3	87.5	83.3	66.7	100



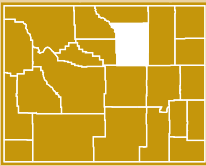
## Goshen County • 19 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	100
Safety 2	100	100	100	83.3
Permanency 1	100	100	80	0
Permanency 2	66.7	100	80	33.3
Well-Being 1	50	66.7	83.3	50
Well-Being 2	100	100	83.3	100
Well-Being 3	100	100	66.7	100



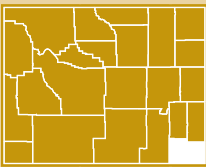
## Hot Springs County • 5 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	100
Safety 2	100	100	100	100
Permanency 1	0	100	80	100
Permanency 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 1	0	100	100	100
Well-Being 2	0	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	0	100	100	100



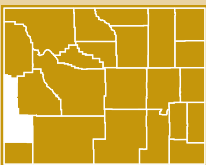
## Johnson County • 9 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	N/A
Safety 2	100	100	100	100
Permanency 1	50	100	50	100
Permanency 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 1	100	100	50	50
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	100	100	50	100



## Laramie County • 65 reviews total

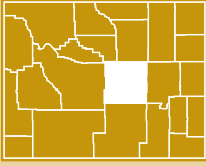
	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	91.7	100
Safety 2	85.7	71.4	100	80
Permanency 1	50	33.3	73.3	62.5
Permanency 2	66.7	58.3	93.3	75
Well-Being 1	56.3	68.8	58.8	37.5
Well-Being 2	100	86.7	92.9	93.8
Well-Being 3	78.6	75	86.7	93.8



## Lincoln County • 11 reviews total

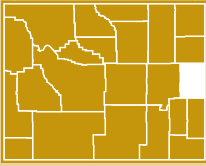
	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	100
Safety 2	50	100	100	66.7
Permanency 1	100	100	100	0
Permanency 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 1	66.7	100	100	66.7
Well-Being 2	50	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	66.7	100	66.7	50





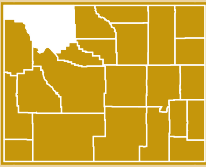
## Natrona County • 47 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	91.7	100	70	No Review
Safety 2	90	100	85.7	No Review
Permanency 1	53.3	60	60	No Review
Permanency 2	66.7	80	80	No Review
Well-Being 1	50	68.8	66.7	No Review
Well-Being 2	71.4	93.8	92.9	No Review
Well-Being 3	62.5	75	85.7	No Review



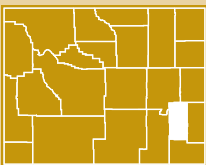
## Niobrara County • 5 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	N/A	N/A
Safety 2	N/A	100	N/A	50
Permanency 1	100	100	100	0
Permanency 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 1	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	100	100	100	100



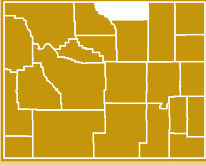
## Park County • 23 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	100
Safety 2	100	100	100	100
Permanency 1	0	80	100	75
Permanency 2	100	80	100	100
Well-Being 1	25	100	100	85.7
Well-Being 2	100	85.7	100	100
Well-Being 3	50	100	75	100



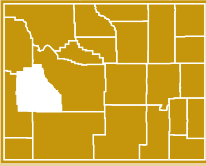
## Platte County • 12 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	N/A
Safety 2	100	100	100	100
Permanency 1	0	100	75	66.7
Permanency 2	100	100	75	66.7
Well-Being 1	100	100	100	75
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	100	100	100	100



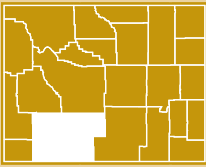
## Sheridan County • 21 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	100
Safety 2	100	100	66.7	80
Permanency 1	100	100	100	75
Permanency 2	100	100	100	75
Well-Being 1	75	100	50	66.7
Well-Being 2	75	100	80	100
Well-Being 3	100	100	66.7	83.3



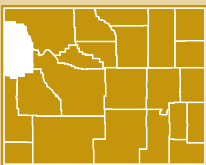
## Sublette County • 4 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	N/A	N/A
Safety 2	100	100	100	0
Permanency 1	100	0	100	N/A
Permanency 2	100	100	100	N/A
Well-Being 1	100	100	100	N/A
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	100	100	0	100



