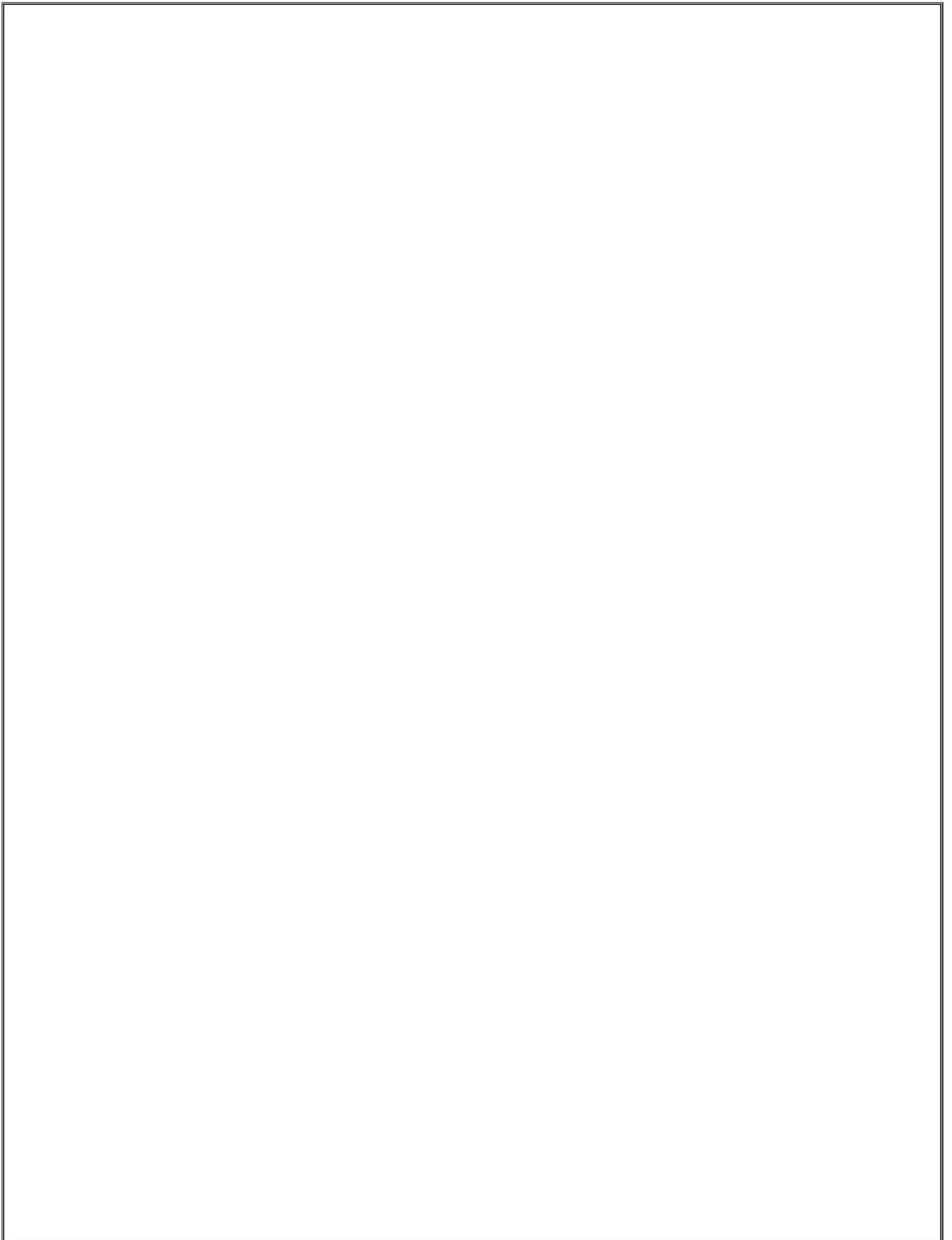


Michigan Supreme Court  
State Court Administrative Office

# Michigan Foster Care Review Board 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

## PLACEMENT STABILITY





**Michigan Supreme Court**

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Chad C. Schmucker  
State Court Administrator

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Governor Rick Snyder  
Lt. Governor Brian N. Calley  
Honorable Members of the Michigan Legislature

**FROM:** Chad C. Schmucker, State Court Administrator 

**DATE:** May 16, 2010

**SUBJECT:** 2010 Foster Care Review Board Annual Report

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It is my pleasure to present the 2010 Annual Report of the Foster Care Review Board. This report, submitted to you pursuant to 1997 PA 170, § 9, provides an overview of the review board's functions and program activity details from this past year. Included are data, trend summaries, and observations gleaned by the board during 2010 from the review of cases involving over 1,100 children in foster care.

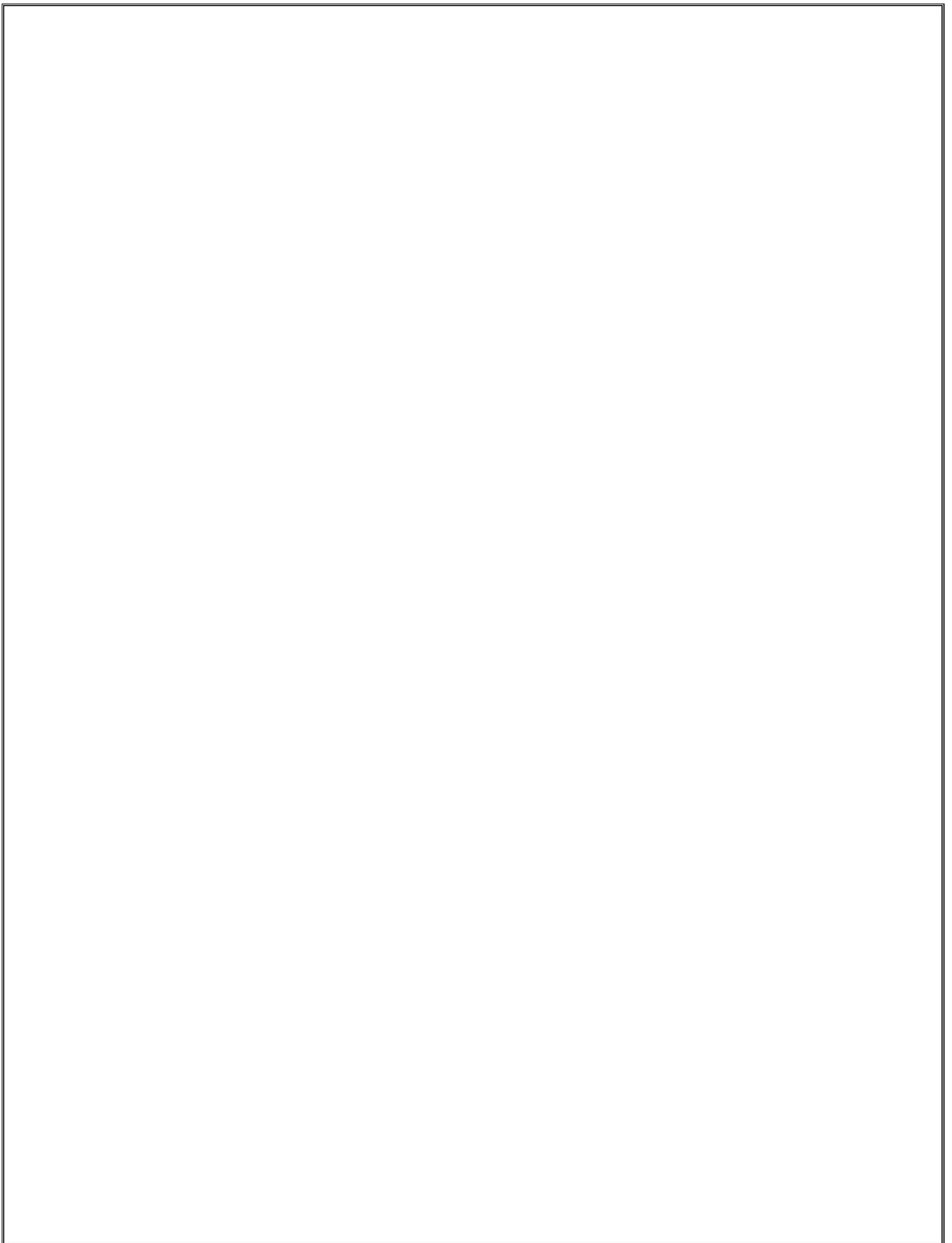
These reviews were conducted by 186 dedicated and well-trained citizen volunteers. The information obtained from case reviews provides an objective, third-party evaluation of the care that Michigan's foster care system provides to abused and neglected children.

