

**Western Citizen Review Panel**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**September 23, 2016**  
**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Attendees:**

*Panel Members:* Ellen T. Kennedy, Melissa A. Cavagnaro, Paula Mazur, MD,  
Stefan Perkowski, Danny Sklarski, Sarlyn Tate, Dennis Walczyk,  
Karl L. Wiggins

*Guests:* Judge Lisa Bloch Rodwin, Erie County Family Court  
Judge Sharon LoVallo, Erie County Family Court  
Steve Brown, Psy. D., Director Traumatic Stress Institute of Klingberg  
Family Centers  
Sarah Yanosy, Director of the Sanctuary Institute  
Lisa Gordon, OCFS  
Greg Owens, OCFS  
Caterina Plotnicki, Catholic Charities

*WRI Staff:* Judy Stanger, Program Specialist and CRP Coordinator  
Cindy Alois, Administrative Support Specialist

**Handouts:**

- Agenda
- OCFS: Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016: New York State's Position
- Engaging Parents, Developing Leaders: A Self-Assessment and Planning Tool for Nonprofits and Schools
- Traumatic Stress Institute: Risking Connection: A Transformative Whole System Intervention that Lasts, Risking Connection Trauma Training, TSI: Overview, Whole System Transformation to Trauma Informed Care
- Development and Psychometric Evaluation of the Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care (ARTIC) Scale
- Risking Connection Trauma Training: A Pathway Toward Trauma-Informed Care in Child Congregate Care Settings
- Trauma-Informed Care: Current State of the Field and Interventions to Change Whole Systems-of-Care
- 9/7/16 Summary of CRP Chairs' Meeting with NYS DOB
- Home Visiting Need: NYS Infographic
- 8/15/16 Home Visiting Advocacy Meeting Agenda
- 4/13/16 HEARTS Leaders Meeting Draft Agenda
- 8/25/16 Summary of CRP Chairs meeting with OCFS
- 6/9/16 Summary of National CRP Conference
- 6/9/16 Joint CRP Minutes

### **Agenda Item: Welcome and Introductions**

Ellen Kennedy opened the meeting and introductions took place.

### **Agenda Item: Erie County Family Court Presentation on Practices to Reduce DMR**

*Judge Bloch Rodwin and Judge LoVallo*

The Panel heard a presentation by Hon. Lisa Bloch Rodwin and Hon. Sharon LoVallo, judges in the Erie County Family Court, about practices to reduce disproportionate minority representation (DMR) in the Erie Family Court. They discussed implementation of practices throughout the Court to reduce disparities in the system, with particular emphasis on reducing disparities in removals of children of color from their homes. There is an Erie County Permanency for Children Collaborative, in which the Erie County Department of Social Services participates. The Collaborative is working to eliminate disparities and achieve equity for minority children, youth and families by doing the following:

- Promote Awareness that disparities and inequities exist for children;
- Encourage and facilitate community education about factors that create and perpetuate disparities and inequities for minority children; and
- Identify and advocate for the implementation of deliberate change in thought, practice and policy for minority children, youth and families.

The presentation concluded with a description of the changes implemented as a result of their work. They have worked to educate attorneys and court staff to become more aware of implicit bias through mandated training. They are working to recruit more attorneys of color to Family Court, however lower pay, compared with private law firms, is a barrier. There are two other Family Courts with Committees to reduce disproportionality, one in Westchester and the other in Queens.

The Panel offered to support this important work going forward. Judge Rodwin concluded her presentation encouraging Panel members to contact her with any questions.

### **Agenda Item: Building a Trauma Informed Child Welfare System**

*Steve Brown, Psy.D. and Sarah Yanosy*

Dr. Brown began his presentation by discussing the current state of the Trauma Informed Care (TIC) field. He presented a brief overview of the current field of TIC. The Trauma Stress Institute (TSI) assists in transforming whole systems into Trauma sensitive organizations. TSI Practice model is based on two pillars: 1) Risking Connection Trauma Training Model, and 2) Restorative Approach (for child congregate care). A whole-system change to TIC is an 18-24 month implementation process consisting of a number of steps, including engagement of leadership, development of a task force, trainings, coaching and evaluation.

Presently, TSI is working with 40 organizations and two provinces in Canada. Dr. Brown stated that TSI works in collaboration with Sarah Yanosy of the Sanctuary Institute, which serves the tri-state area. TSI takes the position that the signs of trauma existing within systems are very

similar to the signs of trauma present in individuals. The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) study provided the framework for the TIC movement. Current trends reflect an increased awareness in the TIC movement driven by ACE research and ACE-related intervention, cross sector awareness and implementation, and growth of community-wide and statewide efforts. Dr. Brown also addresses challenges within the TIC movement, including:

- TIC has become a buzzword
- Implementation and sustainability is difficult
- Defining measurable change
- Most TIC interventions not related to trauma
- Practice ahead of research

Ms. Yanosy stated that the Sanctuary Institute's model is also a system-wide TIC model. Sanctuary works with 350 organizations in seven countries. They work with 30 states in the US, including New York State where they work with 20 organizations. The implementation of the Sanctuary model is closer to a three-year implementation process, with a similar set of benchmarks, tracking, and program evaluation process.

