

DIRECTOR'S REPORT
OCCY COMMISSION MEETING
November 22, 2024

PERSONNEL

Office of Planning and Coordination: We wished Margaret Butler well as she moved back into direct service at another agency and welcomed Amoreena Killough as the new Cross-Systems Coordinator recently. This position is supported by several state agencies: OCCY, the Oklahoma State Department of Health, and Oklahoma Human Services. Ms. Killough holds a B.A. in Sociology and Gender & Women's Studies from Oklahoma State University and a Master's in Public Health from the University of Central Oklahoma. Her career includes international experience as a research intern in the Philippines and as a Food Security Advisory with the Peace Corps in Benin. She has worked with several nonprofits in the Oklahoma City area including Parent Promise, the YWCA, and Variety Care's Teen Clinic. She brings with her expertise in program planning, community outreach, and stakeholder engagement. In addition, Ms. Killough is fluent in French and Tagalog.

Child Death Review Board: Funds from a Michigan Public Health Institute grant are being utilized to employ two parttime, graduate-level interns to work for CDRB and analyze data related to sudden unexplained infant death – with an emphasis on rural parts of our state. This semesters' interns include:

Kamryn Ford – a graduate student in epidemiology and biostatistics at the OU Hudson College of Public Health. Ms. Ford is originally from New Hampshire and has worked as a hospital mental health technician and a graduate research assistant for cancer and Covid-19 studies. She brings strong analytical and critical-thinking skills to our agency along with proficiency in SAS programming.

Oyindamda “Oyin” Okuwa – a PhD candidate in Sociology at the University of Oklahoma. Originally from Nigeria, Ms. Okuwa has served as a Junior Research Fellow for a national think tank, as a graduate research assistant, and as a graduate instructor. She brings to our agency a tremendous energy for all things research with a special interest in mixed methods. She is proficient in the use of STATA and NVivo software. In addition, she adds to the OCCY catalogue of languages by speaking French and Yoruba.

Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO): Due to a retirement within OJSO, the OJSO has a new oversight specialist, Lucia Amezcuita. Ms. Amezcuita holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Central Oklahoma. Her professional journey began with Oklahoma Human Services in 2014. She transitioned to the role of Child Protective Services Supervisor in 2018. There she developed extensive knowledge about the child welfare service system. It should be noted too that Ms. Amezcuita is a native Spanish speaker.

In addition, OCCY has contracted with Dr. Ellen Harwell of Ellen Harwell Consulting, LLC to conduct a systemic review of local and state actions relating to the Tulsa County Family Justice Center and to review processes of state's oversight systems including the OCCY Office of Juvenile System Oversight. A draft report regarding her findings and recommendations is due to OCCY by December 20, 2024.

FINANCES - Mahboob ul Haq, OCCY Business Manager

General Budget Monitoring:

Mr. ul Haq continues to monitor our current budget situation. In addition to the attached report, Mr. ul Haq will present information during our meeting that will provide further explanation and detail. (*Please see handout.*)

As a sidenote, please congratulate Mr. ul Haq on being elected as the Treasurer of the Children's Trust Fund Alliance Board of Directors. They are thrilled that he is sharing his expertise in this way with them. He recently attended their annual meeting in Phoenix, Arizona and presented his report to the organization. We are so very proud of the way he represents OCCY and Oklahoma.

The State Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Request was submitted by October 1st. Assistant Director Mark James will be presenting the request at the November meeting.

DIRECTOR'S HIGHLIGHTED ACTIVITIES

Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO): It has been many years since the OJSO has critiqued and/or revised their policies and practices. After the New Year, we'll begin a coordinated effort to do just that and include stakeholders in the process. We will keep you updated as the work unfolds.

Grand Jury Petitions Filed: Oklahomans for Children's Rights filed two petitions requesting that grand juries be impaneled in Oklahoma and Tulsa Counties to look into a variety of matters related to child-serving systems. There has been no ruling related to the Oklahoma County petition. However, an amended Tulsa County petition was transferred to Garfield County. On November 8th Judge Paul Woodward ruled that the amended petition contained enough information to move forward if the Petitioner gathers a minimum of 5,000 signatures from Tulsa County residents by December 23rd. The Tulsa County petition can be found on the Oklahoma Supreme Court Network website (oscn.net) under case number GJ-2024-1.