This year's report and recommendations address significant issues related to placement stability for children in foster care, with a focus on the need for recruitment and retention of well-qualified foster parents.

I hope this report will prove valuable to all involved parties as we work together to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children and families served by our state foster care system.

Please feel free to contact Jim Novell, Program Manager for the Foster Care Review Board, at (313) 972-3288 with any questions you may have regarding this report.

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### **FCRB MISSION STATEMENT**

*The mission of the Foster Care Review Board is to utilize citizen volunteers to review and evaluate permanency planning processes and outcomes for children and families in the Michigan foster care system. Based on the data collected through case review, the Foster Care Review Board advocates for systemic improvements in areas of child safety, timely permanency, and family and child well-being.*



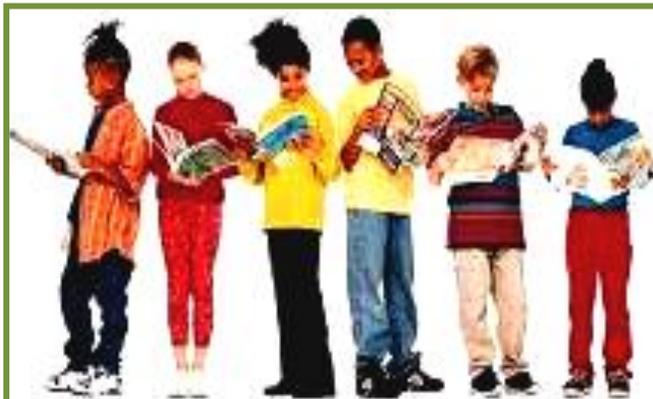
The Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) provides independent third-party review of cases in the state child foster care system. The FCRB also hears appeals by foster parents who believe that children are being unnecessarily removed from their care. Established by the Michigan Legislature in 1984 Public Act 422, as subsequently amended by 1986 PA 159, 1989 PA 74, and 1997 PA 170, the FCRB helps ensure that children are safe and well cared for while in the state foster care system, and that their cases are being moved toward permanency in a timely and efficient manner.

The FCRB provides this support by reviewing randomly selected individual foster care cases from each county and providing case-specific recommendations to the family division of the local circuit court, to local offices of the Department of Human Services (DHS), and to contracted agencies. The review process also serves to identify systemic barriers to safety, timely permanency, and child well-being, and to monitor Michigan's compliance with important federal funding requirements.

FCRB review boards are comprised of citizen volunteers from a variety of professions and backgrounds. They are recruited, screened, and trained on key aspects of the child welfare and foster care systems, including court policy and rules, federal funding requirements, DHS policy, and state statutes regarding child protection.

Citizen review remains a cost-efficient and effective means of assisting the courts, DHS, the Legislature, and other interested parties by providing them with an objective perspective on the foster care case management process. Citizen volunteers donated over 10,000 hours of their time to case review this past year. Their capacity and willingness to significantly increase that number is limited only by available staff support.<sup>1</sup>

This annual report is our opportunity to detail the efforts of the FCRB during the past year and to share with Michigan's policymakers some of the systemic issues that our citizen volunteers have identified while reviewing foster care cases from throughout the state.



### **FCRB VISION STATEMENT**

*The Foster Care Review Board will be viewed and valued by the courts, the Department of Human Services, private child-placing agencies, the Legislature, and the citizens of Michigan as a major source of credible data on the performance of the child welfare system. Additionally, citizens of the state will use the data to shape public policy and promote awareness regarding the child foster care system.*

<sup>1</sup> FCRB staffing levels were reduced due to budget constraints in both 2007 and 2009.

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**2010 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

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**Court Rule:** In July 2010, the Michigan Supreme Court approved amendments to MCR 3.973, MCR 3.975, and MCR 3.976 directing how courts should utilize and respond to Foster Care Review Board reports received in child protective proceedings. These amendments provide instructions regarding placement of reports in appropriate court files and utilization of reports in the case review process. The amendments took effect on January 1, 2011.

**Annual Child Welfare Awards:** These awards are presented at our annual conference to formally recognize outstanding work by child welfare professionals. Awards were added this year for outstanding foster parent and parent attorney. The 2010 winners are listed below:

**Foster Parent of the Year****Elaine Van Leeuwen**

Licensed through Family and Children Services, Calhoun County

**Foster Care Caseworker of the Year****Amy Venard**

D.A., Blodgett-St. John's Homes for Children, Kent County

**Parent Attorney of the Year****Tracy Green**

Detroit Center for Family Advocacy

**Lawyer-Guardian Ad Litem of the Year****Viola King**

Juvenile Law Group, Wayne County

**Jurist of the Year****Judge Faye Harrison**

Saginaw County Probate Court

*Nomination forms for the 2011 awards will be available beginning in June at <http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/services/fcrb/fcrb.htm>.*

**Annual Conference:** The 2010 FCRB annual conference was held in Mt. Pleasant this year, with all first-day sessions conducted collaboratively with the State Court Administrative Office Court Improvement Program. National experts focused on the need to improve parent-child visitation, both in quality and frequency, in order to improve reunification timeliness and increase the frequency of reunification as the permanency goal. The second day of the conference provided volunteer board members with an overview of several DHS initiatives, including a new medical unit, efforts to reduce the need for children to be placed in long-term residential care, and a new unit created to work with Child Protective Services to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect of children in the foster care system.

**Program Data System:** In 2010, the FCRB program established an independent data system that supports user-friendly and timely data entry, data retrieval, system repairs, and adjustments to data elements. (FCRB Administrative Assistant Kathy Lohr Falconello and Judicial Information Systems Support Specialist Gina Miloser are to be commended for this achievement.)

## 2010 PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

1. **What percentage of foster parent appeals are investigated within seven days, as required by MCL 712A.13b(3)?**
  - 2010: 86 percent
  - 2011 goal: 92 percent
  
2. **What percentage of cases were reviewed by local boards consecutively every six months, as required by MCL 722.137(1)(b)?**
  - 2010: 56 percent
  - 2011 goal: 70 percent
  
3. **What percentage of cases were distributed to interested parties within 30 days of the review, or prior to the next court hearing, as required by MCL 722.137(1)(b)?**
  - 2010: 80 percent
  - 2011 goal: 90 percent

## INTRODUCTION

This 2010 report emphasizes placement stability for children in foster care, which is a critical component of a safe and successful foster care experience. The impetus for this focus is the significant recent increase in foster parent appeals of agency decisions to remove children from their homes.

The number of appeals increased 52 percent from 2008 to 2010. Although the number of appeals investigated by the board represents only a small percentage of the children whose placements were changed, the FCRB's investigations of the appealed cases identified many issues that impact placement stability.

| APPEALS        | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|----------------|------|------|------|
| Appeals heard: | 82   | 101  | 125  |
| Intake calls:  | 121  | 126  | 142  |

*Another current concern is the high number of foster children for whom the permanency goal is "Another Planned Permanency Living Arrangement" (APPLA). The FCRB closed the case files of 43 children with a goal of APPLA in 2010, and analysis of related data indicates that these children averaged 8.8 placements during their time in care. (See page 14.)*

Although placement stability impacts many aspects of the foster care experience for children and their parents, studies over the past few years indicate that it also impacts recruitment and retention of foster parents. A large number of our foster parent appeal investigations included a recommendation by the licensing agency to revoke a foster parent's license. Furthermore, a number of these foster parents advised the board that they were considering voluntarily relinquishing their licenses, expressing disillusionment with the experience of foster parenting. Their primary concerns included a lack of support and assistance by the agency and caseworker, and a lack of adequate information about the special needs of the children placed with them.



As always, we hope that the information, observations, and recommendations in this year's report will be strongly considered and acted upon by the Michigan leaders and officials who are ultimately responsible for the safety and well-being of the children served by our state foster care system.

*On a positive note, the 59 cases closed for review by the board in 2010 with a permanency plan of **reunification** averaged only 2 placements while the case was open. Reunification cases, however, accounted for only 19 percent of all cases closed for review by the FCRB in 2010, while adoptions accounted for 40 percent. (See page 14.)*

## PLACEMENT STABILITY AND CHILD WELL-BEING

Placement stability for children in foster care is a key predictor of a "successful" foster care experience. A collaborative study initiated by Casey Family Programs (see bibliography) reported that maintaining children in a safe, stable, and nurturing home during their time in foster care will:

- Minimize child pain and trauma.
- Lessen childhood disorders related to attachment, behavior, and mental health.
- Decrease school enrollment changes and increase academic achievement.
- Maximize continuity in services, decrease foster parent stress, and lower program costs.
- Increase the likelihood that a child will establish an enduring, positive relationship with a caring adult.

