



A Message from Our Administrator

It is common at this time of year to reflect on the year that has passed and give thought to our hope for the New Year. For the CRB program, 2008 has been a year of changes and accomplishments.

In January, we shortened the time frame for sending our Findings and Recommendations to DHS, OYA, the court, and parties from the 21 days allowed by statute to 7 days after the review. This will allow the boards' recommendations to get to those who use them more quickly so they can positively influence outcomes for the cases you review. I have received many positive comments from DHS and the courts indicating that they are pleased to get this information more timely. This was not an easy transition for staff, and I want to thank them for their dedication to making this new business practice a success.

In July we all made changes in how we conduct reviews. We are still in transition as we become more familiar and skilled in the new process. That can be expected given that some of the volunteers and staff have been doing reviews in the former way for a long time. I am appreciative of your commitment to improving practice.

Also in July, the staff received training on effective use of interpreters in reviews. This training was conducted by our Cultural Responsiveness Committee, under the leadership of Maria Chavez-Haroldson, and in collaboration with Court Interpreter Services. It was an excellent training, was well received, and will be presented again at our annual conference in April of 2009.

A second training was provided to staff in October. This training focused on volunteer recruitment, retention and management. Shary Mason worked with Steve McCurley, an international volunteer management expert, who has worked with Red Cross, Special Olympics and CASA. This work is a good foundation for full implementation of our marketing plan that was developed by MetroGroup a few years back.

As we look toward 2009, the CRB will be taking on new opportunities to improve practice. Toni Sloan is work-

ing with the Juvenile Court Improvement Project (JCIP) as our liaison for age appropriate consultation with children. Clayton Kubota is leading a work group to improve coordination of court and CRB reviews. And Steve Lindeman will be leading a work group to recommend changes for our delinquency (OYA) reviews. You can read more about these and other projects in upcoming newsletters.

This has been a year full of accomplishments, not the least of which is the work you do on a daily basis. I want to acknowledge all of our board members who quietly and competently accomplish the work that we are charged with every day. As of November 30, 2008, our boards had completed 5,025 reviews for 6,302 children and youth. Based on The Independent Sector Research, this amounts to approximately \$588,226 of donated time by our volunteers.

We can't thank you enough for your most generous gift to these families and to the state of Oregon.

Have a great winter holiday season. May it be filled with joy, and people and things you love.

~Benjamin Hazelton,
CRB Administrator

An Update on Juvenile Case Law

Submitted by Walt Gullett, CRB Field Manager

CRB Volunteers utilize federal and state law, administrative rules, and agency policies and procedures while making findings and recommendations. As juvenile law evolves, it is also important to understand the law in a given jurisdiction by studying reported cases, especially Court of Appeals cases. A working knowledge of case law will help board members make effective findings and articulate recommendations. A few interesting cases follow:

State ex rel Dept. of Human Services v. J.A.C., 216 Or App 268, 172 P3d 295 (2007) the state sought to terminate a mother's parental rights on the grounds that she was unfit to parent. The mother had mental deficiencies, was unwilling to keep her child away from another unfit person, and failed to benefit from numerous services. The mother was borderline intellectual functioning and her condition was described by a therapist as "permanent and untreatable". The court ordered termination of the mother's parental rights on the grounds of unfitness, and stated the "mother's conduct or conditions described could be viewed in combination, and that serious detriment and the inability to safely parent in the

future was demonstrated in potential harm due to the mother's mental deficiency."

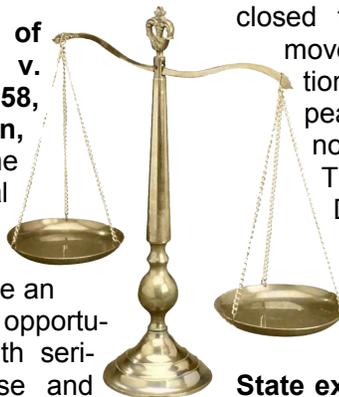
State ex rel Dept. of Human Services v. B.S.I., 219 Or App 158, 182 P3d 230, rev den, 344 Or 670 (2008) the court studied parental progress and concluded, "our case law does not authorize an indefinite number of opportunities for parents with serious substance abuse and mental health conditions to engage in cycles of treatment, relapse, and recovery while their children remain in the foster care system."

