

Administrative Review Division



Annual Report
July 2012 - June 2013

Colorado Department of Human Services
Office of Performance and Strategic Outcomes

The Administrative Review Division

Colorado's Child Welfare Quality Assurance and Improvement System

Vision and Mission

The ARD's vision is to create a safe and promising future for children. Our mission is to strengthen the communities, families, and systems that work to make that future possible. As a neutral, third party, we do this by facilitating reviews, gathering and analyzing data, publishing research, and providing training and technical assistance to effect change in practice, policies, and programs that lead to improved outcomes for Colorado's children.

Program Description

Colorado's Administrative Review Division (ARD) serves as an independent third party review system under the auspices of the Colorado Department of Human Services. ARD is the mechanism responsible for the federally required Case Review System and a portion of the Quality Assurance System for both the Division of Child Welfare and the Division of Youth Corrections. With an ultimate passion of providing permanency and well-being for Colorado's children, the Administrative Review Division works closely with Colorado's counties to train, measure and assess their adherence to State and Federal regulations. Such regulations are in place to help prevent unnecessary moves for children in foster care and to assess (and encourage) that the needs of the families' and children are being appropriately addressed. ARD's staff members comprise a closely knit team that truly operates with outward enthusiasm and optimism.

ARD's employees maintain notable academic and professional credentials and utilize these skills to conduct reviews, create strong working relationships with their regions of responsibility, provide technical and compliance training to county caseworkers and supervisors and, most importantly, assist in achieving high quality and consistent care for Colorado's children.

Organizational Structure

The ARD is located within the Office of Performance and Strategic Outcomes in the Colorado Department of Human Services. The ARD works cooperatively with both programs it reviews, the Division of Child Welfare and Division of Youth Corrections. In addition, the ARD has cooperative relationships with many external partners including: State Judicial, Office of the Child's Representative, Foster Parent Association, Denver Indian Family Resources Center, Colorado Coalition of Adoptive Parents, Butler Institute for Families at the University of Denver School of Social Work and many others. The ARD Steering Committee, comprised of many of the external partners listed above, guides the review processes and practices of the Division.

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2013 Year in Review

The Administrative Review Division of the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), Office of Performance and Strategic Outcomes (OPSO), presents its Annual Report for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2013.

The SFY 2013 allocation for the ARD totaled \$2,113,602 and 24.2 FTE. This year brought new additions to the functions with the ARD. The Child Fatality Review Team function was brought over from the Division of Child Welfare in January of 2013, bringing over one FTE.

The ARD continued to fulfill its role as Colorado's Child Welfare Quality Improvement System by continuously collecting and analyzing data collected through qualitative case reviews and presenting results to each county department as part of the ARD's ongoing monitoring processes. Although the most prominent of the ARD's requirements are the administrative case reviews, the ARD conducts a large variety of qualitative case reviews each year. During SFY 2013, the ARD completed a total of 13,027 reviews. Included in that number were 7,344 Child Welfare Administrative Reviews, 712 DYC Administrative Reviews, 1,276 In-Home Services Reviews, 2,153 Assessment Reviews and 1,542 Screen-Out Reviews (reviews of screened-out referrals). During SFY 2013, the ARD completed Assessment and In-Home Services Reviews in 57 counties.

