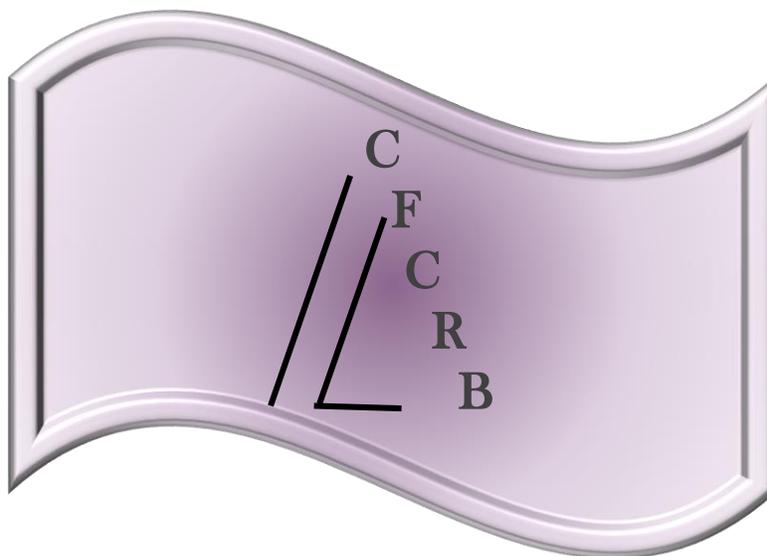
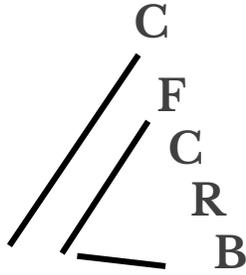


# CITIZEN'S FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD INC. COLLIER COUNTY 2021 ANNUAL REPORT





**Citizen's Foster Care  
Review Board Inc.**

CFCRB Inc.  
P.O. Box 10746  
Naples FL 34101  
CFCRBCollier@gmail.com  
www.CFCRBCollier.org

**Board of Directors**

**Officers**

Thomas J. Wedlock  
President  
Lori Cohen  
Vice President  
Fernand Billon  
Secretary  
Robert Nossen  
Treasurer

**Directors**

Ann Campbell  
Kenneth I. Shevin  
Doug Campbell  
Angie Cruz

May 24, 2022

Dear Friends:

The Citizen's Foster Care Review Board (CFCRB) was founded in 1992 by the Hon. Ted Brousseau in response to a heavy caseload of dependency cases. Judge Brousseau recognized the value of this community partnership as a way to allocate each dependency case the time and attention that it deserved. The CFCRB supports the Dependency Court by conducting Judicial Reviews on a rotational basis with the Judge. In 2021 our volunteers heard 160 cases involving 230 children.

It is with deep sadness that we report that Judge Brousseau passed away in July 2021. Judge Brousseau was a fierce advocate for the CFCRB. He believed in our mission and provided unwavering guidance and support. On retiring from the judiciary Judge Brousseau became a valued member of our Board. He will be greatly missed.

COVID-19 continued to provide unique challenges in 2021. The Panels conducted the majority of Judicial Review Hearings on Zoom and look forward to returning to the courtroom in 2022.

The CFCRB receives no governmental funding and must rely on fundraising and grants to support our mission. Your donation through our website [www.cfcrcollier.org](http://www.cfcrcollier.org) will help us protect and advance the interests of abused and neglected children who come under the jurisdiction of Collier County's Dependency Court.

It is truly an honor and a privilege to represent such a dedicated and determined group of volunteers devoted to a most valuable mission.

Thank you so much for your continued support and friendship.

With sincere gratitude,

Thomas J. Wedlock  
President  
Citizen's Foster Care Review Board Inc.

## MISSION STATEMENT

THE MISSION OF THE CITIZEN’S FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD (CFCRB) IS TO PROTECT AND ADVANCE THE INTERESTS OF ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS IN COLLIER COUNTY WHO COME UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE DEPENDENCY COURT BY PROVIDING WELL-TRAINED VOLUNTEERS TO OVERSEE THEIR SAFETY, STABILITY, AND WELL-BEING.

## 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Lt. Tom Wedlock
Vice President	Lori Cohen
Secretary	Fernand Billon
Treasurer	Robert Nossen
Director	The Hon. Ted Brousseau ( <i>Deceased</i> )
Director	Kenneth I. Shevin
Director	Ann Campbell
Director	Doug Campbell
Director	Angie Cruz

CITIZEN’S FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD INC			
2021 FINANCIAL ACTIVITY			
INCOME			
Donations			800
TOTAL INCOME			800
EXPENSES			
Administrative			5,618
Program:			1,650
TOTAL EXPENSES			7,268
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)			(6,468)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Stakeholders in the dependency court system share a common goal - to preserve families and protect children. Guided by core values of impartiality, fairness, and integrity, the thirty-one volunteer panel members of the Citizen's Foster Care Review Board (CFCRB), conducted 160 judicial review hearings involving 230 children in 2021. The majority of cases were conducted over zoom as the courthouse was closed due to COVID-19. We were able to return to the courtroom for a brief period in July 2021 and heard 17 cases in person. The downward trend of cases continued in 2021. The number of cases decreased by 17% and children served decreased by 22% as compared to 2020 cases. 2021 marks our 29<sup>th</sup> year and we look forward to continuing to serve the community and the court.

