



Citizen Review Panels

Evaluate the effectiveness of state and local child protection programs and policies and make recommendations for improvement

Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) were established by federal statute and implemented in 1996 as part of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requirement for states to receive federal grant funding. California and most states are required to have a minimum of three (3) independent CRPs. Each CRP is led by a facilitator who assists members with their quarterly meetings and annual reporting requirements. The California Department of Social Services' Office of Child Abuse Prevention provides oversight, technical assistance and funding allocations.

The evaluations provided by CRPs involve examining child protection policies, practices, and procedures and assessing the extent to which state and local child protection agencies are discharging their child protection obligations. Recommendations are then made to county and state governments for improvement. CRP members may consist of former recipients of social services, foster parents, child welfare services professionals, court-appointed special advocates, children's attorneys, educators, representatives of tribal governments and county public health and mental health agency staff, law enforcement officials, and other interested parties.

The Office of Child Abuse Prevention has awarded a contract to Big Picture Research and Consulting who will facilitate California's three (3) CRPs to evaluate the Child Welfare System (CWS) at the state and local level. Big Picture Research and Consulting will plan, guide, and manage each CRP function in accordance with federal guidelines (42 U.S.C. Section 5106a(b)) and in alignment with the strategic plan of the CDSS' Office of Child Abuse Prevention. Big Picture Research and Consulting will ensure that each CRP contributes to an annual report that includes the findings and recommendations of each CRP to the Office of Child Abuse Prevention and to the public. The California Department of Social Services will utilize the annual report to address whether or how the state will incorporate the recommendations of the CRPs to make measurable progress in improving the state child welfare services system.

CRPs are funded by: Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act ([CAPTA](#)) funds.

