



The Citizens Review Board for Children (CRBC) was established by the Maryland State legislature as the Foster Care Review Board for Children in 1978 to spur efforts to provide permanence in the lives of foster children. It consists of a State Board and local boards in all counties. In 1999, the State Board was additionally charged to oversee child protection agencies and to train local citizen panels for child protection.

Mission Statement

To conduct case reviews of children in out-of-home care, make timely individual case and systemic recommendations; and advocate for legislative and systematic child welfare improvements to promote safety and permanency.

Vision Statement

We envision the protection of all children from abuse and neglect, only placing children in out-of-home care when necessary; and providing families the help they need to stay intact; children will be safe in a permanent living arrangement.

Overview

CRBC is comprised of volunteer citizens and Department of Human Services (DHS) staff that provide child welfare expertise, guidance and support to the State and Local Boards.

CRBC is charged with examining the policies, practices and procedures of Maryland's child protective services, evaluating and making recommendations for systemic improvement in accordance with §5-539 and § 5-539.1 and the Federal Child Abuse and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (Section 106 (c)).

CRBC reviews cases of children and youth in out-of-home placement, monitors child welfare programs and makes recommendations for system improvements. Although CRBC is housed within the DHS organizational structure, it is an independent entity overseen by its State Board.

There is a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between DHR/DHS, the Social Services Administration (SSA) and CRBC that guides the work parameters by which CRBC and DHS function regarding CRBC review of cases.

The CRBC State Board reviews and coordinates the activities of the local review boards. The board also examines policy issues, procedures, legislation, resources and barriers relating to out-of-home placement and the permanency of children. The State Board makes recommendations to the General Assembly around ways of improving Maryland's child welfare system.

Prior to the pandemic, the local Boards met at the local department of social services in each jurisdiction but now meet virtually to conduct reviews of children in out-of-home placement. Individual recommendations regarding permanency, placement, safety and well being are sent to the local juvenile courts, the local department of social services and interested parties involved with the child's care.