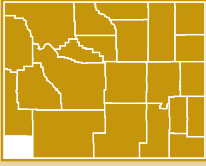
## Sweetwater County • 22 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	66.7	100	100	50
Safety 2	66.7	100	100	80
Permanency 1	33.3	100	40	33.3
Permanency 2	66.7	100	100	50
Well-Being 1	25	83.3	83.3	66.7
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	50	100	100	50



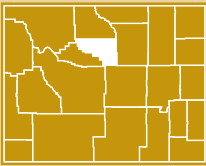
## Teton County • 11 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	N/A	100	100
Safety 2	100	N/A	N/A	100
Permanency 1	50	100	100	100
Permanency 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 1	100	100	100	33.3
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	50	100	100	100



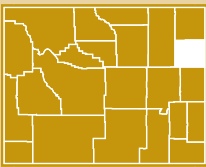
## Uinta County • 16 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	100
Safety 2	100	100	100	50
Permanency 1	50	75	50	50
Permanency 2	100	100	100	75
Well-Being 1	75	100	100	50
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	100	75	66.7	75



## Washakie County • 7 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	100	100	100
Safety 2	100	100	100	100
Permanency 1	100	100	100	0
Permanency 2	100	100	100	0
Well-Being 1	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 2	100	100	100	100
Well-Being 3	0	0	100	50



## Weston County • 4 reviews total

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Safety 1	100	N/A	0	N/A
Safety 2	100	N/A	0	100
Permanency 1	0	N/A	N/A	0
Permanency 2	0	N/A	N/A	100
Well-Being 1	100	100	0	100
Well-Being 2	0	100	N/A	N/A
Well-Being 3	100	100	N/A	N/A

Detailed Mini CFSR reports exist for each juvenile services region and child protective services district of the state. The reports list findings from the Mini CFSR reviews and associated stakeholder meetings and suggest reasons that support statistical findings. To view and/or download these reports, please visit the WYCRP website at [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org) and click on the Mini CFSR tab.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A CHILD WELFARE VEHICLE TUNE-UP

All involved in Wyoming child welfare have responsibility for consideration, evaluation and resolution of the following recommendations. The system needs a “tune up” and the WYCRP is asking DFS administration to coordinate that “tune up.” Past reports from the WYCRP have focused primarily on what the local DFS offices might change. This year the WYCRP has chosen to focus primarily on the administrative function of DFS; quality leadership exists at DFS and now is the time to recognize and solve some of the following issues.

### SAFETY:

- Pick a track; a basic understanding of the DFS dual track, case classification system is needed, followed by consistent, systematic usage across the DFS enterprise. Even though DFS operates a “dual track system,” there are three tracks: Investigation, assessment and prevention. There is not a consistent use of the track system statewide creating inconsistency among the DFS field offices on how and to whom field offices provide services.



- Explore the concept of central intake in both child protective services and juvenile services. Statistical results displayed previously in this report would indicate a lack of consistency in application of policy and procedure throughout DFS particularly in the area of case assignment.
- Establish a sexual abuse investigative unit within DFS. A sexual abuse investigative unit may not be needed in every office, but at the very least a properly trained consultant that monitors these cases should be readily available for consultation. Reviews have indicated that these cases are not consistently classified and awkwardly handled.
- Establish clear and concise policy regarding when and how risk assessments and safety assessments are administered. In addition, develop a process to guide the case worker in case planning in context of the safety and risks identified in the assessment. Additionally, there is a disjoint between what WYCAPS<sup>16</sup> calculates and what caseworkers instinctively know in these assessments according to reports from caseworkers.

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<sup>16</sup> WYCAPS is the DFS case computer management system. The acronym stands for: Wyoming Child Assistance and Protection System.