When we make the difficult decision to bring a child into care, we make a tacit promise to provide a safe, **stable**, and nurturing temporary home until a permanent one can be restored or established.

Children coming into foster care, regardless of age or the reason for their removal, will, to differing degrees, be traumatized by this action. For many of these children, removal adds even more pain to the trauma related to the circumstances that made removal necessary. To be considered successful, the foster care experience must do everything possible to mediate the traumatic impact of these experiences on the child, and most certainly should not compound that impact.

Unfortunately, all too often, trauma to the child *is* compounded. It is compounded every time a child is moved from one foster home to another. Each move forces the child to again experience the distress, anxiety, grief, and loss experienced when initially removed from his or her home. Each move may involve a change in schools, loss of friends, change in therapist, and loss of other relationships, routines, or activities the child has established while in that placement.

When children are initially brought into foster care, they are removed from everything they are familiar with, even when placed with a relative they know and trust. They wake up in a strange bed, in a strange house, surrounded by strange furniture. And, in many cases, their new "parents" are strangers who,

while well-meaning and presumed competent, are not **their** parents. Yet we still ask these children to accept foster parents, to trust them, obey them, and attach to them. Then, **due to circumstances beyond their own control**, these children may be moved and forced to experience the entire traumatic process again and, possibly, yet again a few weeks or months later.

Children in foster care often develop strong attachments to their foster parents. This is a positive sign of healthy development for the child. At times, these attachments become as strong as the bonds they have with their biological parents. Although moving children and youth from one placement to another sometimes is necessary and appropriate, particularly when the move supports achievement of their permanency goal, placement changes many times do more harm than good. Often, placement moves are made with little or no preparation of the child, ultimately adding to the trauma of the move. No matter how logical the case worker's explanation to the child (if the child even receives an explanation), it does not change the reactions the child will have when separated from their present foster family.



Some children will experience a sense of inadequacy, rejection, and shame, believing they have done something “bad” that brought about this move. Regardless of how problematic the placement was, all *will* experience some level of loss and grieving. Most experts believe that almost no one in our society, especially a child in foster care, has adequate tools for dealing with multiple episodes of rejection, grief, and loss.

When infants are placed directly from the hospital into a foster home for any length of time, the child will bond with the foster parents if they are nurturing people. They become the primary caretakers to whom that child turns for comfort and safety on a daily basis. Any sudden move is undoubtedly traumatic, particularly if the new placement is not permanent, and the child must be moved again.

There is substantial literature available regarding attachment and bonding issues and the deleterious impact that placement in foster care and subsequent placement moves have on children, particularly young children (see bibliography). Placement instability for children in foster care adversely impacts the child's physical health, cognitive and academic functioning, social-emotional well-being, and capacity to meet responsibilities associated with a successful transition to adulthood. Research indicates that the younger the child and the longer the placement, the greater the adverse impact of removing that child from foster parents to whom he or she has become attached.

Many children come into foster care with pre-existing attachment and bonding deficits. All too often, the system exacerbates the deficits through multiple placement changes, when the primary goal should be to remediate them. Children with attachment and bonding deficits typically display them through externalizing behavior, which presents significant challenges to foster parents and results in requests for additional services and support (which may or may not be provided).

The literature indicates that these circumstances may account for up to 70 percent of foster care moves, with either the foster parent reluctantly requesting the removal, or the agency initiating the removal due to the foster parent's inability to appropriately manage the child's behavior.

Aside from the reasons noted above, typical reasons for unplanned moves of children include procedural or policy mandates such as moving the child from an initial emergency placement, foster home licensing violations, or placing a child with a sibling or other relative. The Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) reports over 7,000 placement changes for children in foster care in FY 2010.

### **IMPACT OF PLACEMENT STABILITY ON FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

Michigan faces significant challenges in its efforts to recruit -- and particularly to retain -- qualified and dedicated foster parents. Presently, we have approximately 7,100 active foster homes to care for approximately 15,000 children in foster care. DHS reports that in 2010, we recruited nearly 2000 new foster parents, but we lost over 1,800. This poses a serious threat to Michigan's child welfare system. Foster parents are the people we ask to look after our state's most vulnerable children, and they play a critical role in our efforts to protect and nurture these children, as well as provide them with stability and permanency. The vast majority of children adopted from the foster care system in Michigan are adopted by families with whom the child has been placed for foster care.

Our state's inability to recruit and retain a sufficient number of quality and "qualified" foster parents places caseworkers under substantial pressure to identify appropriate foster homes from a limited pool available for both initial placements and placement changes. Caseworkers must meet competing policy demands for placement, such as placing children with relatives, maintaining siblings together, meeting children's cultural needs, and placing children close to the neighborhoods from which they were removed. These demands are in addition to finding a home that is capable of caring for a child's special needs. Caseworkers must make these determinations within a short time frame, and for many children, this process almost certainly means they will have more than one placement. The Wayne County Child Placing Network, which was implemented in 2006, attempts to address these issues. However, its success in reducing placement moves and reducing stress on foster care workers remains unclear at this time.

Many children coming into our foster care system today have multiple special needs and difficult behaviors that require well-qualified, experienced foster parents. The current scarcity of such foster parents frequently results in agencies placing children in homes with inexperienced, new, or marginal foster parents who are unprepared for the challenges these children present. They do not always have the skills or receive the training, support, and services necessary to successfully meet such challenges. This often results in a placement change for the child, either because it was requested by the foster parents or required by the agency.

The relationship between externalizing behavior problems in children and placement disruptions is well documented throughout the literature. One study by Chapin Hall regarding placement instability indicated that over 75 percent of foster care moves in a specified time period were due, in part, to the foster parents' unwillingness to continue fostering. A primary reason given for this was their intolerance for or unwillingness to continue fostering children with significant emotional or behavioral problems, often due to a lack of support and training.

A 2002 foster parent retention report authored by Janet Rehnquist, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, was based on surveys and focus groups of child welfare staff, foster

parents, and foster care program managers from five states. It identified five primary reasons that foster parents willingly leave the system:

- Failure to have a voice in decisions affecting children in their care, with both the courts and agencies ignoring their input and suggestions.
- Caseworkers who are inaccessible and slow to respond to the needs of the children and the foster parents.
- Absence of appropriate mental health and behavioral services for foster children, and lack of adequate supportive services for foster parents, e.g., respite care, childcare, and training.
- Having to address false allegations of abuse and neglect.
- Incurring expenses exceeding reimbursements, including parents' personal funds spent on extracurricular activities, such as sports fees and equipment, and transportation to numerous medical appointments.

The conclusion of the report was as follows:

While foster parents leave the system for a variety of reasons, many leave because they are frustrated and exhausted. They are weary from navigating a foster care system that is difficult and inoperable, where they are unsupported and unprepared for the rigors of caring for children with significant behavior problems.

Another study, this one commissioned by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) in 2002, produced the following conclusions:

Although some foster parents quit because of normal life changes such as a return to work or the birth of a child, many leave because of a lack of support from the child welfare agency and a feeling of being undervalued and unappreciated. These problems are, in large measure, attributable to high turnover among foster care caseworkers. Lack of continuity in relationships with caseworkers makes it difficult for foster parents to maintain the trust, respect and support they need from the child welfare system. In addition, foster parents frequently are asked to care for children with serious physical, emotional and behavioral problems but often are poorly trained, not given adequate information about the children in their care, and are left on their own to negotiate a fragmented and confusing service delivery system. They usually are not consulted when decisions are made on behalf of the child. The monthly payments they receive are, in many cases, insufficient to cover their expenses. They often are confused about their roles, rights and responsibilities but may be labeled as troublemakers if they ask questions or seek help from caseworkers.

The Jordan Institute for Families, which is the research and training arm of the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, notes the following with regard to the difficulty of recruiting and retaining foster and adoptive parents:



- More children with complex problems entering the system; thus,
- Parents need more support, training, and respite care.
- Financial reimbursement to parents is low relative to the cost of raising a child.
- More households have two working parents.
- The "system" gets lots of negative publicity and parents do not want to get involved.

