

**Montgomery County Citizens Review Panel (MCCRP)**

**December 12, 2023 Meeting**

**Minutes**

**Members Present:**

Tinuade Akinshola

Laura Brown, Technical Advisor

Laura Coyle

Stacey McNeely

Lisa Merkin, CYFS Liaison

Ronald Whalen

Ms. Stacey McNeely called the meeting to order.

**Review and Approval of the Minutes**

The draft minutes of the November 14, 2023, meeting was distributed prior to the meeting. Ms. Tinuade Akinshola made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Laura Brown seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

**Agency Update**

Ms. Merkin reviewed the agency's data for November 2023.

Tinu asked about the decrease in recruitment numbers. Lisa indicated that as anticipated, there has been a slight decrease in the number of calls to the screening unit and reports of maltreatment because of the Thanksgiving holiday. When school is not in session, calls and reports generally decrease. A small change, for example, a decrease in the number of recruitment inquiries is no cause for concern. The biggest struggle now is beds for teenage girls coming out of their programs soon.

FY24 Data Review						
Data Element: Screening & Assessment	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Total
Number of Calls to Screening Unit	546	698	950	1,194	1,032	4,420
Reports of Child Maltreatment (Referrals)	438	473	678	790	731	3,110
Number of New Alternative Response (AR) cases	45	44	72	75	89	325
Number of New Investigation Response (IR) cases	49	50	61	83	65	308
New Non-CPS Cases	63	66	63	81	75	348
Number of Completed IR CPS investigation Findings- Allegation Indicated	50	37	32	44	44	207
Number of Completed IR CPS Investigation Findings - Allegation Unsubstantiated	28	18	20	31	20	117
Number of Completed IR CPS Investigation Findings - Allegation Ruled Out	41	23	16	30	50	160
Data Element: Foster Care Entries & Exits	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Total
Number of OOH care entries	6	7	9	7	6	35
Total children who exited OOH care	-12	-4	-12	-13	-14	-55
Total children in OOH care at month's end	331	334	331	325	317	328
Data Element: Out of Home	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Avg / month
Number of children in foster care	214	210	214	209	208	211
Number of children placed with relatives	70	71	69	68	60	68
Number of children in residential placement	47	53	48	48	49	49
Average (mean) length of stay for children in foster care (months)	33	34	34	34	34	34
Median length of stay for children in foster care (months)	27	27	26	27	28	27
Data Element: Resource Homes	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Total
Number of Licensed Regular Foster Homes (does not include Restricted/Relative Homes)	126	125	125	124	122	124
Number of Newly Assigned Regular Home Studies	4	1	0	0	1	1
Number of Recruitment Inquiries	37	32	54	34	33	190

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## MCCRP Committee

### County Health and Human Services Committee Meeting

Ms. McNeely asked if we had received a request for answers to the questions at the meeting. Ms. Lisa Merkin said not yet, it might be a while.

Ms. McNeely said that she listened to the recording and has a list of questions, and she read them to the panel. Ms. Coyle asked if Stacey would send the questions to her to embed in this agenda for the record; the questions are:

Dawn Luedtke, Lead for Crisis Response

- What percentage of the foster children in Montgomery County end up being reunited with their families?
- Time of stay for children within the foster system.
- Age of children within the foster system?

Laurie-Anne Sayles, Lead for Disparities in Public Health

- What is the current model of compensation for foster parents?
- How are we determining if the compensation is being used for the children in care?
- What feedback are we getting from the foster children?
- Do we know how many foster parents we are losing that have gone through a difficult reunification process?
- How many foster parents do we currently have?

Mr. Whalen asked about whether feedback is collected from foster children and former foster children. Ms. Merkin replied that they are always invited to provide feedback and that participants in the program are encouraged to join the Youth Advisory Panels because their lived experience is valuable. Ms. Merkin wants staff to conduct a longitudinal study of children going out of care for three years after they are out of care and lose the supports they had under care.

The committee also discussed the idea of asking the Council to submit their questions in advance of the meeting so that the committee could be more prepared.

#### Resource Home Recruitment and Retention Sub-Panels

##### *Helping Resource Families to Deal with Grief and Loss at Reunification Subpanel*

Ms. Coyle had no update for the subpanel.

Ms. Merkin advised that the agency had two meetings on this topic with that were helpful, and she will provide details to Ms. Coyle for her resources spreadsheet.

##### *Targeting Untapped Communities and Strategies for Emergency Placement Homes Subpanel*

Ms. Laura Brown reported for the subpanel. She noted that most people she shared information with wanted to post about a specific event or want to hear more directly from Lisa's department. Ms. Akinshola asked whether a staff member could be present if they met with groups. Ms. Merkin said she would be happy to pass along any requests like this to the recruiters, who can follow up.

#### Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on January 9, 2024.

The meeting adjourned.