Pursuant to Florida Statute 39.702, the CFCRB submits its annual report to the 20th Judicial Circuit Chief Judge, Michael McHugh. It is also shared with our dependency judges, state and local child welfare agencies, and related stakeholders within the community.

This annual report summarizes the data collected by the CFCRB panel members during judicial reviews in a single year and compares it to previous years. The primary cause of entry into the system remains parental substance abuse followed closely by domestic violence. Children aged 0-2 and 6-10 years old are the predominant age range of children served by the CFCRB. The placement of children in-home or with relatives continues to be the preferred placement option.

As changes and improvements in programs are made over the years, challenges remain. Stakeholders and the community must continue to work together to find solutions. This is where the CFCRB is in a unique position to serve as a link and voice to the community.

## **THE WORK OF THE CFCRB**

The CFCRB was established in 1992 under Florida law through the efforts of Dependency Judge Ted Brousseau (of Blessed memory). Citizen panels allow more time for the review of dependency cases, thus allowing Judges to focus on more complex cases.

Panels consist of a cross-section of volunteers from the community who undergo comprehensive specialized training to acquaint themselves with the foster care review process. Upon completion of their training, volunteers are sworn in as officers of the court to act in the best interest of the child. Volunteers are also required to undergo a criminal history check and attend additional in-service training throughout the year.

Acting under the authority of the Dependency Court, panels of 5 well-trained volunteers conduct judicial hearings to evaluate the progress of the parents' or custodians' compliance with their court-ordered case plan. They ensure that all necessary services are being provided to the families as well as monitoring the welfare of the children.

Based on the information received at these hearings the panels make recommendations to the Dependency Court Judge regarding the safety of the children and the progress of

the family toward case resolution. Upon acceptance by the Judge, these recommendations become fully enforceable court orders.

Pursuant to Florida law, a judicial hearing in a dependency case must be held at 3-to-6-month intervals to determine whether it is advancing in an expeditious and appropriate fashion.

Prior to each hearing, panel members review the case documents provided by the Court. The parents, the Department of Children and Families, the case manager, caregivers, Guardians ad Litem, the children, and the attorneys representing the parties to the case attend the hearing. All parties are entitled to be heard by the panel. The children who are the subject of the proceedings are required by law to be present unless otherwise excused by the Court. They are offered the opportunity to speak with the panel, thus encouraging open communication.

The panel examines the safety, education, enrichment activities, physical (medical/dental), psychological and emotional needs of the children. When a need is identified, the panel seeks to identify a potential remedy, which is then included in its recommendations to the court. The goal of the panel is to reduce the instability that dependency instills in the children and their families. We encourage all parties to move effectively and efficiently to create a permanent solution for the children.

Upon deliberation, the panel makes recommendations to the Court. Once reviewed and approved, those recommendations become an order of the Court that must be complied with by all parties.

By helping to avoid unnecessary delays in the dependency process, the panels help to ensure the safety and well-being of the children while expediting permanent placements. The panels bring the objective voice of the community to the dependency process. In addition, by bringing the experience, thought processes and intellectual efforts of five trained members of the community to bear on each hearing, a comprehensive analysis of each case will result. At the same time, the panels ensure the accountability of all participants in the proceedings, and afford all parties - but, particularly the children - the opportunity to be heard.

Finally, by assuming a part of the burden of the Dependency Court, the panel's work provides the judicial process the ability to focus more time and attention on each case in pursuit of an optimal outcome.

Our vision remains steadfast in its commitment to children, young adults, and their families in the Dependency system--- *That every child has the most meaningful outcomes; that the court reaches timely resolutions; that every child and young adult lives in a safe, secure, healthy, and permanent home and that families are reunified whenever possible.*