Boys and Girls Club Halloween: For the second year in a row, OCCY participated in the Cameron Building trick-or-treating event for local Boys and Girls Clubs. Staff created a spooky trail throughout the office space and provided dozens of children with candy. There was a great deal of laughter and a few screams heard from the kiddos that afternoon. In addition, we continued the tradition of winning the building decorating contest.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Child Death Review Board (CDRB)– Lizz Kaup, Program Manager

Big Shift in Reporting: For many years, CDRB was producing annual reports that included information from cases reviewed during the previous calendar year. The reviewed cases involved deaths from multiple years, not just the immediate previous year. This situation was caused by having only one CDRB staff person for many years and the backlog that arose from the staff shortage. Fast forward to the legislature appropriating more funding for CDRB staff and the backlog being eroded. For the first time in many, many years, CDRB has closed all except one of a given year – the 2022s cases (the one case lacks records being held due to a criminal investigation). A huge thanks go to the staff for prepping and entering these cases as well as to the state and regional boards who worked so diligently to review the cases. Some of the boards even held special meetings so that they could review more cases. The 2022 dataset will now allow CDRB to have a baseline to utilize for annual trends and future data will have much more meaning.

The OU E-Team is now working on a newly formatted CDRB Annual Report utilizing the 2022 data. We anxiously await the first draft and are eager to share the final report with you soon. I would also like to report that CDRB is fervently working on closing all of the 2021 and 2023 cases.

Year of Death	Total # of Child Deaths (per Vital Statistics)	Total # of Cases Eligible for Review (Including Natural Deaths*)	Total # of Cases in Open Status	Total # of Death Cases Reviewed & Closed by CDRB Boards
2024	N/A	Unknown	189	0
2023	622	277 (45%)	177	100
2022	618	300 (48%)	1	299
2021	594	271 (46%) ¹	182	94
2020	532	257 (48%)	27	230
2019	581	232 (40%)	4	228
2018	577	243 (42%)	1	242
2017	628	260 (41%)	0	260
2016	655	271 (41%)	2**	269
2015	658	273 (41%)	0	273
2014	696	292 (42%)	0 or 1**	291 or 292
2013	639	305 (48%)	0**	305
2012	640	280 (44%)	6**	274
2011	650	293 (45%)	0**	293
2010	652	320 (49%)	0**	320

*Natural Deaths eligible for review includes deaths where abuse or neglect were a component of the case. For example, the child died of asthma and the caregivers had a history of not obtaining medical treatment for the decedent. Additionally, COVID-19 cases will also be included in the review process.

At the end of calendar year 2023, OCCY Leadership and CDRB made the decision to 'skip' ahead to focus on 2022 deaths and near deaths. The goal is to review and close, including completing data entry on, all 2022 cases and produce an annual report comprising 2022 data. Once 2022 is complete, the goal will be to continue moving forward to 2023 cases while also catching up the 2020 and 2021 cases.

**Regarding 2010 through 2016, we are working to determine the correct number of remaining open cases, if any. There are discrepancies between the internal database, CDRB network, and the National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention Case Reporting System (CRS). For example, a case in 2012 might be closed in the CRS (shows the Team that reviewed the case, date the case was closed, etc.) but because of staff shortages in 2012, the case was not reflected as closed in the database. We are working on reconciling this information and correcting/updating the status of a case when necessary.

¹ This number has been corrected from the most previous report. The previous number was 276.

Office of Planning and Coordination (P&C) – Danielle Dill, Program Manager

Children of Incarcerated Parents: OCCY sponsored two Children of Incarcerated Parents Task Force partners to attend the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s National Conference on Youth Justice in Washington, D.C. during November. Ms. Amanda Maxwell with New Hope Oklahoma and Ms. Jamie Ellette with Girl Scouts Beyond Bars were the attendees.