State ex rel Dept. of Human Services v. T.K., 217 Or App 116, 175 P3d 976 (2008) the court commented on parent progress that began only when the termination trial was imminent. The judge said "given the child's need for permanency, the parents' recent progress was not of sufficient duration to justify a conclusion that the children could safely return home."

State ex rel Dept. of Human Services v. H.S.C., 218 Or App 415, 180 P3d 39 (2008) DHS offered a father services but within a few

days he was incarcerated at Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Tacoma, Washington. DHS closed the service referrals and moved immediately to an adoption plan. The father appealed claiming that DHS did not make reasonable efforts. The court concluded that DHS failed to "inquire into the possibility of the father completing counseling and other requirements while in detention."

State ex rel Dept. of Human Services v. G.L., 220 Or App 216, 185 P3d 483 (2008) the issue was whether or not the court is allowed to order a psychological evaluation even if mental health is not a founded allegation. The judge concluded "the court's specification of a particular type of service that DHS provides must bear a rational relationship to the jurisdictional findings"; however, the judge went on to reject the mother's argument that a psychological evaluation could be ordered only when a parent's mental health condition forms the basis for jurisdiction. The court concluded the evaluation was associated with the case plan and permanency goal, and met the rational relationship test.



Shoulder to Shoulder 2008

Jim Mollerstrom, a DHS child-welfare caseworker, was presented with the Tom Moan Award for Excellence for his exemplary casework practice.



The Citizen Review Board was represented by several volunteer board members and staff who served as room hosts for the many workshops (see next page). Shary Mason was the Emcee of the event, and the Volunteer Resource Coordinator team, Darcy Davidson and Michaëlle Bienvenu manned our new table top display (at right). The display helps to recruit new board members, increase public awareness



of the CRB, and distribute our new informational brochures.

Shoulder to Shoulder 2008: A Special Thank You

To all of our CRB Volunteers and Staff who made this year's Shoulder to Shoulder Conference a big success:

Carl Christman
LoisAnn Colainni
Bill Richardson
Patricia Everett
Kathy Warren
Mary Strobel
Mary Bloom

Laverne B. Brown
Tiffany Lamberth
Maria Chavez-Haroldson
David Smith
Darcy Davidson
Shary Mason
Michaëlle Bienvenu

Tina Qualls
Toni Sloan
Mark Harris
Robin deAlicante
Your time and effort were very much appreciated!

Training on Demand!

The following full length trainings are available through The Court Improvement Training Academy. To download or watch on your computer go to <http://www.uwcita.org/CITAv1008/ondemand.html>:

Best Practices in Dependency: Planned, Purposeful, and Progressive Visitation

Rose Wentz, Consultant for the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning, discusses how to have safe and successful visits. Rose covers the definition of visits per federal law and best practice standards as well as the connections a child needs while in care. With audience interaction she reviews a four-step decision making process for developing a visit plan to meet a child's needs and enable parents to improve parenting skills. She also looks at how to develop a visit plan that will meet the goal of allowing children to have a safe visit in the most natural and home-like situation.

Get training on your schedule! Any time, day or night!

The Racial Geography of Child Welfare

In *The Racial Geography of Child Welfare*, Dorothy Roberts, a Harvard Law School Graduate and the Kirkland & Ellis Professor of Law at Northwestern University Law School, argues that the overwhelming number of black children in foster care is a result of racial bias.

Reasonable Efforts and Court Improvement

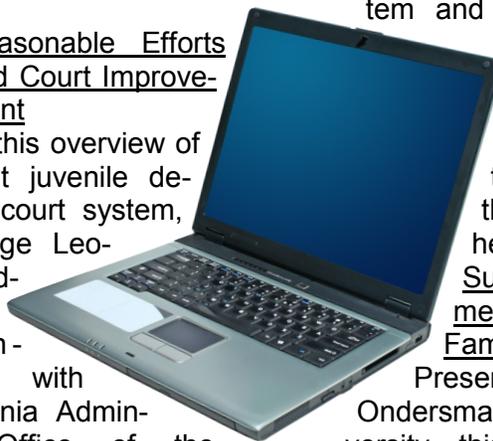
In this overview of the current juvenile dependency court system, retired judge Leonard P. Edwards, a Judge-in-Residence with the California Administrative Office of the Courts, outlines the types of problems that riddle the current system. Through the use of hypotheticals, various models used around the nation and personal

experience, Edwards leads an informative and engaging conversation about the challenges of our states' and nation's juvenile court systems. One of the fundamental challenges in improving the juvenile court system lies in how to bring about change. In this program, Judge Edwards, discusses the importance of family in revamping the juvenile court system and how to bring about

such change despite a multitude of obstacles. See first-hand stories of how a holistic approach can help these families in crisis heal.