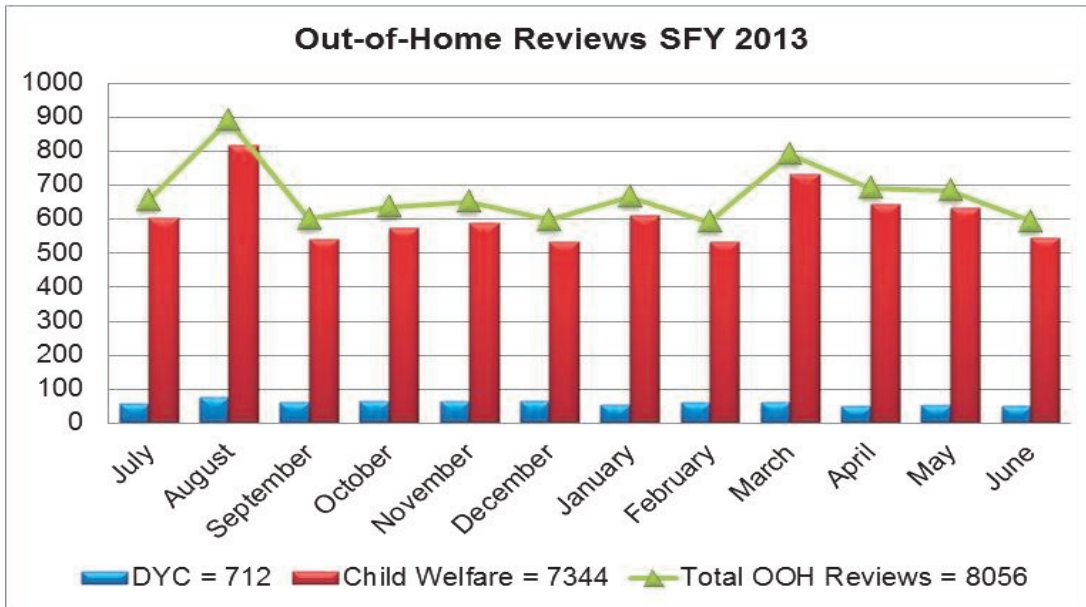
The Child Fatality Review Team process came over to the ARD in January 2013 and continued its work reviewing the fatal, near fatal, and egregious incidents that resulted from abuse and neglect. In Calendar Year 2012, it was reported that 78 children were victims of a suspected egregious incident, a near fatality, or a fatality as a result of child maltreatment. Of the 78 child victims, 59 incidents were fatalities, 14 were near fatal incidents, and five incidents were egregious. Thirty-seven cases were substantiated and, of these cases, 12 had prior involvement with county departments of human services within two years of the substantiated incident. The cases that are substantiated and have the prior involvement required for an in-depth case review are referred to the Child Review Fatality Team (CFRT) process. Twelve cases were reviewed by the CFRT in CY 2012: 9 fatality cases; two near fatality cases; and one egregious incident.

The ARD continues to make caseworker and client manager recognition a priority. In SFY 2013, the ARD awarded over 1159 daily certificates to child welfare caseworkers and DYC Client Managers for quality case work and participation in the Administrative Review Process. Monthly certificates were awarded to nine caseworkers and client managers, with six of these individuals moving on to become the SFY 2012 Annual Outstanding Case Practice Award Recipients. These six individuals were recognized at an awards luncheon at the ARD offices.

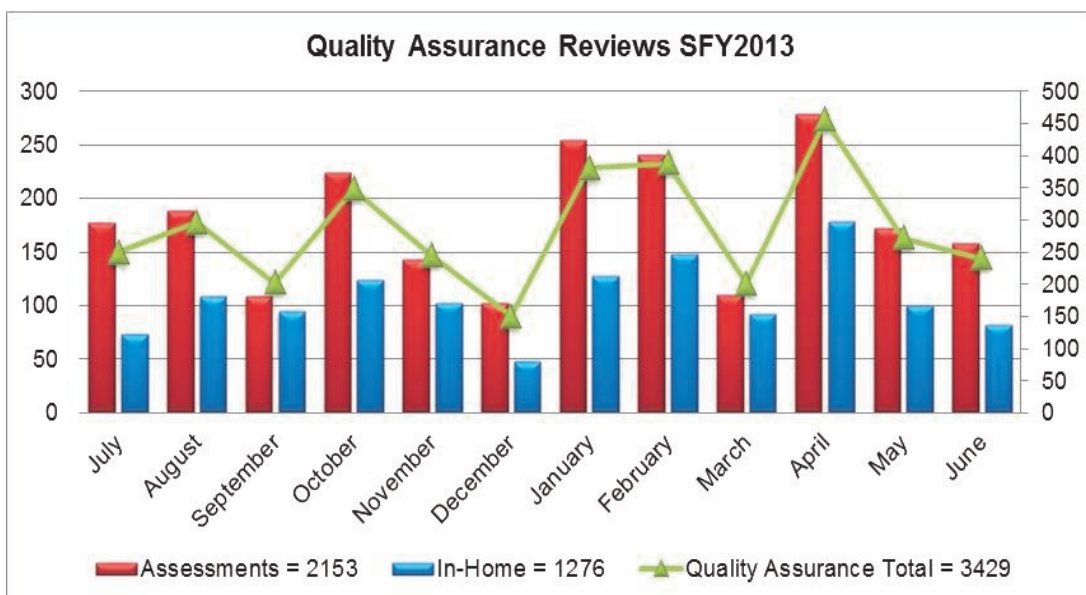
Practice Matters, the ARD's quarterly newsletter, published four new issues this fiscal year. The issues highlighted a variety of child welfare issues, from examining the use of Permanency Round Tables to highlighting ARD's Continuous Quality Improvement processes.

