

Maui Citizens Review Panel
c/o Debbi Amaral, Member
99 Mahalani Street
Wailuku, HI 96793

July 26, 2010

Amy Tsark, Acting Division Administrator
Dept. of Human Services
Social Services Division
Child Welfare Services
810 Richards St., Suite 400
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Ms. Tsark,

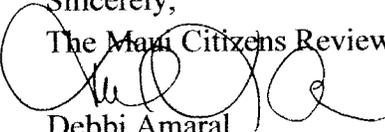
The Maui Citizens Review Panel (CRP) respectfully submits the Annual Report for period of July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009.

The report recaps several highlights throughout the year of review. As a panel, members are in agreement that the year presented challenges that impacted several factors which are detailed within the report. The CRP is currently working collaboratively with various support systems to implement effective practices in accordance with CAPTA requirements.

The Maui CRP remains optimistic that efforts will continue to improve as a result of local, state, and national support. We remain committed to our task as CRP members and will collaboratively work towards successful outcomes.

Sincerely,

The Maui Citizens Review Panel


Debbi Amaral

Member

Attachment (1)

MAUI CITIZENS REVIEW PANEL

ANNUAL REPORT July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

I. Introduction

This is the 6th Annual Report of the Maui Citizens' Review Panel, now in its 8th year of existence serving the tri-isle county of Lana`i, Moloka`i and Maui. The Maui Citizens Review Panel (CRP) has met monthly since its inception and has not had fewer than 8 active members during its tenure.

The issues and recommendations contained in this report relate to the Child Welfare system, its policies and the ability of Child Welfare Services (CWS) to implement them.

II. Executive Summary

The Maui CRP continues to fulfill its Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) required responsibilities by evaluating the extent to which the sections and state discharged its duties to protect children from abuse and neglect.

As noted in previous Annual Reports, being the only CRP in the state, the Maui CRP is handicapped in our ability to impact statewide policies and procedures. We've frequently advocated with DHS-CWS administration to create at least 2 other CRPs. Not only would this provide more community input, it would also expand the base we need to affect statewide policies and procedures.

Regrettably, the Program Development staff person tasked with CRP development was laid off due to the budget crisis.

The state's fiscal crisis has shifted a lot of the attention of the Maui CRP during the last two quarters of the fiscal year. Budget restrictions have resulted in less than optimal meeting conditions as the Moloka`i and Lana`i representatives have not been able to travel to Maui for our meetings. Poor audio and/or poor VCC connections hinder effective communication between members during the meeting.

The fiscal crisis has also impacted the provision of CWS services to the tri-isle county due to budget cuts and impending layoffs and/or furloughs. Until recently, CWS and its Sections had no contingency plans in place for the anticipated layoffs and subsequent "bumpings".

Additionally, members questioned the continuing role and purpose of the CRP more than ever due to the history of Child Welfare Services Division's lack of consistent support, often slow and incomplete communication, and minimal financial support of our CRP.

Improvements:

Jeny Bissell of the Maui CRP participated in the Federal Case Review of the Maui CWS case records in May of 2009. She spoke highly of the preparation by CWS, the process and experience of reviewing case records.

The Federal Case Review is just one of CWS/DHS' continuing Quality Assurance efforts. These practices are becoming more and more of an institutionalized practice, and a mindset amongst management and line staff.

Continuing challenges:

Unlike any of the other sections, the Maui CWS must administer their programs from three different locales. The section budget is affected obviously with higher overhead and travel costs. In addition, effective communication between the three island offices is essential as the Molokai and Lanai communities have much different needs and resources than does the Maui-island community.

It appears that the Program Development staff has been given the responsibility for the Maui CRP oversight, and now with the responsibility for the resurrection of the other section CRPs. It is unclear to the Maui CRP if the PD staff has the authority to fulfill many of the responsibilities that come with promoting, staffing and funding the CRPs. The commitment of the PD office is no longer in question given their cooperation with the Annual Report responses and participation in the Annual Statewide meetings.

The Maui CRP would welcome the same type of commitment and communication from both the CWS division and DHS administration. This would reinforce the work of the Maui CRP and greatly enhance the resurrection of the fledgling CRPs from the other sections.

III. Federal Outcome Measures

The attached matrix covers the period from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009. Unfortunately, the Maui CRP did not receive the data in a timely fashion so analysis and discussion was limited during this reporting period. In addition, only data in the form of percentages were provided as opposed to raw numbers and percentages in years past. The following is a summary and analysis of the attached matrix:

1. Reduce the recurrence of Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN)

Of all children who were victims of confirmed child maltreatment during the report period, what percentage had another confirmed report within 6 months?