Substance Abuse Treatment for Child Welfare Families

Presented by Dr. Steve Ondersma of Wayne State University, this program discusses recent research about substance abuse in the context of the child welfare system, both from the perspective of front-line professionals as well as overall policy.



Every little bit counts!

You may be able to deduct some expenses you incur that are associated with volunteering.

Check out the [IRS website](#) (see *Publication 526*) or [this Points of Light.org article](http://this.Points.of.Light.org) (*IRS Deductions for Volunteer Services*) for more information.

Vicarious Trauma

There have been numerous articles and workshops lately dealing with the subject of vicarious trauma. In addition to experiencing positive feelings and effects from helping and being of service to others, there may be negative effects from repeated exposure to traumatic stories and histories. These negative effects are termed "vicarious trauma" and may lead to peri-

Remember to debrief at the end of the board day, you need it!

ods of burnout, increased levels of cynicism or hopelessness, decreased feelings of personal and public safety, and depression.

In the mental health field it is common practice to "debrief" difficult situations as a team or with a supervisor. CRB staff and volunteers are repeatedly exposed to traumatic stories at

reviews. Due to confidentiality restraints, you are not allowed to discuss these cases with anyone, not even your significant other. In acknowledgment of this, there is a period built in to every board schedule at the end of the review day for the board to "debrief." Please use this time to discuss your review day.

Take care of yourselves - don't skip this important function.

News from the Children's Bureau Express: Comparing Outcomes for Children in Kinship and Foster Care

A recent study of permanency, safety, and stability outcomes for children in out-of-home care concluded that children placed in kinship care fare as well as or better than children in foster care. Outcome data was collected from 12 Colorado counties that strongly value kinship care as an out-of-home placement option. After controlling for variables, researchers studied 318 matched pairs of children in kinship care or foster care who spent more than 60 days in out-of-home care.



The children in kinship care experienced fewer placements and were seven times more likely to achieve permanency through guardianship. In contrast, children in foster care were 10 times more likely to have a new allegation of institutional abuse or neglect, 6 times more likely to be involved with

the juvenile justice system, and 2 times more likely to be reunified with their biological parents. An exploratory comparison of paid and unpaid kinship care providers also revealed

that outcomes for children in these placements were comparable, suggesting that kinship placement may be a more cost-effective option.

The authors caution that these findings do not support the adoption of a blanket policy increasing the use of kinship