Impact at the Child or Case Level—Qualitative Case Reviews

The ARD reviews all children in the child welfare system who are in out-of-home care for at least six months, and every six months thereafter as long as the child remains in care. Reviews are also conducted every six months for the youth in the Division of Youth Corrections who are in a community placement. The chart below illustrates completed reviews for SFY 2013 by month, sorted by type of review. A total of 8,056 reviews were completed in SFY 2013.



The ARD's Quality Assurance Review process allow for an in-depth look at the child welfare assessment process, and the service delivery, safety, risk and well-being for those families receiving in-home services. These Quality Assurance Reviews take place every six months in the ten large counties, and once a year for the rest of the state. In SFY 2013, the ARD completed 2,153 Assessment reviews and 1,276 In-Home reviews. The chart below displays the numbers of both completed Assessment and In-Home reviews.



Child Fatality Review Team

New this year to the ARD is the Child Fatality Review Team function. During the 2011 legislative session, House Bill 11-1181 was adopted, codifying CDHS' Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) and providing statutory authority through the addition of section 26-1-139 of the Colorado Revised Statutes. The statute outlines the objectives and duties of the county departments, CDHS, and the CFRT regarding reporting procedures and the fatality review process, and defines the structure and membership of the CFRT.

All County Departments of Human/Social Services (DHS) must report egregious incidents, near fatalities, and fatalities suspicious for child abuse and neglect to CDHS, within 24-hours of becoming aware of the incident. The CFRT then conducts in-depth case reviews of incidents of egregious child abuse or neglect, near fatalities, or fatalities within 30 days of receiving the necessary documentation from the county DHS when the following criteria are met:

- The incident was substantiated for fatal or severe abuse or neglect; and
- The child or family had previous involvement with a county DHS in Colorado within two years prior to the incident.

In CY 2012, it was reported that 78 children were victims of a suspected egregious incident, a near fatality, or a fatality as a result of child maltreatment. Of the 78 child victims, 59 incidents were fatalities, 14 were near fatal incidents, and five incidents were egregious. After a thorough assessment of each incident, 56% of fatalities, 36% of near fatalities, and 60% of egregious incidents were found to be unsubstantiated for abuse or neglect, and therefore were not considered to be a result of child maltreatment.

The cases deemed substantiated are therefore the result of child maltreatment and there is a "Founded" disposition against the person responsible for the abuse. In CY 2012, 37 cases were substantiated and, of these cases, 12 had prior involvement with county departments of human services within two years of the substantiated incident.

The cases that are substantiated and have the prior involvement required for an in-depth case review are referred to the Child Review Fatality Team (CFRT) process, which includes a full review of the incident and recommendations around policy and practice considerations. In CY 2012, 12 cases were reviewed by the CFRT: nine fatality cases; two near fatality cases; and one egregious incident.

More information about the CFRT process can be found on the ARD website: <https://sites.google.com/a/state.co.us/cdhs-ard/child-fatality-review-team>

Recognition and Appreciation

The ARD utilizes a three-tiered system of identifying and acknowledging Caseworker and Client Manager participation in the case review process, the positive outcomes facilitated by their case practice, and reinforcing good case practice at the local level. Each month, letters are sent by the ARD Director to County and Region Directors listing each award recipient and celebrating the work performed by their staff.