The Maui CWS Section had the 3rd highest rate of maltreatment of all the sections but nevertheless met the federal standard. This is the fourth consecutive year that the Maui CWS Section has met the federal standard.

2. Reduce the incidence of CAN in foster care

Of all children in foster care in the state during the period under review, what percentage were the subject of confirmed maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff?

The Maui CWS Section met the federal standard after failing to do so last fiscal year. It's to be noted that the Maui CWS Section has met this standard 6 out of the last 7 years.

3. Increase permanency for children in foster care (no federal standard)

No data provided

4. Reduce time in foster care to reunification without increasing re-entry

4a. Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, what percentage were reunified within twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home?

Historically, the Maui CWS has performed well in this category. They continued this pattern by meeting the federal standard every year since 2003.

4b. Of all children who entered foster care during the period under review, what percentage of those children re-enter foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode?

Unfortunately, the Maui CWS has historically performed poorly in this category. This year is no different as they failed to meet the federal standard, a pattern unchanged since 2003.

5. Reduce time in foster care to adoption

Of all children who exited foster care during the year under review to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care within 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home?

The Maui CWS Section has met this goal yearly since outcome reports were made available from 2003 to present. They rank first in the state in this category.

6. Increase placement stability

Of all children who've been in foster care within 12 months from the time of the latest removal, what percentage had no more than two placement settings?

After meeting the Federal standard last year for the first time, the Maui CWS Section barely missed meeting the standard again.

IV. REVIEW of the 2007-2008 ANNUAL REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Please note the appended response to the Maui CRP 2007-2008 Annual Report by the DHS dated October 14, 2009.

- 1. The results of the active foster parent satisfaction survey/questionnaire, along with DHS feedback on plans for improvement, will be delivered to the Maui CRP before November 1, 2008. In addition, DHS will provide the draft questionnaire to the Maui CRP for review before finalizing the document.**

There has been no follow up on the survey. We do not know if any action has been taken from the information gathered, nor if there are any plans made as a result of foster parent feedback.

The Maui CRP did not review the draft questionnaire as requested. The final questionnaire and confidential results were shared with CRP members in November 2008 with an Executive Summary to follow. Some of the recommendations from the survey results included:

- a. Mentoring for struggling foster parents,
- b. Provision of alternate contact numbers for foster parents to call,
- c. Development of a checklist of things to cover or discuss at each home visit,
- d. Reply to foster parents request for information even if the information is not available.

To date, the Maui CRP has not received the Executive Summary or any information on the implementation of any recommendations.

CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

- 2. Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will have all Hawaii children eligible for adoption listed and profiled on the AdoptUSKids website.**

Following a listing of twenty-two children in August of 2008, the total for the state of Hawaii is now down to one youth (10/10/09).

CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

- 3. Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will provide the Maui CRP results and evaluation of the last fiscal year of DHS' participation in AdoptUSKids, HOPE Inc., Hawaii Family Forum, and Heart Gallery.**

To date we have not received this report.

CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

- 4. Within three months of the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will provide the Maui CRP the annual CAPTA allocation to Hawaii and breakdown of its expenditure.**

The State of Hawaii receives an annual CAPTA allocation of approximately \$126,000.00. Of this amount, the DHS has allocated \$95,699 for Diversion Services and \$30,333 for Child Death Reviews. None of the CAPTA allocation has been directly appropriated to Maui CRP activities. The Maui CWS Section and the state's general fund has historically funded all transportation costs in addition to Division and Section staffing of the CRP

CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

- 5. DHS will continue to support and fund all costs for the semi annual statewide CRP meetings.**

The Maui CWS Section continued to coordinate the Semi-Annual Statewide CRP meetings. Again, non-CAPTA funds from the general fund and the Maui CWS Section were used to pay for travel and staffing costs.

CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

6. DHS will continue to fund all costs for Molokai's and Lanai's participation in the CRP meetings

Due to statewide budget constraints the DHS funded Molokai's and Lanai's CRP participation initially with travel costs then later through Video Conference Call meetings. CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

7. DHS will have at least 3 fully functioning CRPs by the end of the FY 08-09, with 2 more in formative stages.

At fiscal year's end, the Maui CRP was the only CRP in the state of Hawaii. Efforts by Scott Seto of the Maui CWS and Colin Fukunaga of the Program Development Office were not enough to resurrect the Hilo/West Hawaii CRP or the Kauai CRP in spite of Scott's presentation at the Hilo Section offices in August and September of 2008 as a show of support and assistance. Representatives from both Sections participated in the Semi-Annual Statewide CRP meetings, obtained tools and recommendations for their re-startup to no avail.

The Maui CRP has recommended that consistent, ongoing Divisional support is needed to resurrect both CRPs. To date the message that CRPs are important and deserve Division support has been glaringly absent.

CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

8. Based on the results of recommendation #4, DHS and the CRPs will discuss the establishment and funding of CRP budgets.

CWS Administration elected to use CAPTA funds for CRD and Diversion Services instead of funding CRD, Diversion Services and CRP. It's to be noted however, that CWS did fund travel for the statewide meeting and monthly Molokai and Lanai travel till late 2008. CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

9. DHS will work with CRP to explain the hiring process, from application through a person being at a desk in a CWS office. This includes time frames, the various steps that must be completed, etc. In addition, there will be open discussion about alternative ways of getting qualified professionals in vacant CWS positions as fast as possible.

With the economic downturn and increased unemployment, there has been a significant increase in applicants for CWS jobs, resulting in most vacancies being filled. This took the urgency off the system issue of learning about the hiring process. No action was taken on this issue.

CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

10. Four months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will conduct an analysis of the Centralized Intake process. The analysis is to include, but not limited to, surveying reporters (which is being worked on); comparison data pre and post implementation of CWI; and possible ways to enhance this service. This analysis will be provided to all CRPs by March 31, 2009.

As a beginning step in this analysis, a survey on SurveyMonkey was created by Colin Fukunaga, with input from CRP members. The survey was distributed to several hundred mandated reporters via email. Results of those responses were provided to CRP. Analysis of the responses is pending.

CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

- 11. Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will conduct an analysis of the Kinship Care policy. The analysis is to determine if practice is meeting the intent of the policy and if any policy changes are needed. This analysis will be provided to all CRPs by May 31, 2009.**

As of 6/30/09, the Maui CRP did not receive an analysis of the Kinship Care policy. Although, CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

- 12. Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will provide the Maui CRP an analysis of the implementation of transition plans for foster youth ageing out of the foster care system.**

As of April 30, 2009 the Maui CRP did not receive an analysis of the implementation of transitions plans for foster youth ageing out of the foster care system. CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

- 13. The Maui CRP will collaborate with DHS and the Hawaii Foster Parents Association to introduce legislation in the 2009 Legislative Session and/or change Departmental Policy to increase Foster Care Board rates and Difficulty of Care payments 5% each year for the next 6 years, to set rates in three age categories (0-5, 6-12 and 13-18) and tie future increases to the CPI (Consumer Price Index).**

Representatives Carroll, McElvey, Mizuno, Brower and Lee authored and introduced HCR 240 and HR 209 in the 2009 Legislative Session to have the DHS conduct a feasibility study of increasing Foster Care Board rates and Difficulty of Care payments. The Maui CRP decided on a feasibility study versus a "money" bill given the State's budgetary constraints with the hope that the study would lay the foundation for a "money" bill in the next session. Unfortunately, both resolutions died in the House Finance Committee. CWS did respond to this recommendation in their appended letter dated October 14, 2009.

V. 2008 - 2009 CRP Focus

1. Statewide CRP meeting

During FY 08-09, the Maui CRP hosted and coordinated the annual Statewide CRP meeting at Maui Community College (MCC).

The March 5, 2009 meeting at included representatives from CWS Administration, Hawaii Child Welfare Continuous Quality Improvement Project, representatives from two other Sections and the Maui CRP.

The group spent the day discussing the following:

- CRP resurrection
- Review of last year's statewide meeting minutes
- DHS/CWS legislative proposals
- Child Death Review
- Shaka system
- CWS/DHS commitment to CRPs
- Re-establishment of CRPs on Oahu, Kauai and Hawaii
- CWS' response to the 2005-2006 Maui CRP Annual Report
- Meeting of the Minds
- Overview of the Differential Response project.

- Differential Response System
- HRS Chapter 587
- Higher education board allowance for former foster youth
- ILP (Independent Living Program) brochure
- Kinship Care policy
- 7th Annual CRP National Conference
- Behavioral outcomes for children in the Child Welfare System.

