

Montgomery County Citizens Review Panel (MCCRP)

December 14, 2021 Meeting

Minutes

Persons Present:

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

Welcome

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

Review and Approval of the Minutes

The draft minutes of the November 9, 2021 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. Ms. Wilma Brier made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Laura Brown seconded the motion, which was approved.

County Council Presentation Update

Ms. McCoy-Roth thanked Ms. Brier for making the presentation on behalf of the MCCRP. A Council member commented that he was glad that the MCCRP is looking at the handling of cases involving youth that have identified themselves as LGBTQ. Interest was expressed that the MCCRP examine recruitment for agency staff along with recruitment of resource homes. A question was asked regarding whether foster parents have enough resources.

Agency Report

Ms. Angela English reviewed the agency's data for October 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	1364
Reports of Child Maltreatment	499	434	388	620	696
Number of New Alternative Response (AR) Investigations	85	69	61	78	95
Number of New Investigation Response (IR) Investigations	74	62	56	82	89
New Non-CPS	76	75	59	95	75
In-Home					
Number of Families Receiving In-Home Services	83	80	77	86	87
Out of Home					
Number of new out of home placements (entries)	6	16	16	5	3
Total children who left care (exits)	14	14	13	32	9
Total out-of-home children in care at month's end	377	379	382	355	349
Number of children in foster care	240	237	238	224	215
Number of children placed with relatives	82	84	84	76	76
Number of Voluntary Placement Agreements @ EOM	2	3	2	1	2

Number of Voluntary Placement Agreement Requests	8	2	5	6	6
Number of Resource Homes	186	184	182	181	179
Average length of stay for children in foster care (months)		33.5	33.5	31	32

The numbers for calls to the screening unit and reports of maltreatment jumped significantly again in October 2021. The increase relates to children returning to in-person classrooms reports from hospitals regarding children in need of mental health services. As reported previously, there is a shortage of mental health services in the county. There is a 3 to 4 month wait for mental health diagnostic services. This relates to the state closing facilities that are not providing evidence-based services and lack of professional staff at the facilities.

Two resource homes closed in October. Some of the recent home closures relates to foster parents not being willing to get the required flu shots. Adoption day was held on November 20, 2021. Some of the adoptions were foster parents adopting the children in their care. It is expected that the November data will show additional closures as these families are now complete.

Looking at voluntary placements there are a lot more requests than placements. There are two factors that explain the differences. Parents that sign voluntary placement agreements are required to pay child support. Upon learning of this requirement, some parents decide not to pursue the voluntary placement. The other issue relates to backlog in obtaining mental health diagnostic services. Voluntary placements can't be made until the mental health diagnosis is completed.

Regarding resource families, the agency will be adding additional staff resources to the unit that handles recruitment. The agency is having some trouble placing older youth because of behavioral issues.

Action Item: Ms. McCoy-Roth will contact Foster Club regarding the possibility of training for foster parents on dealing with older youth.

Panel Speaker for Staff

Ms. McCoy-Roth thanked Ms. Laura Coyne for arranging for Dr. Aaron Bryant, Curator of Photography, Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, to be the speaker in January. Ms. Coyne has introduced Dr. Bryant to Ms. English identify a date for the presentation and finalize the program content.

LGBTQ Subcommittee

The subcommittee is continuing to gather information and work on a draft white paper. Ms. Katie Dunn is developing an outline for the white paper and will share it with the rest of the subcommittee for comment.

Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee

Ms. Dunn shared 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. He conveyed his support for the draft and suggested a few changes.

- Under question 10, he suggested asking if the foster parent had ever reported concerns about the biological parent to the agency and how the agency responded.
- For question 15, he suggested adding job titles.
- Under question #17, he suggested adding a question regarding whether the childcare provider receives timely reimbursements.

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. The subcommittee will complete a final edit of the survey. The final survey will be sent to Mr. Chris Plummer, President of the Montgomery County Foster Parent Association, for distribution to his membership in early 2022.

Ms. Coyne suggested that at a later time that the MCCRCP might want to look at whether adequate resources are provided for all age levels.

MCCRCP Interview Panel

Ms. Brier and Ms. Kay Farley participated with agency staff in the interviews of 2 candidates. Both candidates were recommended for approval. Ms. Lisa Merkin will forward the recommendations to the County to complete the appointment process.

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.

The meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: January 11, 2022