One study, conducted by the Oregon State Children's Services Division and referenced in the Jordon Institute for Families material, addressed the impact of money and support services on foster parent retention and supported what the other studies mentioned above reported. It involved 72 foster families and examined the effects of enhanced foster parent support and training on foster parent retention and the outcomes for children. They divided the participating families into three groups: Group 1 received enhanced support and training plus an increased payment of \$70/month; Group 2 received the \$70, but did not receive the increase in services; and Group 3 received no extra support. The results were not surprising: 9.6 percent of Group 1, 14.3 percent of Group 2, and 25.9 percent of Group 3 discontinued care. Compared to the state average of 40 percent discontinuation of care, the results reflect the positive effect of additional support (training, money, and other services) on foster parent retention.

Money and training may be the easiest aspects of foster parent recruitment and retention to address if the child welfare system truly wants to improve in this area. However, as noted in the studies above, there are other significant factors that impact foster parent retention. A foster parent's sense of value and inclusion in the planning of a child's case is one factor. Another factor of ultimate importance is the support, or lack thereof, by the caseworker and/or licensing worker in helping them to address the demands of caring for children with significant special needs.

Foster parents who come before the Foster Care Review Board for case reviews or appeals often say that they feel excluded from much of the process. Most who share these thoughts see themselves as subordinates whose input is devalued or minimized by both the caseworker and the court. This happens despite the fact that the foster parents have the most direct contact with the child and possess first-hand information and practical insights based on an intimate understanding of the child's daily life and experiences.



Foster parents face great challenges and demands from the very beginning of the fostering process. Before they ever have children placed with them, they must undergo a necessary but onerous and invasive licensing process, as well as perfunctory training that can only begin to prepare them for the challenges they are about to face. They are expected to welcome unfamiliar, grieving, traumatized children into their homes; invest in them emotionally, physically, and financially; and help them through difficult times. Many of these children put immense stress on an otherwise healthy family system and challenge even the best parenting skills. Furthermore, in most cases, the foster parent will only see a foster care worker once a month and their licensing worker once a year, unless there are allegations of wrongdoing.

By design, the system requires that a foster parent's intense investment in the lives of these children be temporary. When the placement ends, whether at the foster parent's request, the agency's insistence, or the child going to his/her permanency placement, the child is not the only one significantly impacted by this event. When children in their care are moved, regardless of the reason, foster parents must cope with significant feelings of grief and loss, inadequacy and rejection, much like the children do when a placement change occurs. A foster parent's sense of grief and loss is not necessarily lessened by the fact they are informed early on by the caseworker of the likelihood that the child may be removed from their care; awareness does not fully mitigate the impact of the re-placement. Assuming that there is less grief because there is foreknowledge of the possibility of loss is the equivalent of expecting someone with a terminally ill child to grieve less at the time of the child's death because they knew that the child would die. Grief and loss are the natural consequences of the cycle of human attachment and separation. These feelings cannot be eliminated or even lessened, and can only be handled with recognition, empathy, and support. Minimizing or ignoring foster parents' very real potential for experiencing grief over loss is one of the surest ways for our system to lose good foster parents.

While the re-placement of children from a foster home will always result in some level of grief and loss being experienced by the foster parents, it is not the only event that may do so. Foster parents may also experience a loss of self-esteem and confidence in their parenting skills when they feel they have failed with a child. If their license is revoked, foster parents may view the action as a public declaration of their failure. The stresses of fostering challenging children may result in marital problems and divorce, and if foster parents are placed on the child abuse and neglect central registry, the loss of a job or an entire career.

The impact of grief and loss on foster parent recruitment and retention is not a new phenomenon. The Jordan Institute material also references a study that Lois Urquhart conducted in 1989 to determine whether foster parents' experiences of separation and loss affected their decisions to continue fostering children. She surveyed 376 foster homes, 275 of which were licensed and open to children, and 101 of which had been licensed previously, but had closed within the past 3 years. Her findings indicated that foster parents who were unprepared for or unsupported during the separation and loss experience were at significant risk for leaving foster care.

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## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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Children entering foster care typically come from unstable and chaotic home environments. Many have been significantly traumatized and enter care with pre-existing attachment and bonding deficits. Since these children have already experienced significant trauma, separation, and loss, special care must be taken by the system to not compound it.

Studies have concluded that placement stability is a key predictor of a child's success in foster care and beyond. Placement disruptions can contribute to behavioral and attachment problems, as well as other challenges for children, such as mental health issues, educational underachievement, and possibly unemployment and poverty as they enter adulthood.

It is sometimes necessary to move a child because of imminent risk to their safety and well-being. However, moving a child from a successful foster care placement should be done only as a last resort, after support and services have been offered to the child and family to prevent the move. If a child must be moved, a transition plan should be developed, taking into consideration the child's age, attachment

needs, and depth of attachment to the foster parents and foster siblings, along with a definitive plan for how the agency is going to support the new placement and prevent any further replacements. Details for these plans should be clearly documented in the case services plan.

A growing body of literature and research indicates that placement instability impacts foster parent retention and recruitment. The growing population of children with multiple special needs and problematic externalized behaviors has required significant changes in the roles and expectations of foster parents. The need for better trained foster parents and a state system that understands and supports the needs of the foster parents are emphasized throughout the literature.

The foster parent's significant experience of grief and loss related to caring for these children was emphasized as an area that requires increased recognition, understanding and support by the licensing agency. Priority attention should be given to this problem and the other internal systemic issues that impact foster parent retention if we are to establish a foster care system built on a sufficient number of highly qualified and satisfied foster parents. To this end, the National Conference of State Legislatures offers the following recommendations for retaining qualified foster parents:

- "Adequate" pre service and in-service training.
- Comprehensive information about the child, including the child's current case plan, educational and medical needs, and placement and treatment history.
  - Respect and inclusion as a member of the child's case planning team and as a partner in the policy development process.
  - Ongoing support from the child welfare agency, including adequate supervision, monitoring, and consultation, as well as a network of other foster parents who can provide support and serve as mentors.
  - An opportunity to provide feedback to the agency without fear of reprisal.
  - Clarity about the foster parents' roles, rights, and responsibilities.
  - Services such as child care, respite care, liability insurance, and health care.
  - Sufficient reimbursement to cover the cost of raising the child placed with them.\*



*\* Consensus recommendation from all studies referenced.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**1. We recommend that the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) Director appoint a "blue ribbon" panel of experts to develop a strategic plan for ensuring the recruitment and retention of high-quality and well-qualified foster parents for children served by Michigan's foster care system. Specifically, we recommend that the panel be charged with:**

- Assessing systemic, child, and foster family factors that impact foster parent retention.
- Reviewing the present foster parent PRIDE training to ensure that it meets the needs of both licensed foster parents and relative caregivers.

- Determining the level of foster parent contact and support by caseworkers and licensing workers that will maximize placement stability and foster parent retention.
  - Determining if caseworkers have the appropriate training and supervision to assess and respond to foster parents' needs for support and services.
  - Identifying and evaluating well-researched or promising retention practices.
  - Evaluating the foster care per diem reimbursement and its impact on retention.
  - Delivering a final report and written recommendations to the DHS director and the Legislature.
2. **We recommend amending or enforcing DHS policies to require that case service plans clearly address the following items:**
- An assessment of the present placement for each child; specifically, how well it meets a child's special needs. This should include an objective assessment of the foster parents' needs for support, services, and training.
  - A specific plan detailing how the agency will support the success of the placement and the child's safety and well-being in the placement.
3. **We recommend that the DHS implement policies that require the establishment of foster parent support groups and foster parent liaisons for each DHS county office and private contracted agency.**
4. **We recommend that the DHS establish an independent entity to conduct exit surveys or interviews with foster parents to learn specifically why they are leaving the system and what support and services may have enabled them to continue.**
5. **We recommend that the Michigan Legislature pass a Foster Parent Bill of Rights that guarantees appropriate training, support, compensation, and inclusion in all relevant aspects of any case involving a child placed in their home. We recommend that the contents of this bill be negotiated among DHS, representatives of private child placement agencies, and a representative body of foster parents, such as the Michigan Association for Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Parents (MAFAK).**
6. **We recommend that the DHS facilitate the development of a single foster parent coalition or association to collaborate with statewide and local efforts to improve the services and support provided to foster, relative, and adoptive parents in their care of our state's most vulnerable children.**