Implementation of the Sanctuary model has been supported by OCFS in the following areas:

- Twenty voluntary agencies' residential programs: SI implementation occurred over three-year process.
- Juvenile Justice Programs: Implementation of thirty programs in OCFS' Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY).
- Intervention/TIC within public schools: This program took place in Mt. Vernon, Peekskill, Yonkers and New York City. TI assisted public schools in connecting with community partners.
- Working with Family Court Judges: Outreach programs were conducted in partnership with the Office of Court Administration.

Ms. Yanosy briefly addressed SI outcomes. For individuals served by the programs there is a decrease in length of stay along with improved coping abilities. For staff, there is a decreased turnover rate, a decreased rate of trauma, and improvement of client-to-staff relationships.

A Panel member asked if there were any examples of how child protective cases would be different if caseworkers received TIC training. Ms. Yanosy responded that there has been a lot of work in the area of preventive services, including development of a protocol for Home Visiting programs. Ms. Yanosy concluded her presentation stating that the overall goal is to give families the tools to model relationships that will make children safer in the home.

### **Agenda Item: OCFS Updates** *Lisa Gordon, Greg Owens*

The following updates were provided by OCFS in regard to the CRP's recommendations:

- Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) follow up: OCFS continues to work with a consultant, Public Catalyst, to assess why New York's performance on the CFSR federal measures in NY is so poor, and to identify counties that are achieving good outcomes in

particular areas to learn more about their successful strategies. This work is also being done in a few large counties.

- Trauma Informed Care: OCFS began incorporating TIC into all trainings in 2015. Ms. Gordon acknowledged that more needs to be done to incorporate content regarding caseworkers' self-care.
- Children of Incarcerated Parents: OCFS is currently more involved in this work.
- Child Fatality Reports: OCFS has hired and trained six new staff members tasked with reviewing Fatality reports and developing a more stream-lined approach, starting in November, 2016.
- Safe Sleep: Currently, OCFS has a pilot program in four hospitals located in Western New York. OCFS developed a packet containing Safe Sleep information for parents of newborns that includes a sleep sack, baby book on Safe Sleep, informational door hangers, and a Safe Sleep DVD. Nurses and social workers hand out the Safe Sleep packets to the new parents at the hospital. At this time, parents are also asked if they are willing to participate in a follow-up phone call six weeks later. Ms. Gordon reported that OCFS has had many requests for the Safe Sleep packets. Ms. Gordon also asked for the Panels' assistance in contacting any other hospitals or organizations that would be willing to participate in the Safe Sleep program.
- Abuse/Maltreatment of Foster Children: OCFS is working on closer monitoring of the licensing and oversight of foster homes.
- RFP Awards: Ms. Gordon concluded her presentation stating that OCFS recently announced awards from two Requests For Proposals (RFPs). One created four additional Healthy Families home visiting programs and the other established several Permanency Resource Centers to serve families created through adoption and kinship guardianship (KinGap).
- Training Revisions: OCFS continues to make major revisions to the child welfare training program. One goal is to offer training to all child welfare caseworkers and not just child protective services (CPS) caseworkers. The new training program will include on-the-job training, establishment of coaches in the field who will support caseworkers in their skills practice, and the development of pre/post assessments.

Mr. Owens provided the Panel with an update on OCFS' work to promote race equity. OCFS continues to work with a number of counties on specific initiatives to reduce disproportionality. Statewide work will be supported by the development of a new, web-based training component. There continues to be a focus on data analysis to assess progress.

#### **Agenda Item: WRI Updates**

*Judy Stanger, WRI*

- Summary of OCFS and DOB meetings with Panel Chairs: A meeting was held in August between Panel Chairs and the NYS Division of the Budget (DOB). Ms. Kennedy reported the Panel representatives discussed New York's very poor data outcomes on the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) measures and pointed DOB staff to the tables of CFSR data in the CRP 2015 Annual Report. DOB staff asked questions about trends in CFSR data over time and the underlying conditions behind New York's

poor outcomes, and Panel representatives reviewed the one page agenda detailing the Home Visiting data and funding request.

- Home visiting agenda: Ms. Stanger continues to attend the home visiting workgroup convened by the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA). She pointed panel members to a handout of the agenda for a recent workgroup meeting.
- National CRP Conference: Over the summer, Ms. Stanger attended the national citizen review panels' annual conference. She directed panel members to the handout for further information about the conference.

**Agenda Item: Discussion of 2016 Recommendations**

*Ellen Kennedy*

A discussion took place about the recommendations to include in the joint Panels' 2016 Annual Report. Recommendations made in the 2015 report, and OCFS' response, were discussed. Members also discussed holding a Press Conference once the 2016 report is released to focus on the recommendations that have an impact on the western region.

The meeting was adjourned.