



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY 2019 Arizona Citizen Review Panel Report Agency Response to Recommendations

The Arizona Department of Child Safety (the Department or DCS) is pleased to receive and respond to the recommendations made by the Arizona Citizen Review Panels (CRP) in the Annual Reports for 2019.

The Department views citizen participation as a key element to achieving its mission to successfully engage children and families to ensure safety, strengthen families, and achieve permanency, and to its vision that children thrive in family environments free from abuse and neglect. Citizen engagement to receive a fresh perspective is vital to the success of the DCS strategic plan.

The Department is committed to the strategic goals and initiatives outlined in the DCS SFY 2020 Strategic Plan:

1. Improve timeliness of permanency
2. Increase the placement of children in a family-like setting
3. Improve employee retention through improved supervision
4. Develop and implement the agency IT infrastructure
5. Implement an integrated health plan

We thank each member of the Citizen Review Panels for their commitment and continued partnership.

The Department's responses to each panel's next actions are as follows:

Outcome Based Collaboration for Youth in Care

Next Action 1: Develop a survey to assist in the analysis of coordination of care and communication. The questions on the survey address communication and coordination within provider and government agencies, and other organizations that providers interact with when supporting a youth.

DCS Response: The Department supports this action and looks forward to the results of the survey.

Next Action 2: The CRP will continue to review how to impact inconsistent knowledge among youth-serving team members about Adverse Childhood Experiences for youth in foster care.

DCS Response: The Department supports this action and will collaborate with the CRP to continue this review.

Next Action 3: The CRP will inquire into facilitation procedures to identify those that are most productive and support consistent attendance at meetings. Further analysis is needed to determine the preparation of DCS Specialists for a CFT, along with their coordination between the RBHA and service providers. Additionally, the CRP will seek to determine youth satisfaction with the CFT process.

DCS Response: The Department supports this action and will collaborate with the CRP to support this analysis.

Successful Transition: Plans for Children Aging out of Foster Care

Next Action 1: The CRP will explore the current availability of birth-family counseling and behavioral health and other services offered during the reunification process involving a youth and birth parent, and/or members of the family of origin. In the next year, the CRP members will:

- review policies and practices on preparing youth between ages fourteen and eighteen for successful transition to adulthood;
- meet with the DCS Educational Specialist;
- review data on high school graduation and GED rates among young people age eighteen to twenty-one who remain in Extended Foster Care;
- review actions taken to address the identified characteristics of a successful transition; and
- identify one action to be taken for each of the characteristics of a successful transition.

DCS Response: The Department agrees with this next action and will collaborate with the CRP to support the review.

The Arizona DCS Community Advisory Committee Panel

The DCS Community Advisory Committee produces an annual report in August, after the end of each state fiscal year. The annual report is made available to the public on the Department's website at: <https://dcs.az.gov/about/oversight>.

The focus of the Committee for FY 2019 was on advising DCS in the area of child well-being. The Committee was presented information on the Department's FY 2019 Strategic Plan and continued to identify ways in which the Committee can support and advise the Department in regard to the strategic plan by gathering and presenting

information from each of the represented sectors. Based on the Department's presentation the Committee made the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1: The committee members help to inform the public and each member's represented sector regarding the Ombudsman's role and how a member of the public could access each of the Ombudsman Offices.

DCS Response: This Department is in agreement with this recommendation.

Recommendation 2: That the Committee provide information through the RFI, receive updates throughout the process and make recommendations from the sector each member represents.

DCS Response: The Department agrees with the recommendation and will provide information and updates throughout the integration process.

Recommendation 3: That the Committee assist with input and feedback into service needs and best-practices in regard to evidence-based services in Child Welfare.

DCS Response: The Department agrees with the recommendation and looks forward to collaborating with the Committee.