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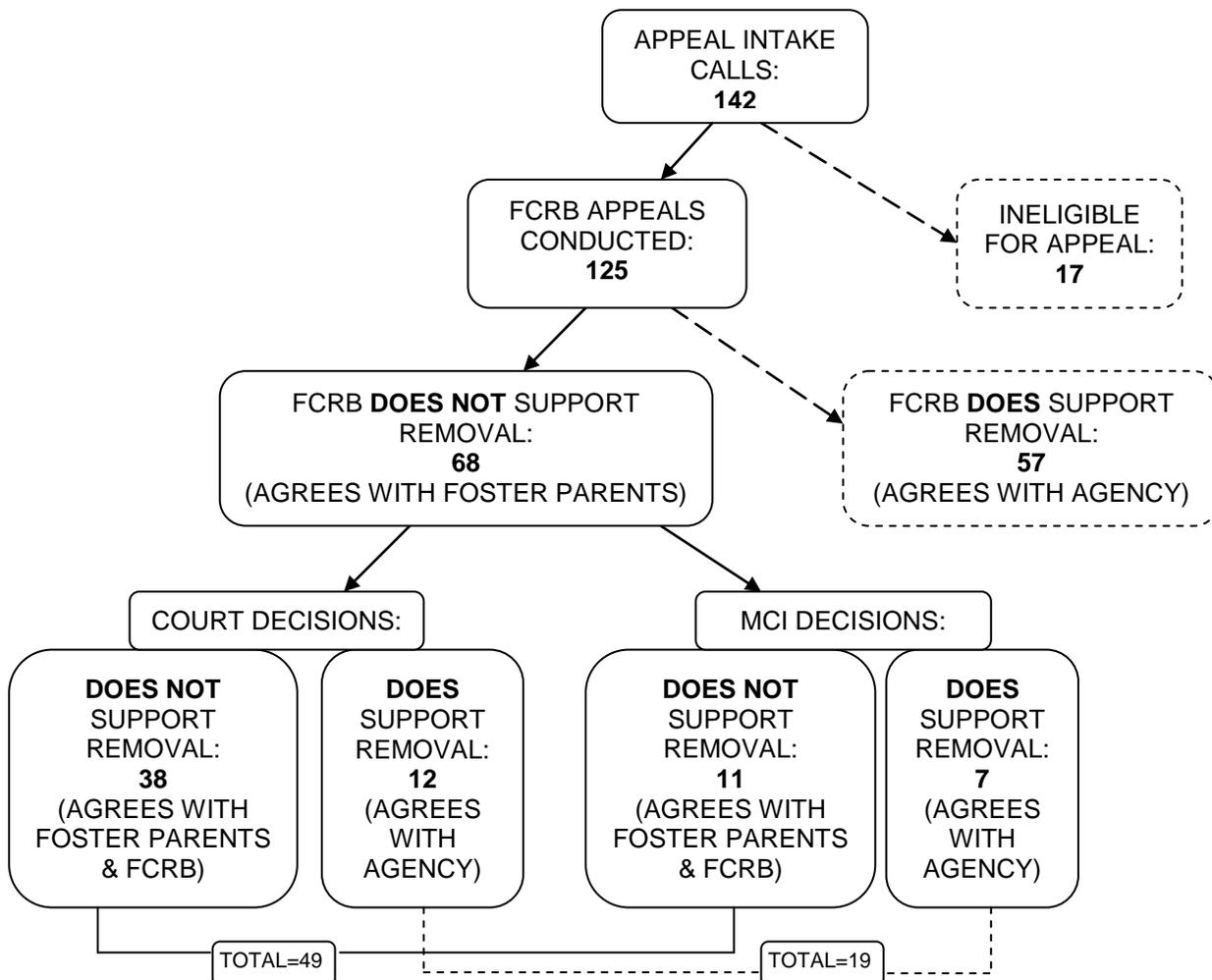
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**FOSTER PARENT APPEALS**

Pursuant to 1997 PA 163, foster parents may appeal the removal of a ward from their home. Eligible appeals are heard by local foster care review boards, which then either agree or disagree with the child’s removal. If the review board **agrees** with the foster parents and determines that the removal was **not** in the child’s best interests, the matter is then heard by the court or reviewed by the Michigan Children’s Institute (MCI) superintendent (if the child is an MCI ward).

In 2010, the Foster Care Review Board Program received **142** intake calls from foster parents who inquired about appealing a removal decision. Local review boards conducted **125** appeals, agreeing with the foster parents **68** times (54.4 percent) and with the agencies **57** times (45.6 percent).

Those **68** cases where the review boards supported the foster parents and determined the moves were not in the children’s best interests were subsequently reviewed by the court or the MCI. The court and MCI superintendent upheld the review boards’ decisions in support of the foster parents (against removal) **49** times. Alternatively, they supported the agencies’ decisions (in favor of removal) **19** times.



## 2010 REVIEW DATA

| CLOSED CASES | Permanency Outcome   | Total | Average Days in Care | Average Months in Care | Average Number of Placements |
|--------------|----------------------|-------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
|              | Adoption             | 118   | 1193.2               | 99.0                   | 3.0                          |
|              | APPLA                | 19    | 1678.8               | 139.0                  | 8.8                          |
|              | APPLA (E)            | 24    | 1659.4               | 138.0                  | 6.3                          |
|              | AWOLP                | 1     | n/a                  | n/a                    | 1.0                          |
|              | Fit Willing Relative | 25    | 1601.2               | 133.0                  | 3.2                          |
|              | Guardianship         | 26    | 1284.8               | 107.0                  | 2.2                          |
|              | Other                | 40    | 1620.5               | 135.0                  | 4.4                          |
|              | Reunification        | 59    | 783.7                | 65.0                   | 2.2                          |
|              | Totals               | 312   | 1403                 | 116.0                  | 3.9                          |

| Barriers to Permanency                              | Number of Applicable Cases |
|---|----------------------------|
| Ward behavior                                       | 285                        |
| Other   | 185                        |
| Lack of appropriate adoptive home                   | 85                         |
| Admin delays-agency                                 | 57                         |
| Perm plan inappropriate to child's needs            | 45                         |
| Parental appeal of termination decision             | 42                         |
| Parenting skill needs-parents not using/benefiting  | 41                         |
| No perm plan/unclear                                | 40                         |
| Unidentified specific living arrangement            | 37                         |
| Un-established specific living arrangement          | 34                         |
| Competing parties                                   | 34                         |
| Caseworker changes                                  | 33                         |
| Parent lacks sufficient income                      | 32                         |
| Mental health needs-parents not using/benefiting    | 32                         |
| Parenting time insufficient for reunification       | 32                         |
| Affordable/suitable housing unavailable             | 31                         |
| Child safety needs-parents not using/benefiting     | 30                         |
| Age 14-up not involved in treatment plan            | 30                         |
| Substance abuse needs-parents not using/benefiting  | 29                         |
| LGAL not actively involved                          | 28                         |
| Suitable housing needs-parents not using/benefiting | 26                         |
| Needed services/support unavailable                 | 20                         |
| Relatives/family not initially recruited            | 20                         |

Additional data is available at the Michigan Courts website:  
<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/services/fcrb/fcrb.htm>

