

STATE RESPONSE TO IOWA'S CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS
SECTION 106(c)(6)

Following is the State's response to the recommendations of the Child Protection Council State Citizen Review Panel, the Cerro Gordo County Family Violence Response Team and the Northwest Iowa Citizen Review Panel.

Child Protection Council Citizen Review Panel (CPC)
Recommendations

The Iowa Child Protection Council Citizen Review Panel offered three recommendations in their 2017 Annual Report. The recommendations involved Mandatory Reporter Training, the IDHS Centralized Intake Unit and Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs). The recommendations and the State's response are highlighted below:

CPC Recommendation:

The Council is recommending that IDHS develop and maintain an online Mandatory Reporter Training curriculum for child and dependent adult abuse. Under this recommendation, IDHS would be responsible for the oversight and maintenance of the curriculum to ensure that the content is current and that a certain level of understanding is attained and recorded.

State Response:

IDHS is aware of the concern regarding Mandatory Reporter Training in Iowa and is moving forward with this recommendation. Approval for this project has been secured from the IDHS Administration.

IDHS plans to contract with a child welfare partner to host an online Mandatory Reporter Training curriculum for child and dependent adult abuse. The oversight and maintenance of an online curriculum will help to ensure that it is current with Iowa Code, Iowa Administrative Rules and IDHS policies and practices. The course will include Pre- and Post-training tests which will require an appropriate level of skill needed to identify and report child and dependent adult abuse and neglect. Certificates of completion will be offered to participants upon successfully completing the course. The training which will be offered at no cost will be made available to IDHS workers and external stakeholders and partners, including childcare providers across the state.

CPC Recommendation:

The Child Protection Council is recommending that the IDHS Centralized Intake Unit (CSIU) be expanded to a 24/7 Call Center that is fully staffed with a designated number of IDHS intake workers and supervisors.

State Response:

Recently, Legislation has been passed that eliminates many of the previous restrictions under Collective Bargaining in Iowa. One effect of this change is that it would

potentially allow for extended hours in regard to the operation of the IDHS Centralized Intake Unit. IDHS is aware of this new development and will consider all options when reviewing the structure and operating needs of the CSIU.

CPC Recommendation:

The Council recommends that IDHS appoint a MDT lead in each of the Service Areas to serve as a designated point of contact regarding IDHS MDTs.

State Response:

IDHS recognizes the critical role that MDTs play in the child welfare system. Most recently, in an effort to support local MDTs, the IDHS required that the Memorandums of Understandings (MOUs) with Iowa's Child Advocacy Centers include Interagency Agreements. Each of the Child Advocacy Centers were required to sign Interagency Agreements for each county in the Service Area that they cover. Additional efforts by IDHS included support for a statewide review of MDTs that was conducted in 2014. As a result of this study, IDHS has since implemented several of the recommendations that came out of this review.

In response to the recommendation that an MDT lead be assigned in each of the IDHS Service Areas, it should be noted that while not mandated, each Service Area has been encouraged to consider this as it is best practice. This was originally presented as such, due to the differing needs and practices within each Service Area and their local communities. IDHS will continue to encourage Service Areas to consider this option as they move forward in supporting and promoting the use their local MDTs.

North Iowa Domestic & Sexual Abuse Community Coalition Recommendations

The **North Iowa Domestic & Sexual Abuse Community Coalition; Cerro Gordo County Family Violence Response Team** has presented four recommendations in regards to the State's policy and practices in the handling of child abuse cases involving domestic violence. Several of the recommendations are targeted toward local coordination efforts while others are relevant to a statewide review of IDHS policy and practice.