Homeless Children & Youth Partnership: OCCY and Restorative Justice Institute of Oklahoma facilitated a community listening session in partnership with the Oklahoma State Department of Education McKinney Vento Liaisons from various school districts on September 17th. They then facilitated three separate community listening sessions to learn about youth’s needs related to homelessness. The sessions were conducted 1) with youth at Pivot in Oklahoma on October 9th; 2) with youth at The Lindsey House of Tulsa on October 14th; and 3) with members of the Homeless Children and Youth Steering Committee at their meeting held on October 16th.

Minor Consent to Healthcare: An ad hoc group of professionals from each managed care entity along with professionals from SISU, Pivot, and Oklahoma Policy Institute has formed to further explore solutions to the issue of minors consenting for healthcare. OCCY Legislative Liaison Marcia Johnson has connected the group to the Oklahoma Hospital Association’s legal team to engage in meaningful conversation. We will keep you apprised of the group’s work.

OPSR Preschool Development Grant Partnership: OCCY hosted the Children’s Trust Fund Alliance’s “Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in your Work” Training October 8th – 10th in Oklahoma City. Twenty-three participants representing seventeen partners completed the training and are now Alliance Certified Trainers. To host a training, contact Caitlin Merritt at caitlin.merritt@occy.ok.gov / 405.606-4907.

In addition, OCCY hosted the “Be Strong Families Parent Café” Training (22 participants) and a “Be Strong Families Café Candidate Training Program Teach Back” (four candidates) in Lawton during the end of October.

Children’s State Advisory Workgroup (CSAW) Partnership: Oklahoma was selected as one of 10 states to participate in the Thriving Families Safer Children Youth Engagement Learning Action Network. The Oklahoma team includes two professionals and at least two youth leaders. The participating youth will be provided honorariums from the Annie E. Casey Fund. The program will run November 2024 through June 2025.

Also, an opportunity from the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices to Drive Thriving Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing has presented itself that would allow Oklahoma to align Policy Academy / CSAW partner efforts as well as potentially secure future funding. The funding would financially support a statewide youth council and the OCCY Cross-Systems Coordinator position. Feedback from CSAW members has been favorable.

Post Adjudication Review Board (PARB) – Keith Pirtle, Program Manager

At the end of October, the first of three PARB leadership virtual trainings was conducted. These sessions reviewed changes to PARB practices resulting from the local PARBs now being exempt from the Open Meetings Act. In addition, the group discussed the rollout of a new PARB credentialing process.

Freestanding Multidisciplinary Teams (FSMDT) – Brittany Gassner, Program Manager

The Child Abuse Training and Coordination Council (CATCC): The first meeting of this newly reconstituted body was to be held November 4, 2024. Pat Damron was to present

information about the previous workings of CATCC. However, the meeting was canceled that morning due to the threat of tornadoes. The meeting is being rescheduled.

Children's Justice Act Grant:

COMPLETED TRAININGS

Drug Endangered Children Awareness

Presenter: Eric Nation

Date: October 1, 2024

Format/Location: Virtual

Child First Forensic Interview Training

Presenters: Maria Rosales-Lambert, Oklahoma Interviewing Services, Inc.; Vicki Boan, Oklahoma Interviewing Services; Andi Hamilton, Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigations; Jaclyn Rivera and Lori McConnell, District Attorney's Office #7

Date: October 7-11, 2024

Format/Location: In-person, OKC

Drug Endangered Children Approach

Presenter: Carrie Jensen

Date: October 8, 2024

Format/Location: Virtual

Child Abuse Medical Examiner Training

Presenters: Dr. Michael Baxter, Dr. Mary Stockett, Brittany Gassner

Date: October 21, 2024

Format/Location: In-person, Tulsa

UPCOMING TRAININGS

Child First Expanded

Presenters: Maria Rosales-Lambert and Vicki Boen

Date: November 6-7, 2024

Format/Location: In-person, OKC

Talk Saves Lives: Suicide Prevention

Presenter: Payton Marr

Date: November 20, 2024

Format/Location: Virtual

Multidisciplinary Team Foundational Training

Presenter: Brittany Gassner

Date: December 4, 2024

Format/Location: In-person, Elk City, OK

Medical Marijuana

Presenter: Dr. Mary Stockett

Date: December 10, 2024

Format/Location: In-person, TBD

Office of Juvenile Systems Oversight (Harold Jergenson, Tina Pendergraft)