## PERMANENCY:

- Develop a standardized process for case worker transition. Mini CFSRs indicate that every time there is a change in DFS case workers, permanency is set back significantly. Mini CFSR findings also indicate there is often not a smooth transition between case workers resulting in a lack of documentation causing the new caseworker to have to “start the case over.”
- Address a high turnover among case workers. While proper staffing models that recognize caseworkers are not effective with too many cases is important for DFS and the legislature to strive for, case worker turnover must be addressed in other ways within DFS using a new vision and strategy. The WYCRP has observed staffing patterns that focus strictly on caseworker numbers for several years with only a slight improvement in case worker retention. DFS needs to ask: “*Why would somebody want to work for DFS?*” Developing opportunities for worker growth through training, compensation that is commiserate with the work, reasonable case loads and addressing worker stress and secondary trauma from the nature of the work will improve employee morale and retention. Additionally, hire and train supervisors and managers who are selected for their leadership abilities and their ability to train and motivate their workers.
- Utilize family partnerships earlier in a case to help identify what is actually occurring with the child and family at the beginning of the case. The WYCRP recommends DFS collaborate with others on a pilot program that “triages” appropriate cases before a child placement decision is made through the family partnership concept. Expected results would show a decrease in placements and an increase in permanency. Many youth who enter placement are returned to their families within 90 days; front end services can prevent many of these out of home placements. A family partnership completed at the beginning of the case can help recognize underlying issues such as the difference between abuse, neglect, and poverty that can greatly impact a placement decision. It is likely that many cases could be handled without the child entering placement through community wrap around services.
- DFS needs to determine if too many cases are handled as Child in Need of Supervision Cases (CHINS) when another option could be used such as the mental health waiver process. Wyoming’s out of home placement rates are high, indicating an opportunity for an alternative option to out of home care.
- A Multi Disciplinary Team Meeting (MDT) should be utilized for its intended purpose. A MDT and a Family Partnership meeting do not have the same purpose. A MDT and a Family Partnership were never intended to be the same thing and do not produce the same results. DFS and the judicial community need to stop allowing one to substitute for the other.

## WELL BEING:

- When youth are delivered to foster care placement there must be a greater emphasis to provide the foster parents with vital information about the child as soon as possible. A Mini CFSR discovered a life threatening condition that occurred to a child in placement; only the emergency room staff knew of the pre existing condition and was able to save the child’s life. The foster parents had not been informed of any existing medical condition.
- DFS case workers need to use every tool available to insure success for any child that is in the child welfare system. Mini CFSR findings indicate that psychological assessments are not requested or used by DFS in a majority of cases. Even



when requested by care providers, the request often goes unanswered. Identifying the mental health needs of a family and child are critical to the well being of the family and youth.

## **FOSTER CARE:**

Develop a foster care provider recruitment and retention program. The WYCRP recommends the following changes based upon information from stakeholder meetings and Mini CFSR reviews:

- Pride training should be strength based and focus on partnering and collaborating with birth families, case workers, youth, and foster parents. Stakeholder feedback indicates Pride training focuses on how to “circumvent a broken system in order to be a foster care provider.”
- Develop and implement a grievance procedure that is reviewed annually with foster parents, youth, and birth parents. Many times in both stakeholder meetings and through Mini CFSR interviews the WYCRP has heard that foster care providers operate in a “fear based” environment. Foster parents indicate their experience has been if they ask too many questions, ask for additional support services, or make any “waves” they are rejected by DFS and simply do not receive any further foster care placements. Many foster parents related to the WYCRP that once the youth currently placed in their home leaves, they would no longer provide foster care for DFS.
- Case workers should zealously pursue input from foster parents when attending an MDT. The WYCRP recommends foster parents attend all MDTs regarding the youth/child placed in their home. There is still a need for foster care providers to be included in MDT’s and other important meetings. If a foster parent is responsible for a child, and a DFS caseworker has limited contact with the child, who really knows what the child is experiencing and going through? The WYCRP suggests the foster parent is most likely to have meaningful input about the child’s needs, progress, and well-being.
- Case workers need to visit a child in the home at a minimum monthly. Home visits by caseworkers in certain areas of the state are still sporadic and in too many cases, nonexistent. A question on the foster care provider monthly report form may help by asking if the foster parents have been visited by the caseworker in the prior month and if they have received a copy of the case plan.