Recommendations:

- Enhance training on best practices related to the intersection of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse.
- Resume quarterly case reviews.
- Increase individual case consultations.
- Expand panel membership

State Response:

The State continues to work towards enhancing the skills necessary for child welfare workers to successfully partner with families facing domestic violence. In response to the high rate of co-occurrence between domestic violence and child maltreatment, the IDHS began in 2011 to utilize CAPTA funds to contract for a fulltime Domestic Violence Response Coordinator. Duties under this position include providing individual case consultation services for IDHS field workers, multidisciplinary teams and Citizen Review Panels across the state that are reviewing child abuse cases involving domestic violence. This subject matter expert is also available to assist local communities in their collaboration efforts between local Child Protection Workers and DV service providers and other disciplines. IDHS continues to encourage staff to utilize this individual as a resource in child abuse cases involving domestic violence.

In addition to case consultation services, the Domestic Violence Response Coordinator assists in the development, enhancement and facilitation of the current domestic violence training for IDHS. Recent DV trainings have included the Safe and Together Model of practice in child welfare. The Safe and Together Model of practice speaks to the intersection of child abuse and domestic violence. Other domestic violence trainings include an introductory course SP 301 Impact of Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse and an advanced course entitled SP 548 Advanced Domestic Violence with Safety Planning. In 2016 each of these courses were reviewed and updated by the Domestic Violence Response Coordinator to reflect current DV research. A new course on the issues of domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health disorders in child abuse cases is also available. In each of these DV training courses sexual assault is addressed within the DV spectrum or scale of violence. The issue of power and control and how that plays out in a sexual assault is described and discussed in the courses. .

In response for an increase in quarterly case reviews and individual case consultations within the local Service Area, IDHS notes its investment in and continued support for cases consultations as well as, the use of local MDTs to review complex child abuse cases. IDHS recognizes that case reviews and consultations play vital roles within the child welfare process as they serve to increase accountability across the system and serve as an evaluation tool regarding child welfare practices. Going forward, Service Areas will see an increase in each of these activities as they will be part of Iowa's CFSR statewide review process which will begin in 2018. In addition, this Citizen Review Panel has been asked to participate in Iowa's upcoming CJA Three Year Assessment which is also scheduled for 2018.

It should also be noted that the State's Citizen Review Panel Coordinator continues to be a resource to the Cerro Gordo County Family Violence Response Team and other MDTs across Iowa as it applies to best practices regarding case reviews and in the engagement and recruitment of new panel members. Other supports include the MDT forms that are available. IDHS recently updated the existing MDT forms and developed new ones where needed to better support and provide direction to Iowa's MDTs.

In March of 2017 the Mason City satellite Child Advocacy Center (CAC) that the Cerro Gordo County Family Violence Response Team had been advocating for was opened. In addition to other funding, seed money for startup costs were provided through the Children's Justice Act Grant with the support of IDHS. The opening of this center fills a critical need for a CAC in North Central Iowa for those children and families who are experiencing severe trauma. Initial data supports the need for a CAC in this area of the state.

As discussed, in an earlier portion of the State CAPTA report, the IDHS utilized CAPTA funds to contract for a fulltime Domestic Violence Liaison. This individual has been working to provide case consultation services and to update and enhance training for IDHS Social Workers in the area of domestic violence, as noted in that section.

Enhancements to training include a carefully planned rollout of the "Safe & Together" model by David Mandel & Associates, LLC. The model is a perpetrator pattern based, child centered, survivor strengths approach to working with domestic violence. The CRP coordinator was invited to attend the initial IDHS leadership kickoff event, to introduce key stakeholders and administrators to the model, on June 24, 2015.

In addition, the State's CRP Coordinator will continue to act as a resource to the Cerro Gordo County Family Violence Response Team as applies to best practices regarding case review.

Northwest Iowa Citizen Review Panel Recommendations

The **Northwest Iowa Citizen Review Panel** has made several recommendations to their local county office related to efforts to reduce disproportionate representation of Native children and families in the child welfare system.

