



# CITIZEN CONNECTIONS

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### STATE UPDATES

## Alaska

The Alaska Citizen Review Panel is saying goodbye to longtime Panel Chair Diwakar Vadapalli, and wish he and his family well as they pursue new adventures. The new Panel Chair will be J.P. Ouellette, a specialist in mediation and conflict resolution. As the new chair, Mr. Ouellette attended the National Conference in Michigan along with two other panelists and the CRP Coordinator. The Alaska CRP will convene in August for their Annual Retreat, where they will confirm the panel’s 2018–2019 priorities, meet with stakeholders, and develop a work plan for the rest of the year.

## Georgia

Georgia’s three panels are the Child Protective Services Advisory Committee (CPSAC), Children’s Justice Act Task Force (CJATF), and Child Fatality Review Panel (CFRP). Each panel has 1–5 standing committees, each focused on a priority identified in their annual report, an ongoing panel priority or interest, or a specific objective related to its CAPTA mandate. This includes committees such as child fatality review training, mandated reporter training standards, worker safety, and CAPTA plan evaluation. Committees will meet over the summer months to develop plans for the remainder of the year. Their next meetings are scheduled for August.



Planning for the annual retreat in September is under way. In addition to presentations from representatives who attended the annual citizen review panel conference on Mackinac Island, each of Georgia's three panels will be responsible for facilitating a session at the retreat. One panel plans to invite a panel of foster parents to share their experience with child welfare investigations.

## Hawaii

A fantastic experience was had by Monica Ka'auwai, chair, and Crystal Chong Wong, panel member, attending the National CRP conference this year. Idea generating, relationship building, and locale appreciation. We are eager to share all with our Hawaii panel!

## Kentucky

Southern Bluegrass CRP:

- ▶ Narcan Training for community service providers
- ▶ Conversation on Collaboration—Substance Abuse: The impact on our community
- ▶ Pilot—Handle with Care in ALL of Fayette County Public Schools
- ▶ Recognized DCBS Service Workers in Southern Bluegrass Service Region

Jefferson CRP:

- ▶ Conducted survey regarding community resources available to those who are identified and/or reported to the DCBS for services but do not meet criteria for assistance or intervention
- ▶ Recognized DCBS Service Workers in Jefferson County Service Region
- ▶ Piloted Student CRP with University of Louisville students

Student CRP:

- ▶ Research project regarding the analysis of factors contributing to multiple foster care placements from the judicial lens

“I slept and I dreamed that life is all joy.  
I woke and I saw that life is all service. I  
served and I saw that service is joy.”

.....  
KAHLIL GIBRAN



Two Rivers:

- ▶ What Works in Child Welfare Conference: Hope and Healing
- ▶ Data collection and program implementation—human trafficking with a focus on children and adolescents in care
- ▶ Recognized DCBS Service Workers in Two Rivers Service Region

Eastern Mountain:

- ▶ New panel as of March 2018

## Minnesota

We are rolling along in Minnesota with all five county-based panels active and engaged in typical work and in learning about the Family First Prevention Services Act. Another upcoming change is that we will soon be receiving training on the new system Minnesota is

using for reviewing child deaths—the Collaborative Safety model from Tennessee. The panels will use the system philosophy when they review various parts of the child protection system in an effort to identify systematic issues that need improvement. This process uses advancements in system improvements in the medical and aeronautic fields as a model.

## Missouri

The Missouri Task Force on Children’s Justice sponsored a conference on June 21–22, 2018, in Jefferson City, Missouri. This was a first endeavor for the Task Force in regard to sponsoring a conference. The conference was called “Show Me a Helping Hand,” and it focused on the subject of male sexual abuse. The Task Force hopes to make this an annual event. The Child Fatality Review Board formed a subcommittee to review all child abuse and neglect-related deaths starting with calendar year 2014. The subcommittee completed the reviews for 2014 and will provide a report by the end of 2018.

## Nebraska

Nebraska is in the midst of reexamining several of its Citizen Review Panels, focusing on membership and how they can best serve the state. Currently, we are overhauling the membership of the Family CRP, shifting the focus from only stakeholders to include more family voices. The strategy is to have family members meet quarterly with stakeholders and organizational officials joining every other meeting. In addition, Nebraska is working to set up a new CRP focusing on youth voice in the juvenile justice system. This panel will examine probation and other juvenile justice programs for young people and provide feedback to the state agencies.