Daily Certificate of Appreciation

These certificates may be awarded to Caseworkers and Client Managers by ARD review staff on a daily basis for quality case preparation and participation in the Out-of-Home Administrative Review Process. In SFY 2013, 1,159 daily certificates were awarded.

Monthly Certificate of Outstanding Case Practice

Nominations for this award may be made by reviewers on behalf of Caseworkers and Client Managers who demonstrate the following criteria in the course of managing a child's case:

- Engagement and collaboration through interaction with parents and providers as seen during reviews,
- Thorough knowledge of the child's and family's needs and services,
- Accessing or mobilizing resources to meet the child's needs,
- Establishing and maintaining life connections for the child,
- Outstanding collaboration with other professionals, and
- Exemplary movement toward permanency.

Nominations are submitted to the ARD's Recognition Workgroup monthly. Upon review, the workgroup determines whether the nominee has met the established criteria. If approved, the nominated Caseworker or Client Manager receives a certificate, presented by the nominating reviewer. Nice caseworkers and client managers were awarded with a Monthly Certificate in SFY 2013.

Annual Outstanding Case Practice Award

The Administrative Review Division acknowledges Caseworkers and Client Managers with an award for Outstanding Case Practice each year. These professionals are chosen from among many others previously nominated for monthly Outstanding Case Practice certificates throughout the year. In addition to demonstrating the qualities required for a Certificate of Outstanding Practice, winners of this award must also exhibit some of the following:

- Open mindedness,
- An ability to utilize creative solutions,
- Strong collaboration skills,
- Persistence, and
- Surpassing expectations and overcoming barriers to facilitate safe permanency.

Award recipients are invited to the Administrative Review Division offices for a luncheon in their honor. Six individuals were honored with a certificate and award for their commitment to children.

During the week of September 24, 2012, the Administrative Review Division (ARD) hosted the sixth annual Screen Out Review. This year, the review teams consisted of 73 reviewers representing 22 counties (51 staff), the Division of Child Welfare (5 staff), and the ARD (17 staff). Within five days, review teams reviewed a random sample of 1,542 referrals.

The sample was extracted from Trails on September 4, 2012. The sample universe included all Program Area 5 Child Protection referrals screened out between March 1, 2012 and August 31, 2012. A stratified random sampling technique with a 90% Confidence Level with a 10% interval was used to create the sample included in the review. This gives the ARD the ability to provide each county individual data that they can use to generalize to the of their screened-out referrals with a 90% confidence level. Three counties did not have any screened out referrals entered into Trails during the 6-month sampling period: Dolores, Hinsdale, and San Juan. The review found that seven referrals were incorrectly coded as Program Area 5. When possible, these referrals were replaced with alternate referrals.

County staff were paired with a team member from a different county or an ARD staff member and were not allowed to review a screened-out referral from their own county. Paired teams of first-level reviewers used a 23-question Screen Out Review instrument. Each reviewer individually completed the instrument before comparing results with their team member(s). Upon comparison of results, if there was a disagreement about how to answer a question, a team discussion occurred to arrive at a final decision. If the first-level team believed the referral should not have been screened-out, the referral was given to a second-level review team. The second-level team would review the referral for the purposes of determining whether or not they believed it should have been accepted for an assessment and whether or not there were safety concerns. If child welfare practice concerns or safety concerns were identified, this information was gathered and sent back to the county departments for information purposes and/or a request for follow-up when appropriate. Additionally, if Trails data issues were found, the information was also given to the counties with a request to clean up the information as necessary.

As a result of this review, issues needing follow-up were identified by the individual review teams. Specifically, three types of information are being provided to counties: 1) required Trails corrections, 2) information regarding practice, and/or 3) a response is required due to potential safety/risk concerns. Bearing in mind that each referral can generate more than one request or recommendation to the corresponding county, this year's review found:

- Statewide, a total of 202 referrals were sent back to counties for their review.
 - Of these, 163 require Trails corrections and 45 were related to practice issues (it is possible for ne referral to have both, so the total is larger than 202).
- For the 45 related to practice
 - 33 were for information only
 - 12 required further follow-up or additional information due to risk concerns.