2. Membership recruitment

The Maui CRP has been successful in recruiting new members to replace outgoing members although welcome letters were not received by some new members in a timely manner.

3. Foster Board payment increase

As noted above, legislation was introduced in the 2009 Hawaii State Legislative Session to increase both Foster Board payments and Difficulty of Care payments to foster parents. Two resolutions were introduced but unfortunately both did not make it out of the House Finance Committee.

4. CWS staffing vacancies

The Maui CRP continued to discuss the staff vacancy issue. There was more discussion on decentralizing personnel operations rather than focusing on the outcome of having the Maui fully staffed. It was later recommended to have the CRP educated about the recruitment and hiring process to determine how the CRP can effectively advocate for change and insure full staffing for the Maui units.

Unfortunately, funding restrictions, proposed reductions, and layoff issues overshadowed review of recruitment, hiring and staffing operations. The Maui Section did its best to maintain services. The issue of the recruitment and hiring process still needs to be addressed to insure adequate CWS staffing. 1

7. How to assist other sections in establishing their own CRP

This item garnered most of the Maui CRP's attention during the fiscal year. The Maui CRP was fortunate in that Scott Seto took the lead in coordinating and encouraging the re-establishment of CRPs on Kauai and in East Hawaii.

In spite of Scott's efforts the Maui CRP continues to be the only operating CRP in the state. Hilo CRP was unable to sustain their efforts to re-organize.

The Maui CRP had little or no impact on policy changes on re-establishing CRP except for establishing need and significance.

8. Poor/unclear/uncertain communication/response from Division

There was a fair amount of discussion and disagreement on how best to elicit interest and support from division for CRPs in general and in the re-establishment of CRPs in other sections. It appeared that a response from the DHS Director and CWS Administrator was provided through the Program Development office. Therefore, given the efforts of Scott Seto and Program Development it was decided not to pursue any other action with Division.

There continues to be concerns about communication with Division. There was a significant positive step when Colin Fukunaga was our contact. This resulted in an increase in communication between the Program Development office and the Maui CRP. Now that his position has been eliminated, we are concerned about recurring communication problems from Division. There is strong skepticism that the CRP is sufficiently valued by Division to build and maintain consistent and meaningful communication.

9. Meeting of the Minds

Meeting of the Minds (MOM) convenes every other month in Judge Valdriz's Courtroom. The MOM team consists of Judge Geronimo Valdriz (Family Court), Elladine Olevao (CWS), Kevin Morris (DOH – Developmental Disabilities), Virginia Shaw (CAMHD), Lois Sato (DOE), Debbi Amaral (Citizen Review Panel of Maui) and Kim Compoc, Facilitator (Mediation Services of Maui). This team of individuals discusses events and circumstances directly related to services involving disabilities, mental health, child welfare services and family court. MOM is credited towards increasing communication between family service agencies and collaborating efforts to provide resource support within Maui County.

Information gained at these meetings is brought back to the Maui CRP to promulgate this level of communication sharing and collaboration.

Meeting together as a group offers the opportunity to network with other service agencies, obtaining specific information about resources available in each community. This venue also affords the means to determine what resources are limited or absent, especially when assessing rural community needs for outreach.

Each member of this team brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the table, adding to the quality of overall service delivery. Judge Valdriz provides a comprehensive lens from the Family Court perspective. Confidentiality is maintained and respected by each participant in the group, especially when discussing a specific case.

VI. Recommendations

1. Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will have all Hawaii children eligible for adoption listed and profiled on the AdoptUSKids website.
2. Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will provide the Maui CRP results and evaluation of the '07-'08 fiscal year of DHS' participation in AdoptUSKids, HOPE Inc. Hawaii Family Forum, and Heart Gallery.
Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report DHS will provide the Maui CRP results and evaluation of the department's listing and profiling of all HI children eligible for adoption with AdoptUSKids, HOPE Inc., Hawaii Family Forum and Heart Gallery.
3. DHS will send at least TWO CRP member to the Annual CRP National Conference.
4. DHS will follow up on their 4-page questionnaire survey to foster parents. By February 1, 2010, the CRP shall receive documentation of what action has been taken from the information gathered, and if there were any plans made as a result of foster parent feedback.
7. Within 3 months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will submit to the Maui CRP their reply to the Annual Report.
8. DHS will continue to support and fund all costs for the Semi-annual Statewide CRP meetings.
9. DHS will continue to fund all costs for Molokai's and Lanai's participation in the CRP meetings.
10. DHS and the CRP will discuss the establishment and funding of CRP budget(s).
11. Three months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will provide the Maui CRP an analysis of the implementation of transition plans for foster youth ageing out of the foster care system.
12. The Maui CRP will collaborate with DHS and the Hawaii Foster Parent Association to introduce legislation in the 2010 Legislative Session and/or promulgate changes in DHS policy to increase Foster Care Board rates and Difficulty of Care payments. The proposal includes rate/payment increases to 5% each year for the next 6 years, rate settings in three age categories (0-5, 6-12 and 13-18 years of age) and tying in future increase to an economic index such as the CPI (consumer price index).