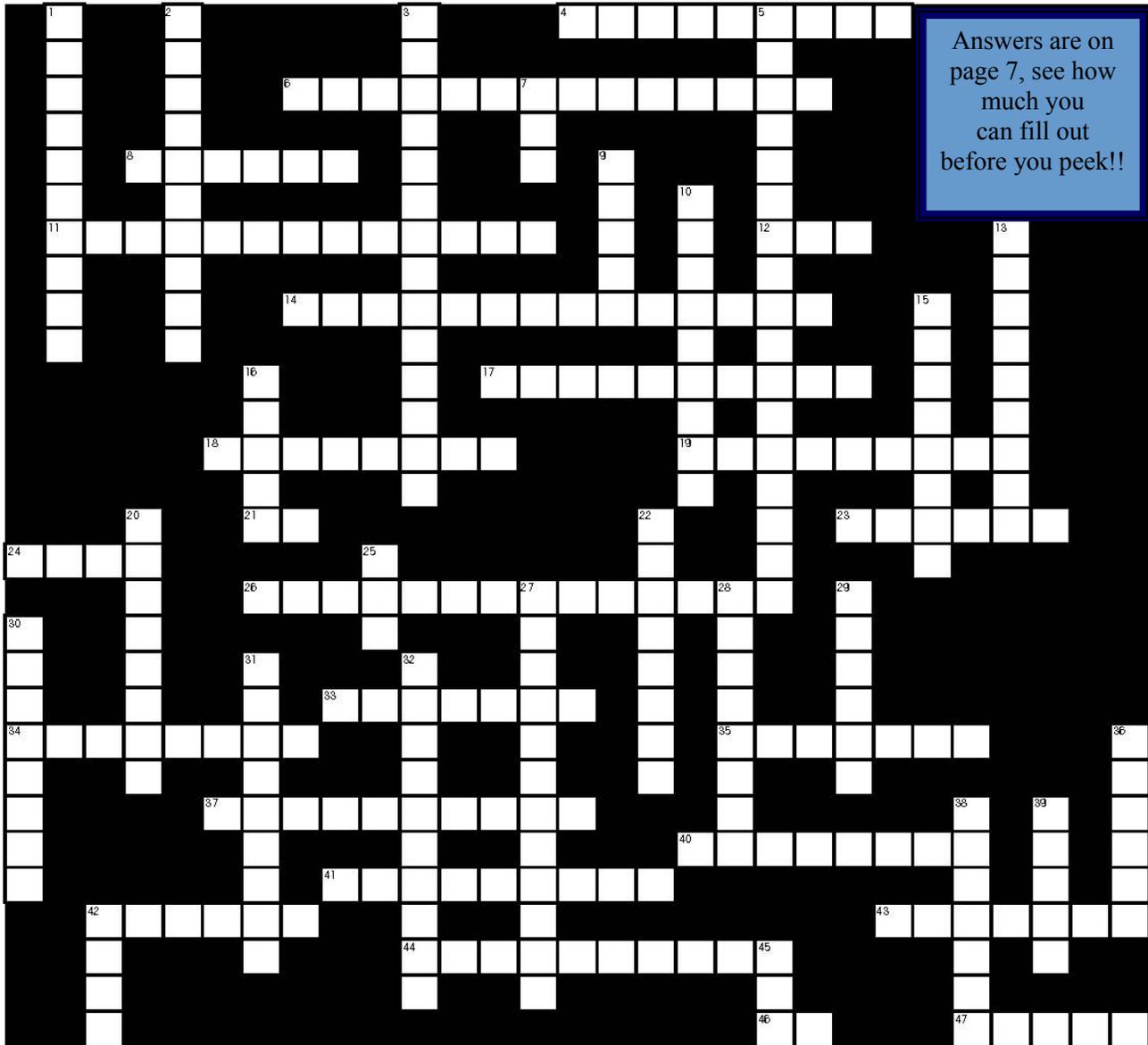
care. Placement decisions should still take into consideration the needs of the child and an assessment of the kin caregiver. However, the authors call for a greater commitment by child welfare professionals, policy-makers, and researchers to make kinship care a more viable out-of-home placement option for children and families.

"Matched Comparison of Children in Kinship Care and Foster Care on Child Welfare Outcomes," by Marc A. Winokur,

Graig A. Crawford, Ralph C. Longobardi, and Deborah P. Valentine, was published in *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, Vol. 89(3), and is available online:

www.familiesinsociety.org/New/Teleconf/081007Winokur/89-3Winokur.pdf

CRB 2008 Winter Crossword



Answers are on page 7, see how much you can fill out before you peek!!