	New Complaints	Closed Cases	Facility Complaints Visits	Facility Oversight Visits
Oct 2022	37	55	0	1
Nov 2022	29	40	0	0
Dec 2022	17	34	1	3
Jan 2023	40	43	0	0
Feb 2023	29	28	1	0
March 2023	37	28	0	0
April 2023	29	31	1	0
May 2023	46	33	0	0
June 2023	36	45	2	0
July 2023	40	68	0	0
August 2023	41	47	0	0
Sept 2023	34	47	2	0
Oct 2023	54	24	2	0
Nov 2023	26	36	1	2
Dec 2023	24	20	0	3
Jan 2024	40	56	2	0
Feb 2024	51	26	1	0
Mar 2024	30	54	0	0
April 2024	33	27	0	1
May 2024	38	39	0	0
June 2024	27	28	0	0
July 2024	25	22	1	0
August 2024	29	26	1	0
Sept 2024	35	6	0	0
Oct 2024	33	22	0	0

TOTALS	New Complaints	Closed Cases	Facility Complaints Visits	Facility Oversight Visits
SFY19	404	368	7	1
SFY20	334	545	15	5
SFY21	364	337	3	3
SFY22	462	390	13	3
SFY23	429	462	8	5
SFY24	438	473	6	6
SFY25 YTD	122	76	1	0

Foster Youth Matters/Foster Parent Voices (Mark James and Tina Pendergraft)

	# of Youth Complaints		# of Foster Parents Complaints
October 2022	14		28
November 2022	42		11
December 2022	37		13
January 2023	47		10
February 2023	21		16
March 2023	56*		20**
April 2023	26		4
May 2023	34		10
June 2023	45		16
July 2023	40		18
August 2023	21		21
September 2023	18		13
October 2023	20		13
November 2023	13		14
December 2023	17		22
January 2024	22		21
February 2024	18		8
March 2024	36		11
April 2024	39		19
May 2024	32		19
June 2024	30		14
July 2024	33		21
August 2024	27		14
September 2024	17		13
October 2024	32		6

*as reported by TJ Cleary of Oklahoma Human Services

** as reported by Dawn Leemon of Oklahoma Human Services

TOTALS	# of Foster Youth Complaints		# of Foster Parent Complaints
SFY19	183*		180
SFY20	395		178
SFY21	405		182
SFY22	395		163
SFY23	437		165
SFY24	306		193
SFY25	109		54

*Program stated in November 2018 (SFY19)

** In previous reports, the foster parent and foster youth numbers for the month of February were transposed.

Juvenile Competency Evaluations (Mark James)

	# of Referrals	# Competent	# Not Competent	Pending Completion
October 2022	5	2	3	0
November 2022	7	3	4	0
December 2022	3	0	3	0
January 2023	7*	2	4	0
February 2023	13*	8	4	0
March 2023	6*	5	0	0
April 2023	3	0	3	0
May 2023	8*	1	6	0
June 2023	4	2	2	0
July 2023	3	0	3	0
August 2023	7	3	4	0
September 2023	7	3	4	0
October 2023	9	5	3	1
November 2023	6	3	2	1
December 2023	2	2	0	0
January 2024	7	3	4	0
February 2024	13*	4	8	0
March 2024	3	0	3	0
April 2024	8	3	4	1
May 2024	9	5	3	1
June 2024	1	0	1	0
July 2024	15	6	5	4
August 2024	7	2	1	4
September 2024	5*	0	0	4
October 2024	4	0	0	5

*One evaluation dismissed

TOTALS	# of Referrals	# Declared Competent	# Declared Not Competent	Pending Completion
SFY19	32	19	13	0
SFY20	34^	14	18	0
SFY21	37+	10	24	0
SFY22	47+	12	32	0
SFY23	67~	28	34	0
SFY24	75*	29	41	4
SFY25 Year-to-Date	32*	7	7	17

**One evaluation canceled ^Two evaluations canceled +Three evaluations canceled ~Four evaluations canceled*

Respectfully submitted,

 Annette Wisk Jacobi
 OCCY Executive Director

November 22, 2024
 Date