During the 2012 review, .77% of referrals reviewed required additional follow up due to risk and/or safety concerns. Over the past several years we have seen a continued decrease in referrals that are sent back to counties. (Trends show 1.2% in 2011, 1.6% in 2010, and 3% in 2009.)

Coordinator Satisfaction Survey

The 12th Annual ARD Coordinators Survey was distributed at the end of October 2012. This survey is intended to collect feedback from Administrative Review Coordinators regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the ARD's processes for scheduling reviews and delivering of narrative findings. Feedback received through this survey allows the ARD to examine its review scheduling and narrative finding reporting systems in order to ensure they are as efficient and effective as possible. ARD distributed invitations to complete the survey via email with an embedded hyperlink to complete the survey on the web.

“Our reviewer and is very easy to work with. He is readily available and answers questions or returns phone calls or email right away. I feel we have great communication and a good scheduling procedure in place.”

As in prior years, the survey was distributed to Administrative Review Coordinators representing each of Colorado's 64 counties and each of the four Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) regions. Although all 64 counties were surveyed, six coordinators represented two counties each: Gunnison/Hinsdale, Grand/Jackson, Kit Carson/Cheyenne, La Plata/San Juan, Montezuma/Dolores, and Rio Grand/Mineral. A total of 62 surveys were distributed, with 58 surveys sent to county coordinators and four sent to DYC coordinators. Of the 62 surveys distributed, 49 surveys were returned. This included surveys from each of the four DYC regions and 45 county coordinators.

In this year's survey, the ARD demonstrated stability in providing review findings in a timely manner, and providing enough availability, flexibility and quantity of review days for the counties and regions. In addition, county and DYC coordinators were pleased with how responsive contact reviewers are to their needs and concerns. Of those county coordinators who needed to reach out the ARD offices and management team, they found the management team to be responsive.

<i>Participating Counties and DYC Regions</i>		
Adams	Gilpin	Montrose
Alamosa	Grand	Morgan
Arapahoe	Gunnison	Otero
Bent	Huerfano	Ouray
Boulder	Jefferson	Park
Broomfield	Kiowa	Phillips
DYC Central	Kit Carson/ Cheyenne	Powers
Chaffee	La Plata	Pueblo
Custer	Lake	Rio Blanco
Delta	Larimer	Rio Grande & Mineral
Denver	Las Animas	Sedgwick
DYC - Southern Region	Lincoln	Teller
DYC NE Region	Logan	Washington
Elbert	Mesa	Weld
Fremont	Moffat	DYC - Western Region
Garfield	Montezuma	Yuma

Administrative Review Division Staff

Administrative Reviewers conduct reviews in each of Colorado's 64 counties and four NYC regions.

Kristy Bennett
Reviewer

Heather Neumann
Reviewer

Tara Saya
Reviewer

Marina Blake
Reviewer

Lynette Overmeyer
Reviewer

Jonathan Scharf
Reviewer

Clint Edgar
Reviewer

Don Pacheco
Reviewer

Tracy Streit
Reviewer

Eric Hoskins
Reviewer

Sara Peterson
Reviewer

Tamara Tacha
Reviewer

Leslie Mascarenas
Reviewer

Roy Reed
Reviewer

Marcia Tuggle
Reviewer

David Tyner
Reviewer

Marc Mackert, Director

Lindsey Gorzalski Hocking, Caire Krol and Susan Nichols, Managers

Jim Martinez, In-Home Review Coordinator

Allison Churchill, In-Home Data Analyst

Tia Whitaker, Research Analyst

Erin Hall, Child Safety Specialist

Nadine Magruder, Office Manager

Please contact the Administrative Review Division to discuss this report further, for additional copies of this report, or for more information regarding Colorado's case review system.

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Colorado Department of Human Services
people who help people

