

ADVOCATES

South Carolina Children's
Foster Care Review Board
South Carolina Heart Gallery
Office of the Governor



CITIZENS ADVOCATING SAFETY & PERMANENCE

SUMMER 2013

Target Advocacy Goal 2012

The 2012 Target Advocacy Goal for the Foster Care Review Board was met AND exceeded! Review Board and Heart Gallery staff worked diligently to surpass our first ever TAG goal to increase finalized adoptions by 50% (or a total of 30 adoptions) for youth aged 15 - 17 by December 31, 2012. As of February 8, 2013 a total of 44 children within our TAG group had finalized adoptions by December 31, 2012; more than double the number of adoptions for this age group in 2011.

The TAG was introduced and implemented at the Annual Professional Development Day on February 3, 2012. Review board members and staff diligently advocating for this foster care population. Additionally, the Review Board has used social media to increase public awareness and interest in adoption.

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Target Advocacy Goal 2013

Increase Finalized Adoptions
By 50%
For Youth In Foster Care
Age 13 And Older
By December 31, 2013

CLARENDON AND WILLIAMSBURG COUNTIES (3A)

Foster Care Review Board 3A, comprised of Clarendon and Williamsburg Counties, enjoyed a busy year staying involved with their community. In August of 2012, FCRB Members Elease Fulton and Carolyn Parker worked with the National Council for Negro Women to donate school supplies to children and teachers within the community. Over 25 backpacks filled with supplies were donated in the area, and lunch was provided to those who attended. The Board, including Jane Benton, Raleigh King, and Vicki Ouzts, worked to support a Heart Gallery Photo Session by providing refreshments and assisting the children throughout the day. In addition, the Board helped support the children's Christmas Party at the Department of Social Services and sold banquet tickets to fundraise for the local chapter of the Foster Parent Association.

Submitted By: Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

MARLBORO AND DILLON COUNTIES (4A)

Ms. Carolyn Wallace, Vice Chair for Foster Care Review Board 4A and 2011 Review Board Member of the Year, has been working with Carolyn Lide, Carole Clardy, Stephen Laird, and Richard Dixon to help support the counties in which they serve. Over summer, the Board assisted with a Heart Gallery photo shoot and provided refreshments, as well as supporting the local Foster Parents Association Kid's Day. The Board continued to advocate for children in the community by attending Family Court Sessions, Palmetto Power and local Partners Meetings. The FCRB is excited about 2013, with plans to work with the Pack-a-Sack Program and support children in foster care heading off to college with needed supplies.

Submitted By: Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

KERSHAW AND RICHLAND COUNTIES (5E)

Foster Care Review Board 5E kept busy in 2012 by assisting in the local Heart Gallery Photo Shoot, providing toiletries to the Independent Living Program, attending local meetings to stay involved with the community, and providing staff snacks for several events. FCRB 5E got a jump on 2013 by hosting a Heart Gallery Reception at the Katie and Irwin Kahn Jewish Community Center. Heidi Lovit, Laurie Parks, Mary Long, and Sandra Inabinet worked with the Heart Gallery to display over twenty-five beautifully framed photographs of SC children waiting to find forever homes on January 15, 2013. The Board met with families at the Center and spoke about the Heart Gallery's mission, all while passing out tasty cupcakes, cookies, and sandwiches!

Submitted By: Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

CHARLESTON COUNTY (9C)

The 9C Board in Charleston chose for its 2012 service project to refurbish the 2 visitation rooms at Charleston County DSS. The Board Members, along with contributions from various businesses, replaced the old carpet with laminate flooring, repainted the rooms, purchased new furniture, books and paintings; as well as new toys for the children to play with during their visits. An open house was held on 12/12/12 and everyone who attended expressed how thrilled they were with the end result. The visitation rooms look wonderful!! Thank you 9C for all that you did and all that you continue to do on behalf of the Charleston County's Children in foster care.

Submitted By: Michelle White, Review Board Coordinator

CHARLESTON COUNTY (9D)

The 9D Board in Charleston held its annual Christmas party on Saturday, December 8, 2012. This event is held each year to recognize Charleston County DSS case managers who have done an outstanding job throughout the year. The children in foster care, foster parents and group home providers attended this special event as well. The Board Members have this annual event catered and donate special gifts of appreciation to all. Everyone who attended this wonderful event expressed their appreciation for the wonderful food, gifts and holiday cheer.

Submitted by: Michelle White, Review Board Coordinator

PICKENS COUNTY (13A AND 13E)

The Foster Care Review Board Members of 13A and 13E had a remarkable 2012! Together both boards remodeled a visitation room at the Department of Social Services. The Boards gave the space a fresh look with new paint, curtains, and furniture! To complete the room, the Boards brought in new toys and books. Having an inviting space provides a positive atmosphere for the children and parents to interact at the agency. The Boards went on to host a Staff Appreciation Breakfast at DSS and a Heart Gallery Reception at the Pickens YMCA. Board Chairs Robin Owens and Jan Dulin attended local partnership meetings and met with Family Court Judges to foster the relationship between the review board and the community. Board Member Jeff Turner assisted at the local Heart Gallery Photo Shoot, and Board Members continued to recruit members for the local Fostering Great Ideas Mentoring Program.