## **POLICY:**

Any safe roadway has some guidance signs along the way; a number of DFS policy signs may need some adjustment, stood back up or fresh lettering. This does not necessarily mean that the policy or procedure does not exist, but the WYCRP has found people internal and external to DFS who may not understand it or be aware of it. In other cases, the policy simply may not exist. The WYCRP recommends the following:

- Implement clear policy regarding diligent search and engagement of absent parents.
- Develop and implement third party perpetration policy and procedure to ensure the completion of investigations into complaints of alleged child abuse perpetrated by a person who is neither the child’s parent nor the legal custodian.

- Clarify the usage of the SS49 form. Identify what information is available to foster parents, what the purpose of the form is, and how it should be applied consistently around the state.
- Develop policy, or clarify existing policy and provide training to create a standard procedure regarding case transfers between case workers.
- Develop and implement policy to address annual well-child check-ups and required timeframes for completion.
- Develop and implement policy that provides clear guidelines to case workers and supervisors on how long to offer services to a family when they are not motivated to work with DFS.
- Clarify policy for notification and involvement of absent parents in voluntarily assessment cases.
- Develop policy and a “glossary” of terminology to be used consistently throughout DFS. One example is the understanding and use of APPLA (Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement) and/or OPLA (Other Planned Living Arrangement); DFS needs to adopt one acronym or the other.
- Develop and implement policy and protocol around secondary trauma experienced by workers of DFS.
- Develop policy and guidelines for case workers regarding advocacy for foreign national clients who are not United States Citizens.

## TRAINING:

- Rather than doing separate core training for juvenile service workers and child protective service workers, DFS should complete an initial week core training that includes new workers to both units so the basic fundamentals and vision of DFS is consistently given to new workers. After the initial orientation training, DFS could then separate the two groups for more unit specific training. Too often there is a disjoint between the two units regarding the philosophy around family centered practice, for example, and this might be relieved through more joint core training.
- The training unit should look at creating online, interactive training opportunities for case workers and supervisors. Training dollars are hard to find and in tough economic times, those dollars are the first to usually be eliminated; yet workers are starved for ongoing training. Supervisor and management training is almost nonexistent, yet the performance expectations for supervisors and managers is significant to the well-being of children and families.
- Provide ongoing training on family centered practice to all case workers and supervisors. During the Mini CFSRs, instances have been documented when juvenile services workers and even child protective service workers have stated that they “do not do family centered practice.” DFS casework revolves around family centered practice, and providing ongoing training focusing on family engagement and family centered practice will help motivate and renew “seasoned” case workers.
- Focus ongoing core training provided to caseworkers on safety, permanency and well-being. If case workers are to be evaluated on these outcomes, they need to have greater training on what safety, permanency and well-being looks like in core trainings.

## OPERATIONS:

- Family assistance workers (FAWs) should be recognized and compensated for the amount of work they do in DFS. FAWs are truly the “unsung” heroes of DFS and are often the primary link the family has with the agency as they work to complete their case plan. Mini CFSR reviews and stakeholder meetings indicate FAWs often go above and beyond the established expectation to ensure the success of the family. Many are paid for only 30 hours per week, but work in excess of 40.
- Contracts need to be created to explain clear deliverables. Several cases were reviewed where no reports existed in case files from private providers that were providing services for DFS when the child was in DFS custody and in residential treatment.
- Continue to engage partners, constituents, families, and youth in quality assurance processes. DFS needs to continue to develop a system of transparency and reflection. Since beginning the Mini CFSR reviews, the WYCRP has noted a significant shift in attitudes of citizens towards DFS. Continued engagement of the Wyoming community by DFS is creating a community sense of responsibility for the well being for Wyoming families.
- Upgrade the existing data system and hardware. Most vehicles today have a computer that helps the vehicle operate smoothly; DFS is no different with their WYCAPS system but it is time for an upgrade. The WYCRP has identified the following issues with the current data system:
  - Many safety assessments have to be overridden in WYCAPS. WYCAPS calculates a finding, but the case workers often know a greater risk exists based on past experience and knowledge; the case-worker is then forced to override the finding in WYCAPS.
  - WYCAPS is difficult to query information in and reported by workers to be “too cumbersome” for child protective services to accurately record changes in child placements. A placement cannot be changed until the last placement is updated as paid in the system, forcing a delay in recording changes in placement in the system.
  - WYCAPS tracking of the next court hearing is an issue; a worker cannot “reset the clock” when a hearing is held which causes staff to enter non factual information into the system.
  - When a child is in DFS custody, but remains in the home, it is hard to capture in WYCAPS.
  - WYCAPS is reported by caseworkers as needing to be modified and updated to match policy in a number of different areas such as concurrent case planning, allegations, and face to face visits. Caseworkers can sometimes see three different parties in one visit, but cannot record it in WYCAPS.
  - If WYCAPS mirrored the quality assurance program it might be helpful for caseworkers to better understand the required standards for their casework.
- Evaluate and assess the usability of current case planning tools. DFS case plans can be seen as a road map of sorts; workers report the revised map is just not being well received and used. The WYCRP acknowledges the intent to insure others are involved in the planning process, but in this day and age of technology there are a number of hardware and software combinations to create a better system than this document that ultimately has to be electronically scanned into WYCAPS.

## SYSTEMIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WYOMING CHILD WELFARE HIGHWAY

- Provide multi-disciplinary guidance and training to individuals working with children at risk on the appropriate use of Child in Need of Supervision (CHINS) petitions and/or alternative solutions. CHINS statutes continue to be misused in Wyoming.<sup>17</sup> Cases have been reviewed where the child has been “encouraged” to admit to some behavior in order to gain access to needed family services. Other times youth with mental health issues have been addressed through a CHINS and placement when it would have been more appropriate to enroll the youth on a mental health waiver.
- Create a mechanism for DFS to become involved with a family other than if the family accepts the services voluntarily; there are certain instances, that with minimal intervention by DFS on a non-voluntarily basis, families could be more successful and placements could be avoided.
- Wyoming needs to create and fund a true family court with judges who are trained in juvenile, domestic violence, and paternity issues. Generally, district courts have high caseloads and are a court of “general jurisdiction.” Numerous variations of family courts, drug courts, truancy courts, and diversion programs are popping up, but ultimately Wyoming needs a family court that is separate from district court.
  - In one judicial jurisdiction, consent decrees are used almost exclusively in juvenile services cases and even some in child protection cases. The WYCRP does not think that consent decrees should be used in any juvenile related case.
  - Adoption cases are currently put on the regular court docket; these cases need to be fast tracked and handled by a family court.
- Improve access to mental health services for juveniles, particularly after normal business hours and during holidays. Oftentimes, mental health services are accessed through the local emergency room and are often costly and only granted after a medical doctor who may or may not be trained in mental health issues has examined the youth. This method is costly to the state of Wyoming and does not adequately meet the need.
- School districts need to insure that when a child leaves their home school district and is placed in a residential treatment facility, the local school district continues to be a part of that child’s educational progress while in placement. School districts and residential treatment centers should work together to insure that the credits obtained while in residential treatment are transferable to the home school district when the child returns to the home community. The WYCRP recommends when a child returns to the home school district, that school should be responsible for the child’s successful transition to the home school and that he or she is received and supported educationally upon return.

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17 W.S. 14-6-429 et. al.: <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/statutes/statutes.aspx?file=titles/Title14/Title14.htm>.

## **SYNC: A ROAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel promotes transparency and reflection; and when approached by Rodger McDaniel, deputy director of the Wyoming Department of Health (mental health and/or substance abuse services unit) to collaborate on an assessment tool that could be used in mental health and substance abuse case reviews, the WYCRP accepted the challenge! SYNC was created and stands for Systems and You Networking and Collaborating.

The SYNC instrument and review process has been created and will be implemented in the second half of 2008. The process was created in Wyoming and for Wyoming citizens. SYNC reviews have three over-arching principles: Access to services, quality of services including recovery support and collaborative efforts.

Participation in the review is strictly confidential and voluntary. The process closely models the Mini CFSR process; a review team includes a citizen and a mental health and or substance abuse service(s) provider. Treatment and case notes are not reviewed in the process.

For more information on this process and to follow the evolution of it, please visit the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel at [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org) and click on the SYNC tab.



