

## Children's Services Review Panel (CAC) Minutes

March 23, 2026; 4:30 – 6:30 PM

<https://zoom.us/j/98236935012?pwd=1aQdPvVwuw8V310V5V3vYcJs7BcCem.1>

Members Present: Ankit Sood, Tonya Long, Casey Acord, Melissa DeBlizan, Molly Evans; Kat Ruth-Leigh, and Jill Esch

Ramsey County Staff: David Herrera

MN Dept. of Children, Youth, and Families: Laura Gapske (DCYF)

Guests:

### Reminder of Agreements:

If you would like a copy of agreements, please reach out to Laura Gapske.

### Ice Breaker

### New Actions:

- Approval of February Minutes
  - Ankit motions, molly seconds; all Approved
- Recommendation of Hibak
  - Beth moves, Ankit seconds. All approve

### Annual Conference Discussion

Historically, and in the operation procedures, one of the co-chairs usually goes. Ankit is unable to go, but Tonya is able to go.

1. Recommendation of Bob Whitehead; Motion by Ankit, second by Kat; vote passed unanimously
2. Old Business
  - a. MAAFPFA Case Reviews; still reviewing internal process to see how this will proceed with the county attorney's approval and protecting data privacy with the statute which allows panel members to have access.
  - b. Flyer Updates; no update
  - c. Foster Care Survey; DCYF will conclude their surveys with foster youth in May. They are willing to share the results with the panel once the themes are collected.
3. Tonya Conference Report
  - a. Tonya shared some of the topics discussed at the conference including a workforce plan to go into the medical field for American Indian youth, liaisons, the concern with low American Indian graduation rates, and they shared MN AAFPCWDA updates.
4. Screening Project Discussion
  - a. What do we need to understand?
    - i. Panel members shared they want to know:
      1. How does a child welfare workers training translate into their daily role?
      2. How do they ask questions when screening?
      3. What does their tone sounds like and how are the questions asked?

4. How is the “script” for screeners created to begin with and what questions are supposed to be asked?
5. What does the State and statutes say about screening? Guidance on what a screener can or cannot say.
6. Gapske will resend the video link from David on screening and disproportionalities in the child welfare system.
  - ii. Gapske will connect with Amanda Lager who is the policy expert on the screening guidelines to present at the next meeting.
  - iii. Gapske will follow up with the MN Child Welfare Training Academy to ask about access to training focused on foundations training for screening cases.
  - iv. Gapske will reach out to the CQI Screening staff to see if they could come to the May meeting to present their process reviewing random screening decisions in SSIS.
  - v. Stats were requested on screening and the types of maltreatment from Ramsey County-David will follow up with that information.
5. Updates from DCYF
  - a. Update on dv and co-occurrence best practice guide child welfare listening sessions. Information and themes will be brought back to panels once completed.
  - b. Law enforcement emergency removals training information shared.
6. Updates from Ramsey County
  - a. No updates at this time. David will be out for the next three weeks.

### **Project Discussion and Timeline**

Project Goal: Provide actionable recommendations for updating child protection screening guidelines and/or screening guidelines training

Project Summary: CSRP members review existing child protection screening guidelines and do research to make recommendations for updating the guidelines. 2026 project (part 1) will focus on recommendations. 2027 project (part 2) will focus on working with partners to implement the guidelines.

#### By March meeting:

- Group: read all docs related to screening guidelines - list/links to come

#### In March meeting:

- Discuss what we learned and what direction we want to make to explore issues/recommend changes

#### Between March and April:

- Do research to figure out if we took on a specific area of changes to recommend, what speakers/education/etc do we need ?

#### In April meeting:

- Outline research plan together

#### April through June:

- Research, groundwork, etc updating our plan and understanding as we go
- Document possible recommendations along the way

#### In August meeting: (or a month later if this is the break month):

- Review existing draft recommendations

- Brainstorm more

Between August and Sept meetings:

- Finalize draft of recommendations and send to members for review

In September meeting:

- Review and confirm draft recommendations
- Plan next steps for distribution/review with DHS and Ramsey County partners

September/October:

- Review recommendations with DHS and the county and adjust - goal would be to align together on course of action based on recommendations

November/December:

- Work with county to plan timeline for implementing recommendations with training in 2027

Molly motions to make the Screening process as a project for the CSRP; Ankit seconds  
6 approvals, one abstention

#### Comments/Requests

- David will follow up on members coming to watch screening and intake happening in real time.
- David will look into TST mock screening and other recordings
- Can the panel see the tools, checklists, or scripts that Screeners use?

#### **Project Ideas**

- Mandated reporting training
  - This was recently updated

#### **Announcements/Comments**

- Foster Youth Bill of Rights is currently being drafted. However, it seems like it is too long. The way it is currently written is not tailored for youth.
- Foster Advocates Legislative agenda has come out - [2026 Legislative Agenda — Foster Advocates](#)
- Jill will look at hosting us in person in June