Across

Down

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>4. Open-ended, directed, or closed-ended.</p> <p>6. CRB Annual Training Conference name</p> <p>8. Every child needs a _____, permanent home.</p> <p>11. Current _____ are not eligible to be board members</p> <p>12. Oregon Revised Statute</p> <p>14. Part of IEP</p> <p>17. Part of FFT</p> <p>18. _____ Responsiveness Committee</p> <p>19. Branch of state government that DHS falls under.</p> <p>21. Treatment abbr.</p> <p>23. Part of TPR.</p> <p>24. Board members take an _____ of confidentiality.</p> <p>26. _____ Basis (on case plan)</p> <p>33. Type of hearing required within 24 hours of the child's removal</p> <p>34. Best _____ of the child.</p> <p>35. _____ is not race or ethnicity, but relates to values and behavior</p> <p>37. DHS and CRB have a _____ of Understanding.</p> <p>40. Allegations against the parents are listed in the _____</p> <p>41. Supreme Court _____ Rules</p> <p>42. Abandonment is a class C _____.</p> <p>43. Indian Child _____ Act</p> <p>44. For each case, DHS needs to have a primary and _____ plan</p> <p>46. There is _____ limit to the number of terms a CRB member can serve.</p> <p>47. Department of _____ Services</p> | <p>1. Type of contact (3 wds)</p> <p>2. The CRB reviews cases of children and youth offenders in _____ care.</p> <p>3. A _____ lists the dates and types of placement.</p> <p>5. OYA and CRB have a _____ agreement.</p> <p>7. Assistant Attorney General abbr.</p> <p>9. Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement abbr.</p> <p>10. CRB members must be _____ or employed within the county they are serving in.</p> <p>13. Part of ICPC</p> <p>15. Review by the _____.</p> <p>16. Part of CPSD</p> <p>20. Body part in title of DHS conference.</p> <p>22. Part of AFSA</p> <p>25. The board makes _____ findings for OYA cases.</p> <p>27. The _____ appoints CRB members.</p> <p>28. Court Appointed Special _____</p> <p>29. Oregon _____ Model</p> <p>30. CRB's are established by the Oregon _____ Department.</p> <p>31. Nodding your head is a component of active _____.</p> <p>32. Type of hearing.</p> <p>36. Efforts required to prevent or eliminate the need for removal of a child in an ICWA case.</p> <p>38. Part of LEP</p> <p>39. 419.A090 _____ Citizen Review Boards.</p> <p>42. There is a _____-step review process for cases reviewed by the CRB.</p> <p>45. There are _____ findings made by the board in each DHS review.</p> |
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Demographic Snapshot 2008