| County     | Children Reviewed | Review Hearings Conducted* | Appeal Hearings Conducted | County       | Children Reviewed | Review Hearings Conducted* | Appeal Hearings Conducted |
|------------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| ALCONA     | 1                 | 1                          | 1                         | KALKASKA     | 5                 | 5                          |                           |
| ALGER      | 1                 | 1                          |                           | KENT         | 32                | 34                         | 7                         |
| ALLEGAN    | 11                | 11                         | 1                         | LAKE         | 9                 | 9                          |                           |
| ALPENA     | 0                 | 0                          | 1                         | LAPEER       | 9                 | 11                         |                           |
| ANTRIM     | 2                 | 3                          |                           | LEELANAU     | 6                 | 6                          |                           |
| ARENAC     | 5                 | 5                          |                           | LENAWEE      | 8                 | 8                          |                           |
| BARAGA     | 2                 | 2                          |                           | LIVINGSTON   | 6                 | 6                          |                           |
| BARRY      | 8                 | 8                          |                           | LUCE         | 4                 | 4                          |                           |
| BAY        | 7                 | 8                          |                           | MACKINAC     | 2                 | 2                          |                           |
| BENZIE     | 1                 | 1                          |                           | MACOMB       | 32                | 46                         | 12                        |
| BERRIEN    | 33                | 49                         | 8                         | MANISTEE     | 3                 | 3                          |                           |
| BRANCH     | 15                | 24                         | 4                         | MASON        | 3                 | 3                          |                           |
| CALHOUN    | 33                | 51                         | 6                         | MECOSTA      | 4                 | 4                          |                           |
| CASS       | 13                | 13                         | 1                         | MENOMINEE    | 2                 | 2                          |                           |
| CHARLEVOIX | 2                 | 2                          |                           | MIDLAND      | 8                 | 10                         | 2                         |
| CHEBOYGAN  | 8                 | 8                          | 2                         | MISSAUKEE    | 2                 | 2                          |                           |
| CHIPPEWA   | 1                 | 1                          |                           | MONROE       | 16                | 21                         | 2                         |
| CLARE      | 2                 | 2                          |                           | MONTCALM     | 3                 | 3                          |                           |
| CLINTON    | 4                 | 4                          |                           | MONTMORENCY  | 4                 | 4                          |                           |
| CRAWFORD   | 8                 | 8                          |                           | MUSKEGON     | 20                | 23                         | 7                         |
| DELTA      | 1                 | 1                          |                           | NEWAYGO      | 10                | 11                         |                           |
| DICKINSON  | 3                 | 3                          |                           | OAKLAND      | 41                | 51                         | 3                         |
| EATON      | 9                 | 9                          | 2                         | OCEANA       | 1                 | 1                          |                           |
| EMMET      | 4                 | 4                          |                           | OSCEOLA      | 4                 | 4                          |                           |
| GENESEE    | 19                | 32                         | 6                         | OSCODA       | 1                 | 1                          |                           |
| GLADWIN    | 2                 | 2                          |                           | OTSEGO       | 8                 | 8                          |                           |
| GRAND TRAV | 3                 | 3                          | 1                         | OTTAWA       | 8                 | 9                          | 5                         |
| GRATIOT    | 4                 | 4                          |                           | ROSCOMMON    | 3                 | 3                          |                           |
| HILLSDALE  | 12                | 12                         |                           | SAGINAW      | 19                | 19                         | 1                         |
| HOUGHTON   | 6                 | 6                          |                           | SANILAC      | 4                 | 4                          |                           |
| HURON      | 6                 | 6                          | 2                         | SCHOOLCRAFT  | 6                 | 6                          |                           |
| INGHAM     | 49                | 66                         | 14                        | ST CLAIR     | 12                | 16                         |                           |
| IONIA      | 4                 | 4                          | 5                         | ST JOSEPH    | 5                 | 8                          | 5                         |
| IOSCO      | 6                 | 6                          |                           | TUSCOLA      | 6                 | 6                          | 2                         |
| IRON       | 1                 | 1                          |                           | VAN BUREN    | 16                | 16                         | 2                         |
| ISABELLA   | 4                 | 4                          | 3                         | WASHTENAW    | 24                | 33                         |                           |
| JACKSON    | 28                | 43                         | 4                         | WAYNE        | 289               | 404                        | 14                        |
| KALAMAZOO  | 30                | 39                         | 4                         | WEXFORD      | 3                 | 3                          |                           |
|            |                   |                            |                           | <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>986</b>        | <b>1256</b>                | <b>65</b>                 |

\*\* Open cases are scheduled for regular re-review and are sometimes heard twice in one calendar year.

## UPDATE: 2009 ANNUAL REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Foster Care Review Board's 2009 Annual Report contained the recommendations addressed and updated below. That report is available at the Michigan Courts website:

[http://courts.michigan.gov/scao//resources/publications/reports/fcrb/fcrb\\_ar09.pdf](http://courts.michigan.gov/scao//resources/publications/reports/fcrb/fcrb_ar09.pdf).

1. **We recommend that the State Court Administrative Office's Court Improvement Program collaborate with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to form a task force of foster care caseworkers, judges, parent and child attorneys, foster parents and parent advocates, with the goal of establishing a functional and useful written case plan format and/or a uniform court report format that includes a clear, comprehensive, and easily read document containing the information required to establish and monitor a plan to facilitate the safety, well-being, and timely permanency of each child in care.**

A multi-disciplinary workgroup was convened at the request of former Supreme Court Justice Maura Corrigan to address this recommendation. This workgroup has developed drafts of both standardized court reports and recommendations for improving case service plans. (Case service plans were identified as an area of concern in the 2009 federal Child and Family Services Review and were subsequently added to the state CFSR Program Improvement Plan.)

2. **We recommend that the DHS increase or otherwise improve new caseworker training on assessment and case plan development, and require regular continuing education to upgrade the assessment and case planning skills of all DHS and private agency caseworkers and supervisors.**

The DHS reports that it has made improvements in the training curriculum; it is unclear if such improvements are related to this 2009 FCRB recommendation, however.

3. **We recommend that the DHS and the Michigan Legislature work with state colleges and universities to establish social work classes that are specific to assessment and case planning in the child welfare system.**

The status of the DHS's and Legislature's response to this recommendation is unknown at this time. The FCRB has had preliminary discussions with officials at Western Michigan University and hopes to engage the Department in further discussions that will broaden to include other universities with social work programs.

4. **We recommend that DHS policy be amended to ensure that incarcerated parents are included in the case planning process.**

DHS policy has been amended as recommended, primarily in response to a recent state Supreme Court decision.

5. **We recommend that State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) propose a court rule that requires the court to enter "compelling reasons" on the court record and in the court order when the agency does not file for termination of parental rights for a child who has been in care for 15 of 22 months.**

This matter is presently being addressed through the SCAO Child Welfare Services Permanency Options Workgroup.



## 2010 FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD MEMBERS \*

|                              |                          |                           |                          |                             |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Alcona County</b>         | <b>Hillsdale County</b>  | <b>Macomb County</b>      | <b>Oscoda County</b>     | <b>Wayne County (cont.)</b> |
| Carline Bendig               | Martha Crow              | Edna Chang                | Janice Booher            | Wilhelmina Cotton           |
| Tamara Quick                 | <b>Huron County</b>      | Elayne Gray               | Gerald Corey             | Tonie Dance                 |
| <b>Alger County</b>          | Jon Fruytier             | Angie Greenslade          | <b>Otsego County</b>     | Lynda DeFrain               |
| Rose Wilbur                  | Janice Holz              | Eugene Groesbeck          | Vicky Rigney             | Marvin Dick                 |
| <b>Allegan County</b>        | <b>Ingham County</b>     | Jack Pittman              | <b>Ottawa County</b>     | George Eason                |
| Diane Marshall-Morgan        | Charles Foster           | Rosemary Sear             | Dennis Schaaf            | Michael Eberth              |
| Chris Seidel                 | Michael Kessler          | Lynda Steele              | <b>Saginaw County</b>    | Doncella Floyd              |
| Vivien Vandenberg            | Wendolyn Larson          | <b>Manistee County</b>    | Barbara Hill             | Brenda Godfrey              |
| <b>Antrim County</b>         | Julie Loveless           | Marilee Johnson           | Vivian Keys Brown        | Remberto Gomez-Baez         |
| Susan Manturuk-Gielda        | Kristina Marshall        | <b>Marquette County</b>   | Shirley Norman           | Mary Hammons                |
| <b>Barry County</b>          | Cheryl Mask-Nealy        | Cara Korhonen             | Willie Owens             | Warren Harrison             |
| Ronald Heilman               | Laura Peiffer            | Glenn Wing                | <b>Sanilac County</b>    | Felisha Hatcher             |
| Carol Stanton                | Rhonda Van Hurley-Wilson | Jill Zueger               | Linda Bombard            | Cathy Ann Haynes            |
| <b>Benzie County</b>         | Stephanie Williams       | <b>Mecosta County</b>     | Richard Hug              | Jonas Hill, Sr.             |
| Lynda Jamison                | <b>Iosco County</b>      | Jill Gernert              | <b>Shiawassee County</b> | Loretta Horton              |
| <b>Berrien County</b>        | Alan Gould               | Sally Workman             | Jorja Ackels             | Kathie House                |
| Frances Rose                 | Renee Keller             | <b>Midland County</b>     | Jacob Drenovsky          | David L. Hunt               |
| Joan Smith                   | <b>Iron County</b>       | Stephen Ignatowski        | <b>St. Clair County</b>  | Darryl V. Hunter            |
| Bridgette Williams           | Bobbie Bonetti           | James Kubiak              | Brendon Aspenson         | Joy Inniss-Johnson          |
| <b>Branch County</b>         | <b>Jackson County</b>    | Billie Jo Parker          | Robert Goldenbogen       | Yvette Jenkins              |
| Michael Ronzone              | Edwina Divins            | Judith Ruttan             | <b>St. Joseph County</b> | Rod Johnson                 |
| Lucinda Wakeman              | Jonathan Hale            | <b>Monroe County</b>      | Judy Holman              | Joyce Johnson-Maples        |
| Jerry Yoder                  | Selena Harris            | Frederick Corser, Jr.     | Kenneth Orlich           | Ethel Knight                |
| <b>Calhoun County</b>        | Diana Liechty            | Thomas Perry              | Betty Taylor             | Mark LaBerge                |
| Arlen Facey                  | Susan Sharkey            | <b>Montmorency County</b> | <b>Tuscola County</b>    | Mary Lemanek                |
| Kathryn Hemenway             | Harold White             | Mary Jo Guest             | Gary Holik               | Gary Curtis Madden          |
| <b>Cass County</b>           | <b>Kalamazoo County</b>  | <b>Muskegon County</b>    | LeRoy Osborne            | Patrice Miller              |
| Jill Ernest                  | Linda Dunn               | William Garrigan          | <b>Van Buren County</b>  | Judy Mock                   |
| James Rutten                 | Joy Light                | Willie German             | Jennifer Carpio-Zeller   | Ronald Moore                |
| <b>Charlevoix County</b>     | Sally Putney             | Edward Holovka            | Meryl Greene             | Jacqueline Moss-Williams    |
| Mary Lee Campbell            | Helayne Smith            | Patricia Roof             | Theresa Ouzts            | Daphne Nedd                 |
| <b>Clare County</b>          | Shirley Topp             | Carolyn Smith-Gerdes      | <b>Washtenaw County</b>  | Don Novak                   |
| Donald Murray                | <b>Kalkaska County</b>   | Norman Swier              | Sonja Felton             | Elizabeth Oliver            |
| <b>Emmet County</b>          | Carri Latta              | Melba White Newsome       | Marion Hoey              | Anitta Orr                  |
| Kenda Deschermeier           | <b>Kent County</b>       | <b>Newaygo County</b>     | Lisa Ruby                | Rita Ross-Price             |
| <b>Genesee County</b>        | Jan Fotsch-Foxen         | Larry Feikema             | Gayle Stewart            | Janine Sladewski            |
| Marilyn Hoffman              | Daniel Groce             | <b>Oakland County</b>     | <b>Wayne County</b>      | Rita Smythe                 |
| Patrice Martin               | Joan Irons               | Barbara Allen             | Brooke Adams             | Willie Stanley              |
| Kimberly Mears-Thomas        | Vernon Laninga           | Carol Borich              | Patrick Arella           | Ellen Stephens              |
| Lauretta Montini             | Suzanne McCune           | Cassandra Chandler        | Nancy Arnold             | Irene Stringer              |
| Gordon Sherman               | Jacqueline Rudolph       | Clara Dawkins             | Angela Asteriou          | Sara Tyranski               |
| Stephanie Young              | <b>Lake County</b>       | Charles Ludwig            | Beatrice Bikali          | Cassandra Wells             |
| <b>Gogebic County</b>        | Frances P. Arquette      | Eleanor Mickens           | Henry Bohm               | Pamela Wilson-Travis        |
| Laurie Niemi                 | <b>Lapeer County</b>     | Betty Roland              | Brenda Boyd              | Claudia Yates               |
| <b>Grand Traverse County</b> | Kathryn Bruer            | Darnita Stein             | Keenan Brown             | <b>Wexford County</b>       |
| Diana Zapalski               | <b>Luce County</b>       | Judith Stephens           | Willie Cambell           | Virginia Mackey             |
|                              | <b>Ronald Ford</b>       |                           | Ifetayo Chaffin          |                             |

