

**WESTERN CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL MEETING MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 6, 2015**

**Attendees:**

Ellen Kennedy, *Panel Chair*  
Danny Sklarski  
Sarlyn Tate  
Caterina Plotnicki (for Dennis Walczyk)

**OCFS Staff (for portions of the meeting):**

Joanne Ruppel (FAR presentation)

**WRI Staff:**

Lee Lounsbury, *Executive Director*

**Handouts:**

- Agenda
- Summary of CRP Annual Report Recommendations 2015
- Three Safe Sleep flyers (ABC's of Safe Sleep)
- CPS Differential Response System Powerpoint

The meeting was called to order by Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy.

**Agenda Item: Follow Up Discussion to Joint Panel Meeting and Recommendations**

There was a review of the recommendations that the three Panels decided to include in the Annual Report at the Joint Panel meeting in October, referring the handout that summarized these.

**Agenda Item: Updates from OCFS**

**Lisa Gordon, OCFS**

OCFS was not available to provide this update, but offered to provide it at a future date. Panel members have copies of three handouts of the ABC's of Safe Sleep in their handout packets.

**Agenda Item: OCFS' Recently Released FAR Data**

**Joanne Ruppel, OCFS**

Joanne Ruppel presented via webinar, and a hard copy handout of her Powerpoint, recently released data about Family Assessment Response (FAR) in New York State. Some of the key points included:

- The Family Led Assessment Guide (FLAG) used with FAR cases is now incorporated into CONNECTIONS.
- County CPS units are now allowed to do both traditional CPS investigations and FAR, and individual units can be divided as well.
- Several counties are now training all of their CPS caseworkers on the FAR principles.
- Some counties doing FAR are experiencing reduced rates of re-reporting, as well as reduced rates of first time reports.
- Nine counties have discontinued FAR, but some are considering re-starting it.
- New York City has committed to expanding FAR.

For all types of CPS reports/investigations, the data show:

- One-third of all families reported to the SCR are reported again in 12 months, and half are re-reported within two years. (This is all types of cases, not just FAR)
- 87% of CPS investigations find no imminent danger at 7 days, and 90% find no danger at 60 days.
- 70% of all investigations, statewide, are unfounded.

Regarding FAR cases:

- Almost half of FAR families have 2 or more needs for service.
- Three-quarters of CPS reports would be eligible for FAR.
- FAR families were less likely to have a subsequent report within 12 months.
- Families served by FAR report more positive feelings about their interaction with FAR than do families who receive a traditional CPS investigation.

**Agenda Item: Panel's Plans for 2016**

**Ellen & Panel**

The Panel discussed the Impact Assessment results for 2015, the recommendations for the Annual Report, and topics for discussion in 2016. Possible topics include:

- recommending a positive media campaign about child welfare caseworkers
- a press release about the Annual Report
- Using the media to help get the Panels' messages out
- Better understanding of solution-focused, trauma-informed casework approach
- More information about a public health approach to CPS

For the next Panel meeting in March, the Panel would like to hear more from Monroe County about their work with FAR and reducing disproportionality. WRI will extend this invitation.

The meeting was adjourned by Ellen Kennedy.