Submitted by Darcy Davidson, Volunteer Resource Coordinator

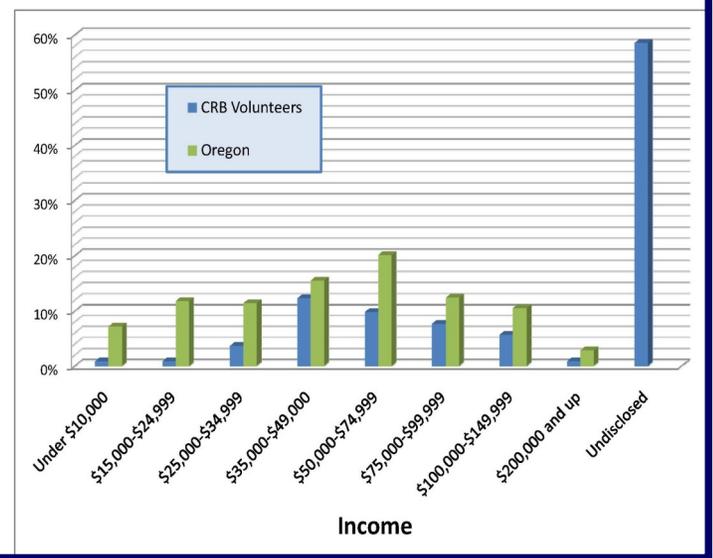
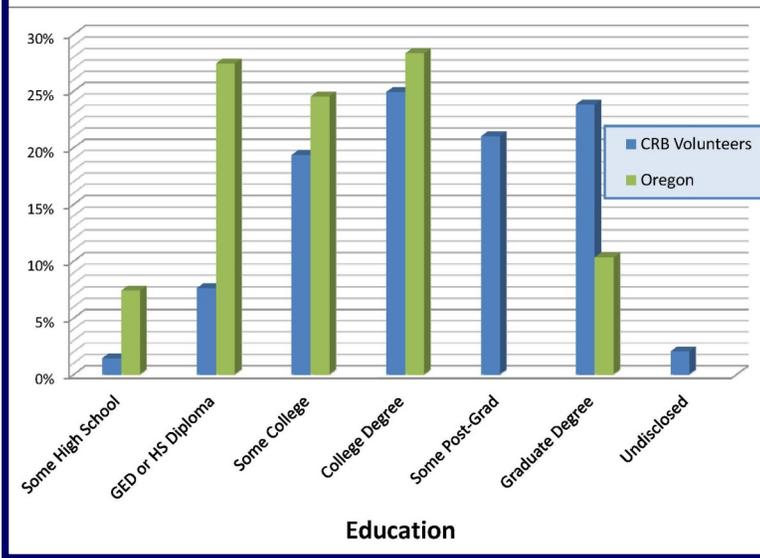
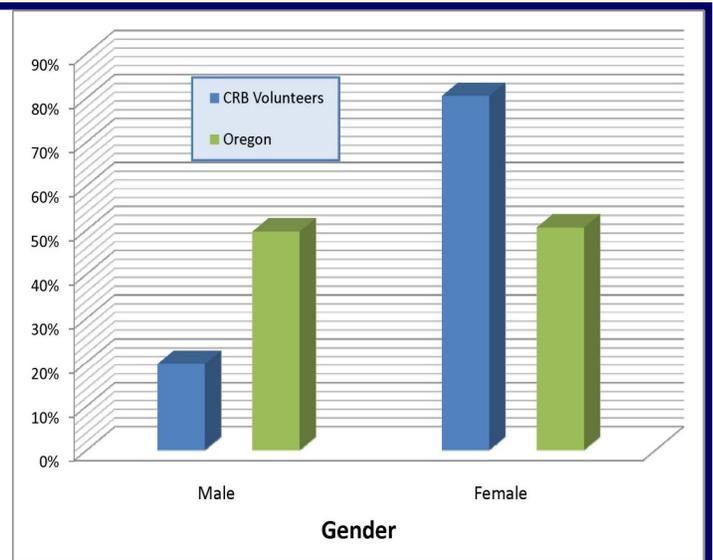
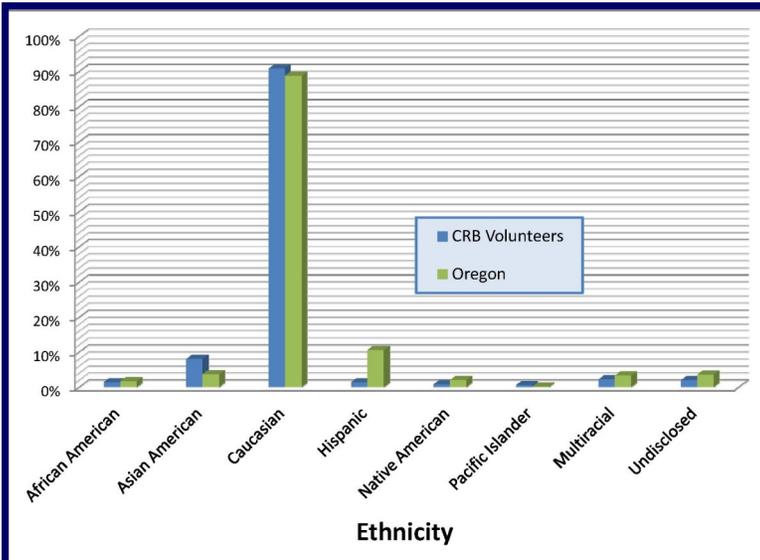
The charts below represent the Citizen Review Board's current demographic profile for indicators of ethnicity, gender, education, and income in comparison to the same demographic indicators for the population of the state of Oregon. We are committed to following the CRB membership guidelines explained in our statute, which include the provision that "... members of each local citizen review board shall represent the various socioeconomic and ethnic groups of the area served." (ORS 419A.092 (1)(b)).

Over the last several years, CRB Staff and Volunteers

have done excellent work to improve our representation of the socioeconomic and ethnic groups of the populations we serve, but more work is still needed to continue to diversify our boards across the state.

We have recently released a new brochure that helps to explain the CRB, and gives information on how to become involved. If you are interested in assisting in recruitment efforts in your area, or would like some brochures to give out, please contact your field manager, or the Volunteer Resource Coordinators at:

CRB.Volunteer.Resources@ojd.state.or.us
or toll free at 1-888-530-8999.



Inspirational Quote of the Quarter:

"I don't know what the word unadoptable means"

~Judge Jim Fun, Washington County

10 Things You Can Do to Improve the Life of a Child in Foster Care

Submitted by Mike Mathisen

1. Your presence on CRB makes the system stop and think. CRB members help ensure all parties are doing what is right for the child. We hold DHS, parents, attorneys and service providers accountable to that end. Don't accept excuses. Each excuse adds time that children don't have. Every day a child spends in foster care they lose a little piece of their childhood.

