



Ending Child Abuse and Neglect.

CITIZEN CONNECTIONS

IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ National CRP Conference
- ▶ 2016 National CRP Conference
- ▶ Region 7 CRP Meeting
- ▶ National CRP Advisory Board Spotlight
- ▶ New Tip Sheet Published!
- ▶ Bright Idea
- ▶ State Profile: Alaska

National CRP Conference Attracts Most States Ever

The 14th Annual National Citizen Review Panel Conference was held May 18–20 in Portland, Oregon, attracting 30 states—the most ever. It was a delightful city and a terrific conference! Participants heard from Susan Dreyfus, the President and CEO of the Alliance for Strong Families, who emphasized, “We are ALL the child welfare system, and citizens play an integral role in helping child welfare agencies achieve better outcomes for kids and families.” Conference attendees also learned about:

- ▶ Increasing diversity on your Panels
- ▶ Evaluating CRPs through concept mapping
- ▶ Gathering information to support your CRP work
- ▶ Working toward permanency in interstate placements for youth and children

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.

.....

UNKNOWN



Continued from page 1

A highlight of the conference was a cruise down Willamette River. The CRP community also formally said goodbye to Howard Davidson, Executive Director of the ABA Center on Children and the Law, who is retiring after nearly 40 years heading this agency. His support for the Citizen Review Panels over the years has helped immeasurably, and he has been a fearless champion of children and those who serve them. Thank you, Howard, and don't be a stranger!

Thank you to Amy Church, Leola McKenzie, and all of the planning committee in Oregon for putting on an amazing conference.



Howard Davidson, center, at the 14th Annual CRP Conference, Portland, OR.

2016 NATIONAL CRP CONFERENCE

We are already beginning to plan the 2016 National Citizen Review Panel conference, which will be held on June 6–9, 2016, in Phoenix, Arizona. We would like every state to attend this year! If you have ideas about programming, please email conference coordinator Sandra Lescoe at Sandra.Lescoe@asu.edu.

Region 7 CRP Meeting

On June 17, CRP members and coordinators from the states of Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas met together in Kansas City to discuss their work and how they could connect. They heard a presentation by Blake Jones entitled, “What Makes Citizen Review Panels Successful? Research, Best Practices and Practical Advice,” and also looked at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to their Panels. One participant remarked, “It was so wonderful to connect with the other states in our region and share information with them.”

Citizen service is the very American idea that we meet our challenges not as isolated individuals but as members of a true community, with all of us working together. Our mission is nothing less than to spark a renewed sense of obligation, a new sense of duty, a new season of service...

.....
BILL CLINTON

Participants in the Region 7 meeting gather for a group portrait.



NATIONAL CRP ADVISORY BOARD SPOTLIGHT ON...

Rosie Gomez



Where were you born and what was your family like? Any interesting or unusual experiences?

I was born and raised in Farmington, New Mexico. I have a very large extended family, so my fondest memories were spending time with all my family. We had a farm about 30 miles from our house, so we would go there on weekends, and my brother and I would build forts, help my parents with the garden, and enjoy the outdoors.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? What brought you to DC?

I went to undergrad at Western New Mexico University, where I majored in Sociology and also played tennis and was an intercollegiate tennis association scholar-athlete. I attended Colorado State University for graduate school and received a Master of Science in Human Development and Family Studies. I worked in non-profits and city and county departments of human services before deciding to move to Washington, D.C. and address child welfare at the Federal level. I joined the Children's Bureau in 2007.

What is your job at the CB and what is your favorite part?

I am a Child Welfare Program Specialist. My portfolio includes work in prevention, human trafficking, and tribal programs. I am the Federal Project Officer for the *Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention* grant program, as well as other prevention efforts at the Children's Bureau. I am also the co-Federal Project Officer for the *Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population*, and am one of the leads for the technical assistance that is being provided to child welfare agencies as they implement the *Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014*. I like many parts of my job, but a very interesting part is being able to see the impact of programs at a national level, and the variety of ways that communities are working together to provide services and programs to support families. I also really enjoy site visits, and learning in person how Federal dollars are funding specific programs in a State.

What do you hope for the National CRP Community?

I hope that the National CRP community understands their important role as they influence, support, and advocate for children and families. I hope that they realize the impact and importance of their time and expertise when they meet and discuss their state's child protective services and how to improve the process of providing support to families and children. I read many of the CRP success stories, and am always amazed to hear about the creative and innovative ways that the CRP community is improving the role of child welfare.

To find out more about the National CRP Advisory Panel, please visit: <http://www.uky.edu/SocialWork/crp/crpadvisory.htm>.

New Tip Sheet Published!

Our first tip sheet has been published. Tip Sheet #1, "CAPTA Citizen Review Panels 101," developed by Blake Jones, discusses the history of CRPs as well as helpful hints and resources for making the panels more effective. The tip sheet may be downloaded at www.uky.edu/socialwork/crp. Look for upcoming tip sheets on:

- ▶ Member Recruitment and Retention
- ▶ Working Successfully with Child Welfare Agencies
- ▶ CRP Operating Procedures
- ▶ Writing the Annual Report

BRIGHT IDEA



Do something nice for the frontline child protection workers in your region or city. Write them a note of thanks, recognize them with an award, or write a letter to the editor in support of their difficult work. This will go a long way in breaking down defensiveness and building good will.

STATE PROFILE: ALASKA

Data-driven decision making

The Alaska CRP conducts annual site visits to its far flung Office of Children Services (OCS, Alaska's CPS system) regional and field offices. The Panel chooses three to five offices out of 26 offices across the state to review each year. Its choice is based on each office's performance on the annual assessment conducted by the OCS Quality Assurance (QA) unit.

The QA Assessment performed by the state uses the Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) template and generates a percentage score on each of the 23 items included. The CFSR classification system includes seven outcomes in three outcome areas: Safety ('S') in the graph below, two outcomes; Permanency ('P'), two outcomes, and Well Being ('WB'), three outcomes. To help choose the offices that merit a visit to examine the quality of service delivery in that regional or field office, the Panel compiled scores for each field office over the last several years. This involved obtaining QA assessment data, non-public information, from OCS. Following an intense process of trust building

over a period of two years, OCS now shares data on key indicators upon the Panel's request.

An example of its work is the Panel's visit to offices in the Southeast Region in January of 2015. The Southeast Region includes offices in Juneau, Ketchikan, Craig, Sitka, and Petersburg, serving 42 remote communities spread across 27,275 square miles, an area larger than West Virginia. None of the communities can be reached by road. All offices except Petersburg (last reviewed in August 2013) were also reviewed in 2014.

Below is a graph showing the reviews of all offices in the region in 2014. The Panel examined each office on all 23 items and picked Ketchikan and Sitka to visit. The final decision was based on a combination of the offices' performance on most recent QA reviews, the relative logistical ease and expense to conduct the visit, and the Panel's knowledge of any outstanding issues in any particular office that may need the Panel's attention.

The full report of the Panel's visit is available at: http://crpalaska.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/Alaska-CRP_SRO-Trip-Report_Jan-21-24-2015.pdf.

Data reviewed by the Alaska CRP to assist it in selecting sites to visit.

