

Montgomery County Citizens Review Panel (MCCRP)

November 9, 2021 Meeting

Minutes

Persons Present:

Wilma Brier	Angela English, CYFS Liaison
Laura Brown, Technical Advisor	Kay Farley, CRBC Representative
Laura Coyle	Marci McCoy-Roth, 2020-2021 Chair
Katy Dunn	

Welcome

Ms. Marci McCoy-Roth called the meeting to order.

Review and Approval of the Minutes

The draft minutes of the October 12, 2021 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. Ms. Wilma Brier made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Laura Coyle seconded the motion, which was approved.

Agency Report

Ms. Angela English reviewed the agency's data for September 2021 from the Supervisor's Briefing – Data Update report.

Data Element	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct- 21
Assessment					
Number of calls to screening unit	834	837	705	1031	
Reports of Child Maltreatment	499	434	388	620	
Number of New Alternative Response (AR) Investigations	85	69	61	78	
Number of New Investigation Response (IR) Investigations	74	62	56	82	
New Non-CPS	76	75	59	95	
In-Home					
Number of Families Receiving In-Home Services	83	80	77	86	
Out of Home					
Number of new out of home placements (entries)	6	16	16	5	
Total children who left care (exits)	14	14	13	32	
Total out-of-home children in care at month's end	377	379	382	355	
Number of children in foster care	240	237	238	224	
Number of children placed with relatives	82	84	84	76	
Number of Voluntary Placement Agreements @ EOM	2	3	2	1	
Number of Voluntary Placement Agreement Requests	8	2	5	6	
Number of Resource Homes	186	184	182	181	
Average length of stay for children in foster care (months)		33.5	33.5	31	

The numbers for calls to the screening unit and reports of maltreatment jumped significantly between August 2021 and September 2021. The increase relates to children returning to in-person classrooms. Schools historically have been the biggest reporters of potential abuse and neglect. The number of in-

home services cases has also increased. When safe for the children, social workers are working to provide needed services to the families without removing the children from the home. The increase on number of children that left care in September includes all of the aged-out youth that remained in care beyond their 21st birthday due to the COVID pandemic.

Availability of mental health services remains an issue. The agency is seeing more children in need of mental health services at a time when not enough services are available.

The agency expects to see a drop in resource homes in the coming months. As reported at the last meeting, Montgomery County implemented a new state policy, which mandates that foster parents be vaccinated against the flu, tuberculosis, and mumps, measles, and rubella (MMR). Five resource homes were closed last week as the foster parents were not willing to comply with the new policy.

The Panel discussed the data elements included in the Supervisor's Briefing – Data Update report and made suggestions for additional information that would provide a more complete picture.

Action Item: Ms. English will inquire about the following on behalf of the Panel.

- **As the number of out of home placements is counted by child and the number of in-home services is counted by family, it is difficult to get a sense of the total number of children being served. Ms. English will inquire whether the number of in-home services can also be counted by child.**
- **It is also difficult to get a sense for where all of the children in out of home placement are placed. Ms. English will inquire whether data can also be provided on the number of children in residential treatment centers and hospital care and in informal kinship placements.**

There has been some progress in filling staff vacancies. There are six people on the Social Worker III list and four people on the Social Worker I/ Social Worker II list. The agency is setting up interviews. The agency is also considering the possibility of hiring bachelor level social workers.

Regarding the Center for Excellence (CFE) project mentioned at the last meeting to improve family engagement involving both biological parents and the foster parents, the agency has completed the first training session for biological parents and foster parents. Two more training sessions are scheduled.

LGBTQ Subcommittee

Ms. Katy Dunn, Ms. Stacey McNealy, and Ms. Coyle are on this subcommittee and provided a written report. Ms. Dunn reported on behalf of the subcommittee. The subcommittee has reviewed the agency's responses to the questions submitted to the agency by the Panel regarding the agency's handling of LGBTQ youth. They have also identified themes, issues needing additional clarification, and potential gaps between policy and practice.

Next Steps: The subcommittee will continue gathering information and begin work on a draft white paper.

Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee

Ms. Laura Brown and Ms. Brier are on this subcommittee and provided an updated draft of the proposed survey for resource homes. Ms. Brown reported for the subcommittee. There was some question as to whether the survey was too long. Before making further edits, there was consensus to seek input from the President of the Montgomery County Foster Parent Association, who had previously expressed interest in collaborating on a survey and assisting with circulating a survey to his membership.

Next Steps: Ms. Brown will provide an introductory paragraph that explains the intent of the survey and how the information provided in the responses will be used. Ms. Dunn will then share the draft survey with Mr. Chris Plummer, President of the Montgomery County Foster Parent Association, for his input on the length of the survey and content.

MCCRP Interview Panel

Ms. McCoy-Roth thanked Ms. Brier, Ms. Coyne, and Ms. Kay Farley for volunteering to assist with the interviews. Ms. Lisa Merkin is inquiring on the number of applications received.

Citizens Review Panel Priority Statement to County Council

Ms. McCoy-Roth thanked Ms. Brier for agreeing to present the Panel's Priority Statement to the Montgomery County Council on November 17, 2021.

December Event for Agency Staff

There was consensus to move the event to January 2022 when there are likely to be fewer scheduling conflicts given the holidays. Ms. Coyne will follow-up to explore the possibility of a speaker from the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

The meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: December 14, 2021