VII. Membership

Island of Lanai:	Butch Gima, Social Worker, Dept. of Health, Adult Mental Health Division	2000-present
Island of Molokai:	Claire Iveson, MFSC Director Molokai Ohana Health Center	2007-present
Island of Maui:	Patrick Singsank, Maui Program Director Children's Justice Center	2003-present
	Jim St. James, foster and adoptive parent. Officer, Keiki Kokua Board of Directors	2004-present
	Jeny Bissell, Family Health Services Section Supervisor Department of Health	2004-present
	Debbi Amaral, Director Headstart Preschool Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.	2005-present
	Nicole Forelli, Attorney Legal Aid Society Hawaii	2006-2008
	Charmaine Bissen, Psy.D., School Psychologist Department of Education	2006-present
	Tammy McMullen, Deputy Director Ke Hale A Ke Ola Resource Center	2008-present
	Lucy Feinberg, LSW Parents and Children Together-PACT	2006-present
	Tina Kiyabu-Crowell, QA Specialist Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division Maui Family Guidance Center	2007-present
Staff:	Elladine Olevao, Maui Administrator Scott Seto, Supervisor Rebecca Ferguson Child Welfare Services	
Meetings:	The panel meets once each month on Maui at the conference room of Ka Hale A Ke Ola Resource Center or, for semi-annual meetings, Maui Community College facilities.	
	Meetings now being conducted via VCC from site locations on Maui, Moloka'i and Lana'i.	

2008-2009 Federal Outcome Measures

OUTCOME	GOAL	Year
1. Reduce the recurrence of CAN		
Of all children who were victims of confirmed child maltreatment during the report period, what % had another confirmed report within 6 months.	< 6.1%	4.3% (10)
2. Reduce the incidence of CAN in foster care		
Of all children in foster care in the state during the period under review, what percentage were the subject of confirmed maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff?	< 0.57	0.4% (1)
4. Reduce time in foster care to reunification without increasing re-entry.		
4a. Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, what percentage were reunified within twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home?	> 76.2%	92.8% (64)
4b. Of all children who entered foster care during the period under review, what percentage of those children re-enter foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode?	< 8.6%	13.2% (18)
5. Reduce time in foster care to adoption.		
Of all children who exited foster care during the year under review to a finalized adoption, what % exited care within 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home?	> 32.0%	74.1% (20)
6. Increase placement stability		
Of all children who been in foster care within 12 months from the time of the latest removal, what % had no more than two placement settings?	> 86.7	85.1% (131)

BOLD percentages and numbers denote goal attainment.

No quarterly data was provided for FY 08-09.

LIND.
GOVERNOR



LILLIAN B. KOLLER, ESQ.
DIRECTOR

HENRY OLIVA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
810 Richards Street, Suite 400
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

October 14, 2009

Mr. Butch Gima
Maui Citizen Review Panel
P.O. Box 630400
Lanai City, Hawaii 96763-0400

Dear Mr. Gima:

Thank you for the Maui Citizen Review Panel's (CRP) 2008 Annual Report and recommendations to improve Child Welfare Services (CWS). We appreciate the Panel's efforts and work on behalf of children and families.

The CRP's 2008 recommendations and the Department's responses (in italics) are as follows:

1. The results of the active foster parent satisfaction survey/questionnaire, along with DHS feedback on plans for improvement, will be delivered to the Maui CRP before November 1, 2008. In addition, DHS will provide the draft questionnaire to the Maui CRP for review before finalizing the document.

