

# Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel Virtual Meeting

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

## MINUTES

**Members Present:** Judge Melissa Murphy, Chair; Lori Aldridge, Co-Chair, Tri County CASA; Judge Libby Messer, Fayette Family Court; Dr. Melissa Currie, Norton Children's Pediatric Protection Specialist, University of Louisville; Lesa Dennis, Commissioner, Department for Community Based Services; Detective Jason Merlo, Kentucky State Police; Jan Bright, State Child Fatality Review Team; Dr. Christina Howard, Child Abuse Pediatrician, University of Kentucky; Geoff Wilson, LCSW, Practicing Addiction Counselor; Dr. Jaime Kirtley, Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky; Dr. Henrietta Bada, Department for Public Health; Dr. William Ralston, Chief Office of the Medical Examiner; Dr. Elizabeth Salt, Citizen Foster Care Review Board; Heather McCarty; Family Resource and Youth Service Center; and Olivia McCollum, Boone County Assistant Attorney.

### **Welcome and Introductions**

*Judge Melissa Moore Murphy, Chair*

Judge Murphy welcomed everyone to the August meeting of the Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel. Before we get started, I want to give a couple of shout outs and do a few introductions. First, I'm thankful for Lori and her willingness to step up as Chair in my absence. My mother-in-law passed away the morning of our last meeting and Lori was willing to step in last minute. I'm grateful for you, so thank you Lori. I also want to celebrate Dr. Christina Howard, who was recently honored at Leadership Lexington's first Unsung Heroes Ball. She was named an Unsung Hero. We all know that she is invaluable and a hero but it's always good when other people can see the work she does. Thank you so much for your work and congratulations on that recognition.

We do have an introduction of a new member joining us today, Heather McCarty with the Family Resource and Youth Services Center.

*Heather:* Thank you, Judge Murphy. I am honored and excited to be here with you all and to be a part of this team. I have been in education for over 20 years now and most of that being a Family Resource and Youth Services Coordinator. I'm currently the regional program manager for region 2 in the western part of the state. Thank you for having me and I'm looking forward to working with all of you.

*Judge Murphy:* Thank you. Of course, we know our FRYSC workers, whether division level or school level are probably some of the first contacts with our kids. We are grateful for your presence and continued work on this panel.

### **Miscellaneous Panel Business**

Next month's meeting will be at the Kids Are Worth It Conference sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky. For those that will be there, I hope you've already sent your paperwork to Elisha. If you

haven't, you need to do that right now so she can ensure you are registered. For those who cannot attend, we will have a virtual option. Our meeting will be held during that conference, so it will come off our regular rotation and be on Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. Please be sure you have that on your calendar. Anything else, Elisha?

*Elisha:* Unfortunately, Steve Shannon couldn't join us today, but I want to give a quick update about the LOIC testimony. Everything went great and they were very complimentary of the panel's work. Steve did mention that the panel will work with the Cabinet to update the MOU. I know we shared it with everyone, I believe back in the June meeting. So, we will work on drafting another MOU and sharing it with everyone for approval.

Regarding the budget updates, everyone should have received the updated ABR via email. I'm hoping we can entertain a motion to get that approved. Unless anyone has any additional changes, I have not received any via email.

*Judge Murphy:* That email was sent out yesterday.

*Elisha:* Yes, and there were no major changes to the ABR from the one that was sent out last month. There could be some slight changes due to retirement increases but overall, the major request is for the software updates and another full-time position.

*Dr. Currie:* I thought it looked pretty good. I make a motion to approve.

*Lori Aldridge:* Second.

*Judge Murphy:* We have a motion and second, with no opposition the ABR has been approved. I just realized I've been gone since the June meeting, and I get to publicly congratulate Elisha on her award presentation. Of course, I'm extremely proud of her and this doesn't happen without Elisha. We all know without Joel, Cindy, or Elisha this work wouldn't be possible. So, again thank you and congratulations.

Everyone should have the Minutes and Case Review Summaries from the June meeting in their email. If everyone has had an opportunity to review those, we will entertain a motion. Lori Aldridge made a motion to adopt the minutes and case review summaries which was seconded by Dr. Henrietta Bada. With no objections, the July Minutes and Case Review Summaries stand as submitted.

### **Case Reviews:**

The following cases were reviewed by the Panel. A case summary of findings and recommendations are attached and made a part of these minutes.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Case #</u>	<u>Analyst</u>
2	F-024-22-C	Joel Griffith
3	F-027-22-C	Joel Griffith
1	F-037-22-C	Joel Griffith
4	NF-015-22-C	Cindy Curtsinger

2	NF-053-22-C	Cindy Curtsinger
1	NF-059-22-C	Cindy Curtsinger
3	NF-047-22-C	Joel Griffith
3	NF-075-22-C	Joel Griffith
4	NF-093-22-C	Joel Griffith
2	NF-068-22-NC	Cindy Curtsinger
1	NF-087-22-C	Cindy Curtsinger
4	NF-103-22-C	Cindy Curtsinger
4	NF-106-22-C	Joel Griffith

\* Cases NF-108-22-C, NF-130-22-C, NF-098-22-C, and NF-131-22-C will be reviewed during the September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Additional Discussion:**

**Recommendation** (Dr. Currie): When MAT providers are aware that parents of young children are using illicit substances, in addition to their medication that is being prescribed and not making a referral to CPS. This is a missed opportunity. I am sympathetic to and understand the concerns that folks have that if MAT providers were to start making CPS referrals, then fewer parents of young children might seek MAT and therefore not get the help. However, if you're receiving MAT and using illicit substances at the same time, I'm not sure MAT is helping anything anyway. I continue to think that our children in Kentucky need to be the top priority and their safety, and I think MAT providers should have to make reports when parents of young children are using illicit drugs. That's my perspective and I'm curious to hear from others.

Dr. Salt: I do think it's a careful balance of providing the help and determining the safety. Ethically and legally, I think you would have to report whenever you think a child would be in harm's way or neglected.

Commissioner Dennis: Especially if they know the parent is in a caretaking role, it should be reported.

Dr. Howard: I agree with Dr. Currie. In terms of Family Drug Court, especially with a caregiver who has a pattern of behavior where they relapse, I don't think it would have been unreasonable to have court involvement to know what those drug screens were showing despite MAT involvement. This is a prime example of why these need to be reported, this is what happens.

**Judge Murphy:** We'd like to take a break and introduce our new prosecutor. We have Olivia McCollum joining the team, who is the Boone County Assistant Attorney.

Olivia McCollum: I apologize for signing in late today, I have court on Tuesdays. Unfortunately, I'll have to sign on when I get out of court. I'm very excited to be a part of this team and start working with you all.

Judge Murphy: Thank you for being here and we are excited to have you join us.

**Meeting adjourned.**