## Oregon

Each year, Oregon selects three counties to host a local CRP. A lot of time was spent this past year recruiting panel members. All panel meetings were held over dinner at local restaurants to enable those who work during the day to attend. All this effort paid off, as each panel ultimately included a current or former foster youth; a former DHS parent client; a foster parent; citizen

review board volunteers and staff; court appointed special advocates and staff; faith, business, and/or community leaders; a child welfare manager; a judge or court administrator; a district attorney or assistant attorney general; and a public defender who represents parents and children in dependency cases. If panel meetings were summed up into one word, it would be energizing!

Following a public forum event, each panel planned to meet just three times—once to select an area of focus and identify subject matter experts they wanted to hear from and research and data they wanted to collect; a second time to hear from the subject matter experts and review the research and data; and a third time to develop recommendations to improve child welfare policies and practices. With preparation, carefully planned meeting agendas, use of Liberating Structures techniques of Celebrity Interview and 1-2-3-All, traditional small group work, and lots of voting with sticker dots (except during the one meeting where panel members revolted and demanded to vote by raising their hands!), the panels successfully generated recommendations without additional meetings and very minimal work between meetings. Also, during the panels’ second meeting, they collectively interviewed 18 local and statewide subject matter experts. Summaries of the



“I’m starting to think this world is just a place for us to learn that we need each other more than we want to admit.”

.....  
RICHELLE E. GOODRICH, SMILE ANYWAY

meetings, interviews, and recommendations can be found in Oregon’s final CRP report for the 2017–2018 fiscal year at <https://www.courts.oregon.gov/programs/crb/news/captareports/2017-18CAPTAReport.pdf>.

In addition to the recommendations, there were a number of other positive outcomes of the panels. The meetings were an opportunity for people from all corners of the child welfare system to hear the same information about a selected topic. This resulted in panel members identifying how they could help individually. For example, a citizen review board member and a district attorney said they would speak to local churches about the need for foster parents, a judge said he would speak to jurors about the need, and a court appointed special advocate said she might be willing to coordinate a local foster parent association. Another positive outcome was simply the connections that were being made. There were multiple instances of panel members exchanging contact information to meet later about a particular subject. Lastly, panel meetings were, by design, opportunities for system professionals to hear directly from foster youth, former DHS parent clients, and foster parents. While these groups are affected most by child welfare policies and practices, there are few platforms for them to speak on systemic issues. The panels provided a platform.

Initial plans for the upcoming year are to continue the momentum that was built. The same three counties will be selected as panel sites, and smaller panels of six members will be established. These panels will select one recommendation from this past year and, over six meetings (one hour each), do some detailed research and planning work around it. We’re looking forward to the coming year!

## Tennessee

Tennessee CRPs have just wrapped up their FY 2018 activities and are finalizing their annual report. In late April, all four CRPs met in Jackson, Tennessee for their annual statewide meeting. Dr. Nancy Kelley, counseling and intervention supervisor for Collierville Schools in Shelby County and a CRP member, was the keynote speaker. Her presentation titled “Don’t Lose Your Stripes: Stress Management 101,” covered the following: (1) What is Stress; (2) Recognizing the Signs and Symptoms of Stress; and (3) Coping Strategies and Tips for Managing Stress. All CRP members and child welfare agency staff appeared engaged throughout her presentation and excited about the tips they receive for managing stress.

Also, at this meeting, the state child welfare agency commissioner and deputy commissioner updated the panels on the state’s efforts to address the growing substance abuse problem in Tennessee. For example, they shared information about the three drug abuse teams in East Tennessee and noted that their partnership with University of Tennessee Medical Center and East Tennessee Hospital was garnering some success.

The commissioner also reported that in June 2017, the state child welfare agency exited the Brian A. lawsuit filed in 2000 by Children’s Rights, a national organization that advocates on behalf of abused and neglected children. The lawsuit was brought on behalf of a class of all children in Tennessee’s foster care system.

Following the presentations and discussions, each of the panels’ chairs or designee updated the commissioner and deputy commissioner on their current work focus, successes, and challenges.

“One of the most important things you can do on this earth is to let people know they are not alone.”