Submitted By: Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

YORK AND UNION COUNTIES (16A AND 16B)

The 16A Board (York and Union Counties) and 16B Board (York County) chose as their 2012 service projects to continue to donate to their “slush” funds. These funds are available to assist children in foster care purchase various items for special events such as, prom dresses, tuxedos and camp supplies. The Boards also awarded gift cards to children in foster care who have demonstrated extraordinary academic achievements in school.

Submitted By: Michelle White, Review Board Coordinator

FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD 7C PRESENTS LETTER OF COMMENDATION TO LIBBY WARLICK, SPARTANBURG DSS

“Libby works tirelessly for our children. She collects the various items we bring to donate to the foster children, provides us with the appropriate paperwork for our taxes, then sees the items go where they are needed the most.

Libby set up the Youth Association almost single-handedly. She asked several volunteers to sit on the board to set up the program, then proceeded to do all of the work required. All we had to do was agree and marvel at how she got everything accomplished and in place. She found leaders and companies that donate food to feed the hungry teenagers at their meetings. Libby also gets speakers to donate their time and talents, targeting subjects that will help our teens function on their own out in the world.

Speaking of donating, Libby is not shy at asking for what the children need.

Often in the evenings Libby is on Facebook on her own time sharing the physical needs of foster children and how we can help. If anyone deserves to be recognized for her love of children and putting that love in action, it's Libby.

That is why we are proud to honor Libby Warlick.”

Submitted By: Toyia Scott



MaryAnn Riley, Carole Self, Libby Warlick, Monica Hill, Zora Massing, Lisa Scott



Carole Self, April Collins, Monica Hill

Welcome New Review Board Members

Review Board member Orientation was held February 4, 2013 for seven new local Review Board members and two new Foster Care Review Board staff members and on March 25, 2013 for six new local Review Board members and one new Foster Care Review Board staff member.

Orientation training is mandatory for all new incoming board members and is offered at least four times each year. If you have review board members who have not completed this training, please encourage their attendance. Volunteer Guardians ad Litem, Guardian ad Litem staff, and other child welfare professions are also welcome to attend.

The next New Member Orientation will be held on Monday, August 12, 2013. Please call (803) 734-0217 to reserve a space.

WELCOME NEW RB MEMBERS



February 4, 2013 Orientation

Back Row: Sadina Terry (9A); Amanda Gallman (16A); Charles Horton (7A); Kimberly Inabinet (15C); Linda Janke (10C); Pamela Byrd (12B) Front Row: Michaela Tomberlin (10B); Jennifer Anstead (FCRB); Hayley Salley (Heart Gal-



March 25, 2013 Orientation

Pictured left to right: Selina Westerwelle (Heart Gallery); Fouchena Sheppard (9C); Dorothy Breeding (11A); Robert Amundson (5D); Doris Mines (9D); Marcia Gaul (2A); Seanta Clark (16B)



*South Carolina's
Waiting Children*

HEART GALLERY

The SC Heart Gallery continues to photograph increasing numbers of waiting children and responds to families who express interest in adopting. As part of a network of state organizations partnering with the Department of Social Services, we now provide additional intensive recruitment opportunities for individual children, as well as direct services for families. The Heart Gallery staff assists families by guiding them through the application phase and then completing adoptive home studies. We advocate for these families and support them through their journey in becoming a forever home for a child in need.

Hundreds of children in foster care in South Carolina are waiting to find their forever families. Children like Michael P. and Merissa W.



Merissa



Michael

Julie Valentine Center Luncheon - 13A – FCRB

Dave Pelzer Lecture

As a survivor of one of the worst cases of child abuse in US history, Dave Pelzer, through his resilience and determination was able to overcome extreme life threatening situations and share his past experiences. Dave recently shared his story at the Julie Valentine Center for Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Recovery, and Foster Care Review Board members from Pickens County were able attend and hear his accounts of the past.

As a child, Dave was brutally beaten and starved by his emotionally unstable, alcoholic mother. With willpower to survive, Dave learned how to endure a life where his mother no longer considered Dave a son but a slave, and no longer a boy but an "It." Years later it was determined that Dave's case was identified as one of the most extreme cases of child abuse in California's history.

Dave channeled his past into the critically-acclaimed book, "A Child Called 'IT';" the unforgettable story of a child whose courage and unyielding determination enabled him to survive extreme life-threatening odds.

At age 12 Dave was rescued from his mother's home and placed into a series of foster homes until he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force at age 18. Dave was determined to better himself - no matter what the odds.

As a member of the Armed Forces, Dave was hand-picked to midair refuel the highly secretive SR-71 Blackbird and the F-117 Stealth Fighter, which played a major role in Operations Just Cause, Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Since penning the book in the mid-90's, Dave has recognized for several awards and has dedicated himself to help others. Dave focuses on his belief that "we all strive beyond the norm. We accept within our hearts, that we all have a purpose. No matter how tiny the ripple of hope may be, at the very least, we engaged to achieve greatness."