2. Ask the tough questions. You are on the CRB to ask the tough questions. Expect DHS to commit to timeframes that support a quick, safe exit from foster care. Long timeframes hurt children. Ask the biological parents the tough questions about their participation in services and progress they are making toward safely parenting their children.

3. Ask about the father. Know who and where the father is and verify that services are offered to the child's father. Otherwise this can delay permanency for children.

4. Ask about siblings. Siblings should be placed together, often they only have each other. A significant reason should be provided if they are not placed together. Separated siblings need regular contact with each other unless it is documented by a mental health professional that it is not in their best interests.

5. Ask about relatives. Verify that the agency has contacted all potential relatives as possible caretakers for the child. These relatives may be in a position to provide a safe home for the child.

6. Ask about the medical plan. Make sure you know when the last dental, physical, eye and mental evaluation was conducted and if the child is supposed to be in counseling verify if this is happening regularly.

7. Ask about the education plan. Foster children should be able to continue at their most recent school if at all possible. Does the child have an individual education plan (IEP) and does the caseworker know what that plan is?

8. Ask foster parents questions. They spend every day with the child. They can tell you if they are eating, sleeping, how they are doing in school, what happens after the counseling sessions and visits. They can provide you with valuable insight.

9. Advocate for the child to have contact with the legal representation or a CASA. The caseworker and attorney may be the only people this child has and they are getting paid to help this child. Make sure they are doing their jobs. The attorney should

visit the child regularly (that means more than once). Consider recommending a CASA. A CASA can make a tremendous difference in child's life.

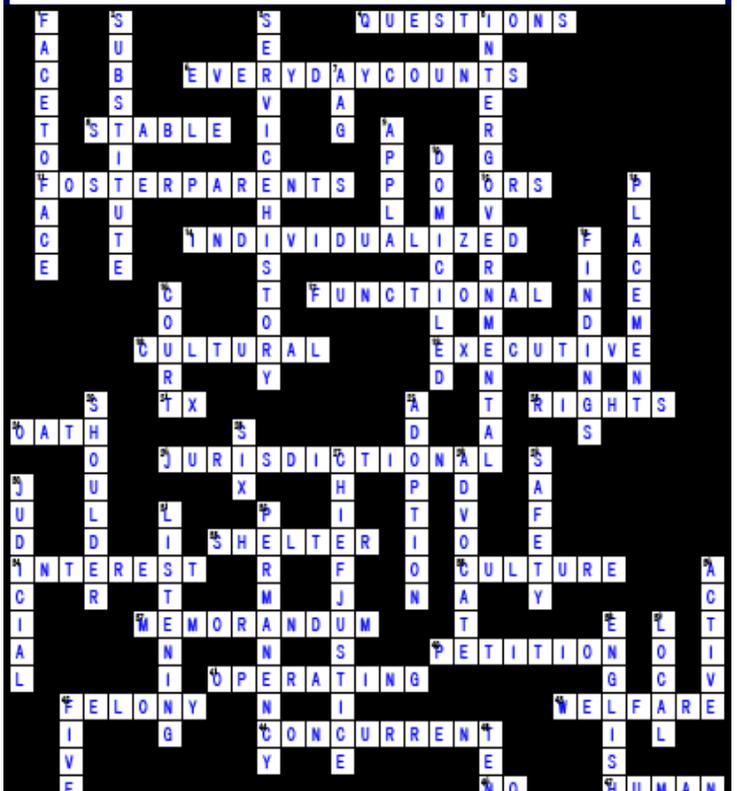
10. If DHS is considering freeing the child for adoption. The decision to file to terminate parental rights should be reached more quickly than it has in the past. As the 12-month mark approaches, the CRB needs to feel comfortable that DHS is on the right track, either to TPR or returning to parent. Set timelines and follow up with an additional CRB if necessary.



Remember: kids deserve to be kids.

Mike Mathisen is a foster parent, an adoptive parent, a former CASA volunteer and a foster child activist. He wrote an article for the 8/22/08 Statesman Journal entitled "Children Wait too Long for Parents to Shape up." We asked him to write an article for the CRB Network News addressing comments and/or suggestions specifically to CRB volunteers.

Crossword Answers





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In the life of a child in foster care...

Every Day Counts.

We're on the web:

www.ojd.state.or.us/crb

*We are
wishing you and
your family
a very happy holiday
season.*

~Citizen Review Board Staff~

Season's Greetings!