



## 2019 Citizen Foster Care Review Board Regional Community Forums

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### Summary of Findings

**During the 2018 Legislative Session, the Kentucky General Assembly passed House Bill 1 which included the following mandates for the Citizen Foster Care Review Boards (CFCRB) effective July 16, 2018.**

KRS 620.270 (5) At least twice annually, the local citizen foster care review boards shall participate in regional community forums for members of the public to discuss areas of concern regarding the foster care system and to identify barriers to timely permanency, well-being and safety for children in out-of-home care. The boards shall report their findings to the State Citizen Foster Care Review Board in accordance with KRS 620.340.

KRS 620.320 (5) Evaluate and make annual recommendations to the Supreme Court, Governor, and the Child Welfare Oversight and Advisory Committee established in Section 1 of 17 this Act regarding: (a) Laws of the Commonwealth; (b) Practices, policies, and procedures within the Commonwealth affecting permanence for children in out-of-home placement and the investigation of allegations of abuse and neglect; (c) The findings of the local citizen foster care review board community forums conducted pursuant to Section 23 of this Act; and (d) The effectiveness or lack thereof and reasons therefor of local citizen foster care review of children in the custody of the cabinet in bringing about permanence for the Commonwealth's children.

**In accordance with the Kentucky Revised Statutes above, the CFCRB held Regional Community Forums across the state in 2018. In the Spring of 2019, the first of two regional forums, for this year, were held on these dates and locations as follows:**

- March 28, 2019 – Somerset (Pulaski County)
- March 30, 2019 – Union (Boone County)
- April 8, 2019 – Owensboro (Daviess County)
- April 9, 2019 – Madisonville (Hopkins County)
- April 15, 2019 – Frankfort (Franklin County)
- April 18, 2019 – Louisville (Jefferson County)

The following is a summary of findings compiled from the six CFCRB Regional Forums held in the Spring of 2019. Findings are based on recommendations and concerns raised by members of the public and have been categorized by parties or stakeholder groups affected. Pursuant to KRS 620.320 (5); the CFCRB will make recommendations which include these findings to the Supreme Court, Governor, and

the Child Welfare Oversight and Advisory Committee upon completion of the fall 2019 Regional Community Forums.

### **Children's Issues & Concerns**

- Preventative measures put in place to keep children from entering foster care
- Trauma Informed Care focus for children
- Keep siblings together and in their communities
- Independent living skills for older population
- Adoptive children should be placed in pre-adoptive/concurrent homes
- More services for children with placement disruptions and medically complex children
- Too many reunifications to unsafe environments

### **Foster Parent Issues & Concerns**

- Need more R&C workers and foster homes
- Need more information on how to request a new *Guardian ad litem*
- Require a *Guardian ad litem* to visit each child they represent
- More authority in child's education and care
- Access to counseling services for foster parents
- Education on adoption and resources
- Improve focus of foster parent training in order to decrease placement disruptions
- Better communication with biological family and Department for Community Based Services

### **Biological Parent Issues & Concerns**

- Lack of transportation and services for parents to complete their case plan
- Provide services/programs for incarcerated parents to work their case plan while in jail/prison
- Case plans should be sent electronically

### **Department for Community Based Services Issues & Concerns**

- Lack of Department of Community Based Services staff, lack of funding, lack of visitation locations, and lack of services
- Transitional services for adoptive children
- Expanding to child-specific foster homes to keep children in their communities
- Workers should be required to visit private child care facilities more frequently
- Interstate Compact needs improvement for out of state placements
- Inconsistency among Department for Community Based Services service regions
- Review subsidies for families who no longer have children in their home
- Standard Operating Procedures needs to include cultural diversity services

### **Relative/Kinship Care Issues & Concerns**

- Continuous Quality Improvement process for payment of vouchers
- Definitive information qualifying financial support for fictive and kinship caregivers

### **Court Issues & Concerns**

- *Guardians ad Litem* need to be more accountable and required to notify interested parties of their appointment to represent child
- Stricter review of timelines
- Continue to increase Family Court judgeships
- Termination of Parental Rights process should be more streamlined
- House Bill 1 information, training, outcomes
- Barriers involving county and state lines
- More CFCRB and CASA's are needed across the state

### **Overall Comments & Suggestions**

- Mental health services need to be communicated to foster parents and Department for Community Based Services workers
- Beneficial for school representative to be present in family court to alert schools of custody changes
- Amend statute to allow foster parents who have fostered a child for a substantial amount of time to receive standing, such as fictive kin, in order to move for custody of the child
- Develop Resource Parents as an advanced Foster Parent, difference being the Resource Parent is a resource for the entire family