**SYSTEMS & YOU  
NETWORKING & COLLABORATING**

## **CHILD MAJOR INJURY AND FATALITY REVIEW TEAM**

The Wyoming Child Major Injury and Fatality Review Team, administered by the WYCRP, continues their incredible progress to create and sustain a dignified and unobtrusive process to review child major injuries and fatalities in Wyoming without causing secondary trauma. Through their work this reporting period, the team made the following recommendations:<sup>18</sup>

- Encourage the establishment of statewide protocol among the coroner community for classification and procedures where coroners perform the investigation; examples would be x-rays and toxicology of child victims.

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<sup>18</sup> The entire Wyoming Child Major Injury and Fatality Review Team annual report can be viewed at [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org).



- Encourage the medical community and law enforcement to perform x-rays on any and all children that present with suspicious injuries.
- Encourage the Department of Family Services to develop and implement an assessment tool to identify high risk cases based on past identified issues such as domestic violence, young parents, substance abuse, and children with disabilities and bonding issues. This effort should be a collaborative effort between the Department of Family Services, Department of Health and law enforcement to develop and implement the tool.
- Encourage Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming to lead a collaborative effort between the Department of Health, the Department of Family Services, and the Department of Education for a collaborative review of current training availability and requirements for recognizing abuse and neglect; especially sexual abuse.
- Encourage the Department of Health, Division of Victim Services, Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming, and the Department of Family Services to collaborate to review, develop, and implement training on the dynamics of domestic violence and its impact on children and child safety.
- Encourage Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming, the Department of Family Services, and the Department of Health to collaborate on the development and implementation of an aggressive statewide education campaign on preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome, targeting males.
- Encourage the Department of Health, Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming, and Department of Family Services to review existing training opportunities and requirements in recognizing Shaken Baby Syndrome among emergency workers and medical providers.

Legislation failed introduction that would have placed the Wyoming Child Major Injury and Fatality Review Team within the Department of Health in the 2008 Wyoming Legislative Session. However, an effort is now under way to move the team within the Wyoming State Attorney General's Office and to broaden the scope of review beyond those cases that involve or could have involved child abuse and neglect.

*Wyoming*  
**CHILD MAJOR INJURY AND FATALITY REVIEW TEAM**

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## WHAT THE YOUTH ARE SAYING ABOUT THE CHILD WELFARE HIGHWAY

*"I don't speak to my case worker once a month; when I do speak to them over the phone, the call is not confidential and there is always somebody around."*

*"It has been nine months since I last talked to my caseworker."*

*"When my caseworker leaves, please let me say good bye in a face to face meeting so I can have closure and have the steps of what happens next explained to me."*

*"The staff at the girl's school has been very helpful for me to get caught up with my education; they have also connected me to people who can help me with scholarships."*

*"It would be helpful if I could have input into my case plan; I have been homeless living in a car with my son; I can help you understand what my son and I need."*

*"I made changes while in placement,  
but my family at home is not making any changes."*

*"Please listen to my concerns about my siblings that are still at home."*





**NATIONAL CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL  
CONFERENCE COMING TO WYOMING  
MAY 20-22, 2009**

The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel has been chosen to host the National Citizen Review Panel Conference in 2009.

Jackson Lake Lodge inside Grand Teton National Park provides an incredible setting for child welfare advocates from around the nation to gather and train. Jackson Lake Lodge is only a 30 minute scenic drive from the Jackson Hole Airport and features views that are majestic and breathtaking.

A complimentary, scheduled shuttle service to Jackson Hole will be offered to conference participants one evening and an island dinner cruise the next. Conference organizers felt that the fact lodge rooms do not offer television and phone services was a plus for having a meaningful gathering. Wi-Fi connections are available in the lodge lobby and conference rooms along with television in the lodge lobby. Cell phone coverage is consistent around the grounds and buildings.

Conference registration is \$100.00 and a special scholarship has been established by the National Citizen Review Panel to help waive or reduce those fees in certain instances.

**To reserve a room**, call the Grand Teton Lodge Company, specify the Jackson Lake Lodge; 2009 National Citizen Review Panel Conference at 1-800-628-9988. **To register for the conference**, visit [www.wycrp.org](http://www.wycrp.org).



## **Wyoming Citizen Review Panel**

SAFETY • PERMANENCY • WELL BEING

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