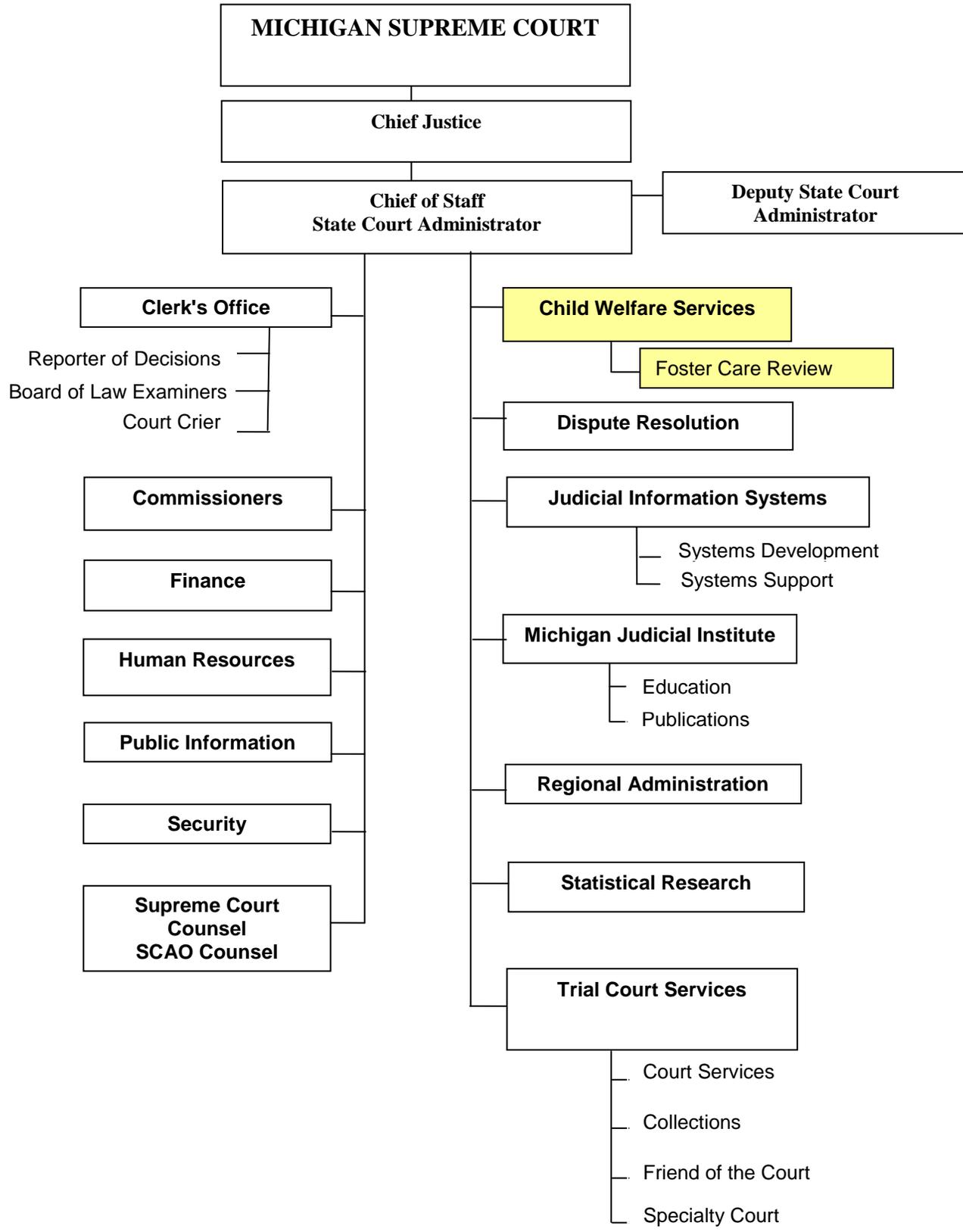
\* Roster lists represent active members as of December 31, 2010 \*

The FCRB Advisory Committee is established pursuant to MCL 722.133(m). It is a collaborative body of representatives from each local board, as well as professionals and advocates from the child welfare community. The information and conclusions presented in this annual report, along with any related recommendations, are the product of the Advisory Committee's collaborative effort and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Michigan Supreme Court or the State Court Administrative Office, under whose auspices this program is conducted.