At the Julie Valentine Luncheon held on February 14, 2013, Dave he shared his belief that "ones' experiences, whether good or bad, are what makes a person who they are, and not the horror of what he went through," explained Jan Dulin, Chairperson for Foster Care Review Board 13A in Pickens, SC. "It's HOW an abuse survivor chooses to deal with their pasts/conflicts that determines the kind of person they become. Dave chose to become an optimist and as an adult he encourages individuals to recommit their efforts and remain steadfast to their personal convictions."

Board member Ellen Johnson finds the "Julie Valentine Center is an invaluable resource for the board and the community. This is my second year to attend the luncheon. The speakers have been inspirational. It was a highlight of my year so far!" Board members Betty Garrison, Judy Rozelle, Jan Dulin and Ellen Johnson found the luncheon very inspirational, to see someone who suffered so much as a child, become a man with such a positive attitude and conviction!



Betty Garrison and Ellen Johnson



Dave Pelzer

DAVE PELZER

**Foster Facts – 2013 Annual Report – Stakeholder Survey –
Next Generation Database**

By: Lisa Vosburgh

I am delighted that with the hiring of a new business manager (Jeanette Davis), 100% of my time is dedicated to data related activities. The last couple of months have included prioritizing data related needs for the next several years. First on the agenda is completion of the 2013 Annual Report (preliminary data points follow). Next will be the design and development of a next generation database to better serve the needs of the Review Board and the customers we serve – both internally and externally. And finally, we will be preparing for a statewide Stakeholder Survey to be distributed in early 2014. The last stakeholder survey was conducted in 2007, and the assistance of local review board members in the process contributed significantly to the success of the process. I look forward to including all of you in this process for the 2014 survey. If you have questions or would like additional information about these projects, or any other data related activities, please contact me via email at

lvosburgh@oepp.sc.gov or by phone at 803-734-4194.

Preliminary data for the 2012 – 2013 Annual Report

- The number of reviews held in 2012 was 19% lower than in 2011
- The number of entries to foster care in 2012 was nearly the same as in 2011
- The number of re-entries, or previous out-of-home placements, increased slightly in 2012
- In 2012 64% of children leaving foster care, left to the custody of a parent (45 or had a finalized adoption (19%)
- The total number of volunteer hours for 2012 was over 14,000 – and 42% of volunteer hours were attributed to non-case review hours.

**The Foster Care Review Board
Welcomes
New Staff**



Jennifer Anstead, Review Board Coordinator

Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

Selina Westerwelle, Heart Gallery Assistant

Hayley Salley, Heart Gallery Recruiter

Jeanette Davis, Business Manager

WELCOME NEW STAFF!



GETTING TO KNOW YOU



Heather Valentine is our Administrative Assistant. She is responsible for distributing Review Board Case Recommendations, managing other functions related to Local Review Board Meetings and other administrative duties. She's a valuable member of the Foster Care Review Board family!

**Foster Care Review Board
Receives
“Together Forever For Kids”
Award**



RECOGNITION

Foster Care Review Board Staff

The Foster Care Review Board was honored to receive an award for creating shared understanding and meaning that is propelling actions, driving results and making a difference in the lives of children and families!

Foster Care Review Board staff pictured from left to right: Beth Green; Robin Campbell; Michelle Dhunjishah; and Stephen Clyburn. Also pictured are Becky Sharp, Elaine Bailey, and Isabel Blanco from DSS.



FOR
ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DAY
JULY 26, 2013
COLUMBIA CONVENTION CENTER

Registration information and directions will be forthcoming. Check-in will start at 9:30 and a hot, free lunch will be provided thanks to Casey Family Programs.

REVIEW BOARD CALENDAR

EVENT	DATES	LOCATION
Annual Professional Development Day	July 26, 2013	Columbia Convention Center
State Board of Directors Meeting	July 26, 2013	Columbia Convention Center
	October 25, 2013	1205 Pendleton Street Columbia, SC 29201
New Member Orientation	August 12, 2013	1205 Pendleton Street Columbia, SC 29201
	November 18, 2013	

South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board –Office of the Governor**1205 Pendleton Street, Suite 436****Columbia, SC 29201****Phone: 803-734-0480****Fax: 803-734-1223****Email: fcrb@oepp.sc.gov****VISION STATEMENT**

South Carolina will make child well-being a top priority by assuring safe, permanent families for all children in foster care.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board is to provide external accountability for the foster care system and to advocate on behalf of children in foster care.

Advocates is published semi-annually by the South Carolina Children's Foster Care Review Board, Office of the Governor. The deadline for submission of articles for the next issue of *Advocates* (Winter 2014) is October 01, 2013.

Anyone wishing to submit an article should contact *Advocates* editor Jeanette Davis by calling 803-734-0217, or send an e-mail to JDavis@oepp.sc.gov.

The publisher reserves the right to make the final determination as to the content of each issue. Articles submitted are subject to editing and are not guaranteed inclusion.

NOTICE:

If you no longer wish to receive this publication, please notify us in writing

by October 01, 2013