## 2021 DATA REVIEW

- ❖ The CFCRB supports the Collier County Dependency Court by conducting Judicial Reviews on a rotational basis with the Judge.
- ❖ To accomplish this task, our Panel Volunteers contributed close to 2,000 volunteer hours in 2021. Marking **our 29th** year, we look forward to continued service to the community and the court.
- ❖ The Panel conducted **160** judicial reviews involving **230** children in 2021. **17** Cases were heard in the Courtroom. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the balance of **143** cases were conducted on Zoom.
- ❖ The number of Cases heard in 2021 decreased by **17%** and children served decreased by **22%** as compared to 2020 figures.
- ❖ The primary cause of entry into the system remains substance abuse (**50%**), with the secondary reason being domestic violence (**29%**).
- ❖ **150** Children (**65%**) attended their Hearings. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Panel spoke privately with just **5** children, each of whom were accompanied by their Guardian ad Litem.
- ❖ Children ages **0-2 (25%)** and **6-10 (31%)** were the largest groupings by age served by the Panels. These were followed by children aged **3-5 (18%)**, **11-15 (19%)**, **16-17 (5%)** and **18+ (2%)**.
- ❖ Placement of children with relatives followed by in-home placements were the predominant choices in 2021.
- ❖ **65%** of identified barriers to obtaining permanency for children are associated with the parents. Non-compliance with their case plan tasks was the leading barrier reported.
- ❖ The most frequent recommended goal in 2021 was Adoption. This was closely followed by a Concurrent Goal (Reunification with a secondary goal of Adoption or Maintain and Strengthen Placement (MASP)).

*The CFCRB gives special thanks and  
acknowledgement to . . .*

20<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT UNIFIED FAMILY COURT COLLIER COUNTY JUDGE:

We are grateful to The Honorable Shannon McFee for his support and guidance during another challenging year.

20<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT DEPENDENCY COURT CASE MANAGER FOR COLLIER COUNTY:

Mrs. Judy Groos oversees the CFCRB scheduling of cases, distribution of court files and documents to panel members and communications liaison between the Dependency Court Judges, the Board and Steering Committee. She provides a vital link between the dependency court and the service that the CFCRB provides. We thank her for her tireless support and dedication.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW PANEL CHAIRS:

Doug Campbell  
Caren Langevin  
Claire O'Keefe

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS:

Fernand Billon  
Doug Campbell  
Lori Cohen  
Janis Kent  
Lt. Tom Wedlock

# 2021 VOLUNTEERS

TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS, WHO CONTRIBUTED CLOSE TO 2,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2021, WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR PASSION, TIME, HARD WORK AND FOR CARING ABOUT OUR COLLIER COUNTY CHILDREN.

## 2021 PANEL MEMBERS

Terry Abraham-Whalley

Michael Baumohl

Larry Birt

Steve Brazina

Eileen Brooks

Sandy Bruce

Ann Campbell \*

Doug Campbell \* +

Lori Cohen \*+

John D'Alimonte +

Lois D'Alimonte +

Jennifer DeVries +

Lynn Drexler

Raymond Hrovat

Joe Jaffe +

Cheri Kooiker

Caren Langevin +

Roger Mann

DeAnne Miller

Elaine Moorin

Susan Mullin

Claire O'Keefe +

David Pfaff

Don Rauch +

Jim Schoenwetter

Ira Schwartz

Ken Shevin \*

Fran Shipman

Elli Taylor

Harold Weeks

Willie West

Carmen Wise

*\* Board Member*

*+ Chair*

### STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

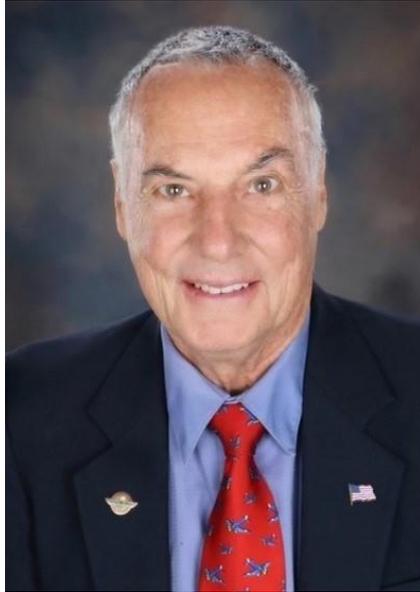
Michael Baumohl  
Ann Campbell (Chair)  
Doug Campbell  
Lori Cohen  
Don Rauch  
Fran Shipman  
Harold Weeks

### VOLUNTEER TRAINERS

Lori Cohen  
Joe Jaffe  
Don Rauch  
Fran Shipman  
Harold Weeks

### ADMIN ASSISTANT

Claire O'Sullivan



The Honorable Ted Brousseau Jr.

April 13th, 1944 – July 16th, 2021

***“A faithful friend”***

*Willie West – Past President*

## **PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION**

***Give a contribution including, in honor or in memoriam of a child, friend or family member.***

As a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization, we are independent of the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court and rely on contributions and grants from the community and businesses.

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**YOUR SUPPORT WILL HELP US TO CONTINUE OUR WORK. PLEASE LOG INTO  
OUR WEBSITE [WWW.CFCRBCOLLIER.ORG](http://WWW.CFCRBCOLLIER.ORG) TO DONATE  
OR MAIL YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO:**

**CFCRB INC.  
P O BOX 10746  
NAPLES, FL 34101**

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