The draft questionnaire was provided to the CRP, after which the questionnaire was finalized. PIDF-Hui Ho'omalu (HUI) sent out questionnaires to Active Resource Parents in May 2008. The results of the questionnaires were compiled and the preliminary results were provided to DHS in November 2008. A summary of the results of the questionnaire were discussed with the Maui CRP during a CRP meeting on April 2, 2009. An executive summary of the results will be forwarded to the Maui CRP in November 2009.

2. Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will have all Hawaii children eligible for adoption listed and profiled on the AdoptUSKids website.

DHS has already created an internal excel database in 2006 to track PC children/youth without identified permanent caretakers (legal guardians or adoptive parents). Each CWS Section updates the database monthly. Currently, we have approximately 150 children/youth in the permanent custody of the Department with very special needs. We are engaged in ongoing efforts to list all children who are available for adoption who do not have permanent homes identified on the AdoptUSKids as well as other national websites.

We have also implemented the CWSB "Keiki Placement Panel", a weekly teleconference with the CWS Branch Administrator, the Program Development Administrator, CWS Section Administrators, and EPIC Ohana Conferencing to review all new placements of children into foster care and a monthly "Permanency Review Panel" of the status of all children and

youth who are free for adoption to ensure that every effort is being made to find them permanent homes, including listing them on AdoptUSKids and other websites and venues that can lead to adoption of the approximately 150 children in the permanent custody of the Department who are waiting for permanent homes.

During the past several months, Lee Dean, Assistant Program Administrator with the Program Development Section, has been working closely with John Dummicliffe, the Project Director of the SHAKA development team located at Maui Community College to make improvements) so that SHAKA system will be user friendly and helpful in assisting the CWS worker in monitoring, tracking, and updating information about the children under the care of DHS.

We are also partnering with Casey Family Programs to conduct reviews of children whose parent's rights have been terminated who have not yet achieved permanency. Thee "Pohai Kealoha" reviews, which involve DHS staff, master practitioners, Casey Family, former foster youth and others are working toward developing a permanency plan for each of the children and youth whose cases are being reviewed.

3. Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will provide the Maui CRP results and evaluation of the last fiscal year of DHS' participation in AdoptUSKids, HOPE Inc. Hawaii Family Forum, and Heart Gallery.

DHS will consult with the CRP and compile relevant information regarding the outcomes achieve in achieving permanent homes through AdoptUSKids, HOPE Inc., Hawaii Family Forum, and the Heart Gallery.

4. Within three months of the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will provide the Maui CRP with the annual CAPTA allocation to Hawaii and breakdown of its expenditure.

DHS provided the Maui and East Hawaii CRP with the annual CAPTA allocation to Hawaii during a CRP meeting held on April 2, 2009. DHS has allocated \$95,699 for Diversion Services and \$30,333 to fund Child Death Reviews conducted by the Department of Health. The annual allocation amount has been the same since Fiscal Year 2005...

5. DHS will continue to support and fund all costs for the semi annual statewide CRP meetings.

Due to mandatory budget cuts, DHS is unable to fund the costs for the semi annual statewide CRP meetings at this time. .

6. DHS will continue to fund all costs for Molokai's and Lanai's participation in the CRP meetings.

DHS appreciates and values the work of the Maui Citizen Review Panel including the members from Moloka'i and Lana'i. However due to mandatory budget cuts, we are unable to provide funding for travel at this time. Should the Department's financial situation improve to allow us to pay for the travel expenses in the future, DHS will commit to cover those expenses.

7. DHS will have at least 3 fully functioning CRPs by the end of the FY 08-09, with 2 more in formative stages.

East Hawaii established a CRP in September 2008. We are looking for ways to encourage and sustain the efforts of the CWS Section Administrator's to revitalize the CRP on the island of Kauai. We will also be asking for support from the Maui CRP and technical assistance from the National Resource Center for Child Protective Service to assist the Department as other CRP's are formed.

8. Based on the results of recommendation #4, DHS and the CRPs will discuss the establishment and funding of CRP budgets.

DHS is unable, at this time, to commit to funding the CRPs at this time.

9. DHS will work with CRP to explain the hiring process, from application through a person being at a desk in a CWS office. This includes time frames, the various steps that must be completed, etc. In addition, there will be open discussion about alternative ways of getting qualified professionals in vacant CWS positions as fast as possible.

DHS will review the hiring process with the CRP and participate in a discussion about strategies to hire qualified professionals for vacant CWS positions. However, these discussions must take into account the State hiring requirements, the Department's ability to fund positions and the reduction-in-force occurring at this time in the State.