.....  
SHANNON L. ALDER



## NATIONAL CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL CONFERENCE

More than 100 people made the trek to lovely Mackinac Island, Michigan for the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual National Citizen Review Panel Conference. The three days of the conference were filled with excellent information and speakers, including the following:

- ▶ Maximizing Panel Participation—The Oregon Experience
- ▶ Developing Best Practice Protocols for the MDT Response to Child Abuse Cases
- ▶ When Trauma Looks Like Bad Behavior—the Impact of Trauma on the Developing Brain and Understanding the Child Within
- ▶ Engaging Community Partners for Prevention Through Collaboration
- ▶ A Year in Ohio’s CRP Redesign: Beginning to End
- ▶ Exploring Member Perspectives on Participation on Citizen Review Panels: Findings from a National Study

Thank you to Nicole Dewitt and her team for an amazing experience! Next year’s conference will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



## ATTACHMENT BEHAVIORS IN CHILDREN WITH INCARCERATED FATHERS

The following article is from the [Children’s Bureau Express, June 2018 Vol. 19, No. 5](#).

A recent episode of the *Poverty Research and Policy Podcast* series, hosted by the Institute for Research on Poverty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, focuses on attachment behaviors in children with incarcerated fathers. The episode, “Attachment Behaviors in Children with Incarcerated Fathers,” features Julie Poehlmann-Tynan, professor of human ecology at the University of Wisconsin and author of the blog *Kids With Incarcerated Parents*.

The podcast features a study published by Dr. Poehlmann-Tynan and colleagues that describes children’s relationships with their caregivers, which are usually the parents or family members left at home while a parent is incarcerated. The researchers went to the children’s homes, spoke with the caregivers, and assessed the home environment. They also observed the children’s visits with their incarcerated fathers and applied their findings to the jail-prison observation checklist, which was developed by Dr. Poehlmann-Tynan to capture children’s attachment behaviors and emotions during visits.

Dr. Poehlmann-Tynan found that children showed heightened attachment behaviors with their caregivers during visits to the jail or prison (e.g., often wanting to hold hands or sit on the caregiver’s lap). She also found that during these visits, many of the caregivers exhibited positive behaviors that facilitated children’s connections with their incarcerated parents. Caregivers would say things such as, “Show daddy what you just learned how to read,” “Show daddy what song you just learned,” or “Why don’t you blow daddy a kiss?” However, there also were visits where the caregiver and the incarcerated parent argued in front of the child or the caregiver had no interest at all in the visit, which led to a more negative atmosphere.

The type of visit—face-to-face contact or noncontact—also affected the child’s behavior. Face-to-face contact visits often occurred in prisons, while noncontact visits, with the child on one side of a Plexiglas barrier and the incarcerated parent on the other side, were the most common in jails. Children were most likely to display negative behaviors, such as showing signs of distress or anger directed at the caregiver who brought them, during noncontact visits. Regardless of the visit type, most children reacted with happiness when they saw their parent, which emphasizes the importance of

maintaining a visiting schedule that helps keep the child connected to their incarcerated parent.

Dr. Poehlmann-Tynan also discusses how to help families stay connected to incarcerated individuals, especially when there are young children involved; and how caregivers' attitudes play a major role in facilitating jail or prison visits and making them a positive experience for the children of incarcerated parents. In addition to addressing visits, Dr. Poehlmann-Tynan noted that law enforcement should consider how they interact with the children of the individuals they arrest, as witnessing the arrest of a parent can have lasting negative effects. She suggests additional training for law enforcement on how to handle these sensitive situations.

A transcript of the podcast is available at <https://www.irp.wisc.edu/publications/media/podcasts/PC57-2017-August-Transcript.pdf> (145 KB).



Is your state's information up to date? Please visit the CRP web page at <https://cantasd.acf.hhs.gov/crp/> to verify.

## NATIONAL CRP ADVISORY BOARD UPDATE

Advisory Chair, Deb Farrell, and national Coordinator, Blake Jones, provided an update at the national conference in Michigan on advisory committee activities since the 2017 conference. The committee felt the first step was to clarify the role of the advisory committee and as a result, five primary objectives have been identified:

- ▶ To support and advocate for the CRP community
- ▶ To serve as a resource for the CRP community
- ▶ To encourage and support inter-panel relationships
- ▶ To encourage and support inter-panel exchange of information
- ▶ To provide guidance and oversight for the national conference

The next step will be to define what each of these objectives means, the resource needs and availability, the limitations of the advisory committee, etc. In order to do so, it was agreed that the advisory committee should be expanded to be more representative of the CRP community at large. An appeal was made to solicit attendees interested in either joining or contributing to the advisory committee to help with this effort. If you were not at the conference and would be interested in being considered for the advisory committee, please email Deb Farrell at [debfarrell@caresolutions.com](mailto:debfarrell@caresolutions.com).