## 2010 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS \*

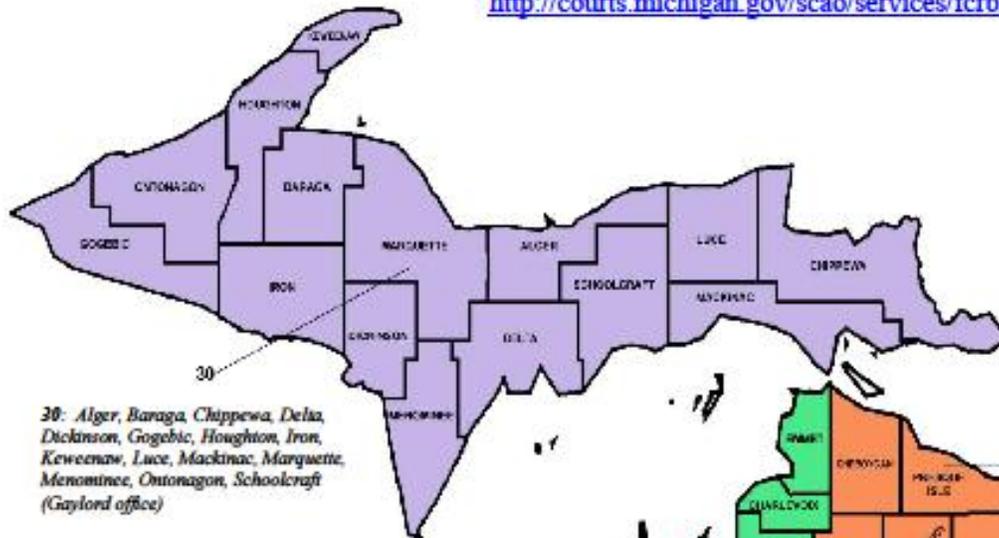
|                          |                                      |                                       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Barbara Allen            | Board # 11                           |                                       |
| Michael Anderegg         | Chief Judge                          | Marquette County Probate Court        |
| Nancy Arnold             | Board #6                             |                                       |
| Brenda Baker-Mbacke'     | Program Representative               | Foster Care Review Board              |
| Stacie Bladen            | Director, Office of Family Advocate  | Department of Human Services          |
| Candee Bobalek           | Legislative Chair, PRIDE Trainer     | MAFAK                                 |
| Jeanette Bridges         | Program Representative               | Foster Care Review Board              |
| Jennifer Carpio-Zeller   | Board # 24                           |                                       |
| Gerald Corey             | Board #29                            |                                       |
| Marvin Dick              | Board #1                             |                                       |
| Jacob Drenovsky          | Board #18                            |                                       |
| Michael Eberth           | Board # 9                            |                                       |
| Ronald Ford              | Board #30                            |                                       |
| Jeanne Fowler            | Child Advocate                       | Big Family of Michigan                |
| Elayne Gray              | Board # 12                           |                                       |
| Jonathan Hale            | Board # 17                           |                                       |
| Marcia Haney             | Bylaws Chair, PRIDE Trainer          | MAFAK                                 |
| Warren Harrison          | Board # 8                            |                                       |
| Felisha Hatcher          | Board #10                            |                                       |
| Terri Henrizi            | Education Coordinator                | Assoc. for Children's Mental Health   |
| Jonas Hill, Sr.          | Board #3                             |                                       |
| Gary Holik               | Board #19                            |                                       |
| Edward Holovka           | Board #23                            |                                       |
| Loretta Horton           | Board # 2                            |                                       |
| Kathie House             | Board #5                             |                                       |
| Kelly Howard             | Director, Child Welfare Services     | State Court Administrative Office     |
| Richard Hug              | Board #14                            |                                       |
| Bill Johnson             | Superintendent                       | Michigan Children's Institute         |
| Mary Johnson             | President                            | MJ3 Consulting                        |
| Marilee Johnson          | Board #27                            |                                       |
| Vernon Laninga           | Board #21                            |                                       |
| Carri Latta              | Board #28                            |                                       |
| Jacqueline Moss-Williams | Board #7                             |                                       |
| Rubina Mustafa           | Staff Attorney                       | Detroit Center for Family Advocacy    |
| Shirley Norman           | Board #19                            |                                       |
| Jim Novell               | Program Manager                      | Foster Care Review Board              |
| Kathryne O'Grady         | Director, Children's Services Admin. | Department of Human Services          |
| Jenifer Pettibone        | Mgmt. Analyst                        | Child Welfare Services                |
| Kristin Putney           | MAFAK Liaison                        |                                       |
| Carolyn Rayford          | Deputy Regional Director             | Lutheran Child & Family Services      |
| Kellie Robb              | Program Representative               | Foster Care Review Board              |
| Patricia Roof            | Board #23                            |                                       |
| Nancy Rostoni            | Foster Care Manager                  | Department of Human Services          |
| Lisa Ruby                | Board #15                            |                                       |
| Verlie Ruffin            | Director                             | Office of the Children's Ombudsman    |
| Helayne Smith            | Board # 22                           |                                       |
| Leslie Kim Smith         | Circuit Judge                        | 3rd Circuit Court, Family Div.        |
| Joan Smith               | Board #25                            |                                       |
| Rita Smythe              | Board #4                             |                                       |
| Janet Snyder             | Executive Director                   | MI Federation for Children & Families |
| Carol Stanton            | Board #18                            |                                       |
| Suzanne Stiles-Burke     | Director, Child Welfare Bureau       | Department of Human Services          |
| Rhonda Van Hurley-Wilson | Board #16                            |                                       |
| Lucinda Wakeman          | Board # 20                           |                                       |

\* Roster lists represent active members as of December 31, 2010 \*



# MICHIGAN'S FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARDS

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/services/fcrb/fcrb.htm>



30: Alger, Baraga, Chippewa, Delta, Dickinson, Gogebic, Houghton, Iron, Keweenaw, Luce, Mackinac, Marquette, Menominee, Ontonagon, Schoolcraft (Gaylord office)

28: Antrim, Charlevoix, Crawford, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Missaukee, Roscommon, Wexford (Gaylord office)

27: Benzie, Lake, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola (Gaylord office)

23: Muskegon (Gaylord office)

18: Barry, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ionia, Montcalm, Shiawassee (Gaylord office)

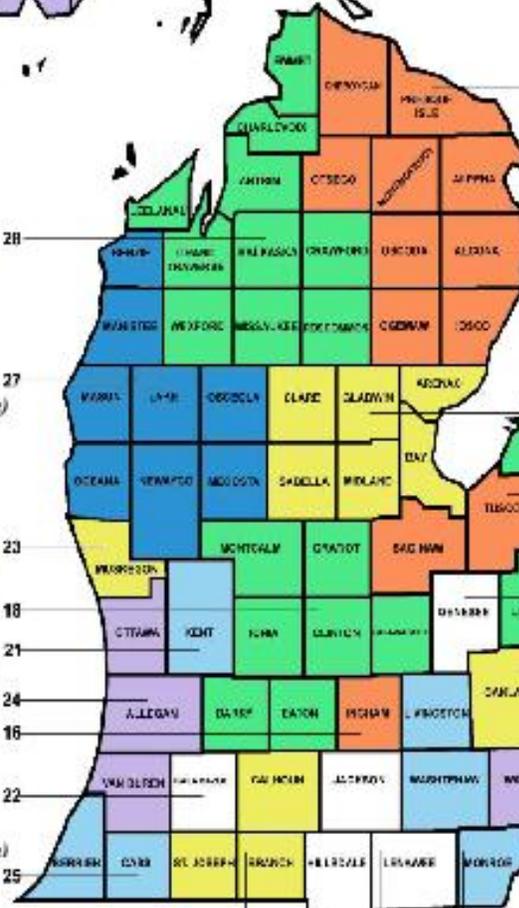
21: Kent (Detroit office)

24: Allegan, Ottawa, Van Buren (Gaylord office)

16: Ingham (Detroit office)

22: Kalamazoo (Detroit office)

25: Berrien, Cass (Detroit office)



29: Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle (Gaylord office)

26: Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Midland (Gaylord office)

19: Saginaw, Tuscola (Gaylord office)

14: Huron, Lapeer, St. Clair, Sanilac (Gaylord office)

13: Genesee (Detroit office)

11: Oakland (Detroit office)

1-10: Wayne (Detroit office)

17: Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee (Detroit office)

## Gaylord Office

P.O. Box 9  
Gaylord, MI 49734-0009  
(P) 989-732-0494 (Fax) 989-731-4538

Boards: 14, 18, 19, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30  
Kellie Robb, Program Rep  
Assistant: Amanda Kucharek  
[Kucharek.A@courts.mi.gov](mailto:Kucharek.A@courts.mi.gov)

## Detroit Office

3034 W. Grand Blvd., Ste. 8-400  
Detroit, MI 48202  
(P) 313-972-3280 (Fax) 313-972-3289

Program Manager: Jim Novell  
Assistant: Kathy Falconello  
[FalconelloK@courts.mi.gov](mailto:FalconelloK@courts.mi.gov)

Boards 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17  
Brenda Baker-Mbacke, Program Rep  
Assistant: Jacqui Poindexter  
[PoindexterJ@courts.mi.gov](mailto:PoindexterJ@courts.mi.gov)

Boards 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 20, 21, 22, 25  
Jeanette Bridges, Program Rep  
Assistant: Earlester Monroe  
[MonroeE@courts.mi.gov](mailto:MonroeE@courts.mi.gov)

## Appeals:

Phone: 1-888-866-6566

Info:

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/services/fcrb/98-01AppealPolicy.pdf>