10. Four months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will conduct an analysis of the Centralized Intake process. The analysis is to include, but not limited to, surveying reporters (which is to be worked on); comparison data pre and post implementation of CWI; and possible ways to enhance this service. This analysis will be provided to all CRPs by March 31, 2009.

DHS does not have sufficient staff resources to conduct an analysis of the Centralized Intake process at this time.

A draft of the Mandated Reporter survey was completed and the members of the Maui CRP were provided a copy for review and input. The comments provided by the Maui CRP members were reviewed and the survey was conducted using Survey Monkey. Citizen Review Panel Members were asked for the email addresses of mandated reporters so that the survey can be emailed to them. The results of the survey include responses from 121 mandated reporters. An executive summary of the report will be provided to the Maui CRP in November 2009.

However, DHS was informed by the Administration for Children and Families that we now have the third lowest recurrence of abuse rate in the nation. This is a significant and very positive indicator of the success of our Differential Response System and our aggressive efforts to improve our system.

11. Four months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will conduct an analysis of the Kinship Care policy. The analysis is to determine if practice is meeting the intent of the policy and if any policy changes is needed. This analysis will be provided to all CRPs by May 31, 2009.

DHS does not have sufficient staff resources to conduct an analysis of the Centralized Intake process at this time. We do not believe an analysis by the Department is necessary. There is a new law that addresses the issue of Kinship Care. It is the bipartisan Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, signed into law by President Bush on October 7, 2008. Among other things, the new law promotes:

- *Permanent families for children with grandparents and other relatives, when return home and adoption are not appropriate;*
- *Reasonable efforts to place children with siblings or at least connect them to siblings when they can do so safely and in a manner that is consistent with the child's well-being.*

12. Six months from the receipt of the Annual Report, DHS will provide the Maui CRP with an analysis of the implementation of transition plans for foster youth aging out of the foster care system.

DHS does not have sufficient staff resources to conduct an analysis of implementation of the transition plans for foster youth aging out of the system at this time.

We believe that the Federally required Case Plan, or Permanent Plan for youth in foster care age 15 and up meets this recommendation since it would contain information specific to the independent living plan for the youth, including linkages, living arrangements, whether the child was reunified with their family, the youths educational plan, etc. Each of the Case or Permanent Plans is reviewed and approved by the Department, the Guardian Ad Litem and Family Court Judge prior to being ordered.

DHS also continues to expand services to youth who will exit foster care through collaborative efforts with community partners and the Hawaii Youth Coalition to enhance and promote transition services for our exiting foster youth. The listing of transition services (which include Independent Living skills, higher education board allowance, Med-QUEST coverage) is posted on the DHS Website and update when new information or services becomes available. The Coalition members also serve as mentors for our youth.

In addition, Family Finding and Youth Circles for youth and family members through EPIC Ohana are important resources for our youth. Family Finding is a way for the Department to locate family members and other supportive adults who can provide support and family connections for the youth during and after their stay in foster care. The purpose of the Youth Circle is to reconnect youth with their families and circle of support and enlist family support to reduce homelessness, unemployment, and other problems that youth exiting foster care encounter without assistance.

We are also partnering with Casey Family Programs to conduct reviews of children whose parent's rights have been terminated who are still in foster care, which will include transitioning youth. The "Pohai Kealoha" reviews, which involve DHS staff, master practitioners, Casey Family, former foster youth and others are working toward developing a permanency plan, or in the case of a youth aging out of the system, a transition plan for each of the youth whose cases are being reviewed.

13. The Maui CRP will collaborate with DHS and the Hawaii Foster Parents Association to introduce legislation in the 2009 Legislative Session and/or change Departmental Policy to increase Foster Care Board rates and Difficulty of Care payments 5% each Year for the next 6 years, to set rates in three age categories (0-5, 6-12 and 13-18) And tie future increases to the CPI (Consumer Price Index).

We agree with the concept of raising the foster board, however due to the current state of the Departments' financial situation, DHS was unable to support the proposed legislation to increase foster care board rates at this time. However, DHS has a new rule which enables the Department to make appropriate increases to the foster care board rate when the Departments' financial situation does improve.

Thank you again for the annual report and recommendations. We appreciate the commitment and the work accomplished by the Maui CRP and look forward to our continued partnership. Please contact John Walters, Program Development Administrator, at 586-5675 if the Panel has further questions.

Sincerely,

Amy Tsark, Administrator

Social Services Division

c: Lillian B. Koller, Director