Recommendations:

1. Increase Native American foster families by 3 to a total of 10 by utilizing the Native Families for Native Children (NF4NC) grant:
 - Continuing collaboration the DHS Native unit and Iowa Kids Net recruitment efforts and the formation of a support group for Native American foster parents
 - Continuing to work with the NF4NC grant for recruitment and retaining native American Foster Homes.
 - Working with BCU and NF4NC promoting Native American Foster Care classes (TIPS-MAPP).
2. Increase enrollment in “Securing Your Parental Rights” class to 30 for Fiscal year:
 - Promoting the 2-day classes in the Native community
 - Working with the University of Iowa and BCU creating to provide parent curriculums and training
3. Continue to promote Four Directions to be the Center for much needed services for the Native American Community by:
 - Continuing to be a forerunner in the Native community.
 - Working collaboratively with the Winnebago Tribe and Indian Health Services to support Four Direction and offer health care locally.
 - Continue active participation on the Vagrancy committees
 - Holding monthly CINCF Meetings
4. Increase the referral of parents to Fatherhood is Sacred and Motherhood Is Sacred classes that are being offered weekly.
5. Increase the awareness of the newly developed Care Coordinator position stationed at the Four Directions Community Center.
 - Coordinate needed services to families that are not involved with the Iowa Department of Human Services and are not on Title IX. Examples of services would include assisting in locating employment, referring to alcohol and drug assessments, assisting Natives getting to and from the Winnebago IHS, etc.

State Response:

The local IDHS continues to participate in the activities recommended above. Local IDHS staff are part of the Native recruitment team and have been involved with Briar Cliff and other Sioux land agencies, including Iowa Kids Net, on the NF4NC (*Native Families for Native Children*) grant. At both the state and local levels, IDHS is involved with the Native PSMAPP (*Partnering for Safety and Permanence: Model Approaches to Partnership in Parenting*) classes through Briar Cliff. IDHS also continues to be part of

the team under the NF4NC grant along with the State of Nebraska, Winnebago Tribe, Ponca Tribe, Omaha Tribe and the Santee Sioux Tribe. To date, Woodbury County has 7 active Native Foster Parents which is an increase of two over last year.

In addition to the activities cited above, the IDHS is also active in planning for the Memorial March to Honor Lost Children. This march is held each year in November to honor those children lost in the child welfare system. This is an educational event that has now evolved into a two day cultural training at Briar Cliff University.

The local IDHS actively promotes and refers the Native parenting classes to all families involved in child welfare services. IDHS provides significant funding for the classes and serves as the primary referral source, in constant collaboration with Four Directions and Briar Cliff University. IDHS also funded a Native American Social Worker to become trained as a facilitator of the *Motherhood is Sacred* program which is now available to families. IDHS has also provided funding (including in-kind support) and made referrals to a successful youth program – *Native Youth Standing Strong*.

Woodbury County continues to offer *Motherhood Is Sacred* Classes through a contract with Chiara Cournoyer. Classes average 6-8 participants per session which is offered throughout the year. Woodbury County also sent Roland Warner, Native Liaison, to be trained as a Facilitator for *Fatherhood Is Sacred*. The *Fatherhood Is Sacred* class is averaging about 5 participants per class.

Lutheran Social Services (LSS) was recently awarded the IDHS Recruitment and Retention contract. Under the new contract, LSS will continue their efforts in providing services in this area and remain a partner in the Diligent Recruitment Grant for Native Americans.

The local IDHS has financially, to the extent that funding is available, supported Four Directions as a center for services for Native adults and children. The Service Area Manager continues to participate in discussions around the funding for local programs and the need for adequate and safe housing. IDHS will also continue to financially support a class at Four Directions, titled "*Securing Your Parental Rights*."

Going forward IDHS will continue to collaborate with the Native Community and support their efforts in providing the services needed in Woodbury County. IDHS also recognizes the need for good communication between the Native American Community and IDHS. IDHS welcomes feedback from the Native Community on how IDHS can better serve the Native population within the child welfare system and will continue to share updates related to funding and program changes.