

# State of Missouri

## Task Force on Children's Justice

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Missouri Children's Division

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### Establishment and Maintenance of Task Force (Sections 107(b)(2) and 107(c)(1) of the Act)

The Missouri Task Force on Children's Justice was established under the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 1991. Each state receiving CAPTA funding is required to maintain a state multi-disciplinary task force on children's justice. Missouri's Task Force is comprised of 21 members representing most urban and metropolitan jurisdictions, as well as rural locations in the State, and includes law enforcement, judges and attorneys involved in both civil and criminal child abuse and neglect proceedings, child advocates, court appointed special advocates (CASA), health and mental health professionals, individuals representing child protective service agencies, individuals experienced in working with children with disabilities, parents, adult former victims of child abuse and or neglect, and individuals experienced in working with homeless children and youth, as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a).

The responsibility of the Task Force is to assist the State in developing, establishing, and operating programs designed to improve child welfare; in particular, the handling of child abuse and neglect cases, the handling of child abuse related fatalities, the prosecution of child abuse cases, particularly sexual abuse, and the handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health related problems. In order to accomplish its mission, the Task Force reviews child welfare laws, policies and practices, and reports of serious child abuse and child fatalities, for the purposes of recommending improvements and providing funding to support programs that address these recommendations.

The Task Force is charged with the oversight and distribution of Children's Justice Act (CJA) federal grant money and reformation of policy and state laws related to the improvement of the investigative response to child abuse and neglect and the reduction of trauma to child victims.

The Task Force meets quarterly to review and discuss activities to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse and exploitation, and cases involving suspected child maltreatment-related fatalities. In

addition to meeting quarterly, the Task Force, via the use of subcommittees, holds in-person meetings and conference calls, reviews policy, and tracks and evaluates proposed legislation.

In 2021, the Task Force maintained 21 members, each serving a term of four years and may serve a consecutive three terms. Below are the names, titles, designations of disciplines, and brief descriptions of the relevant experience of the Task Force members that participated in 2021.

<p>Leanne Reese (Court Appointed Special Advocate Representative)</p>	<p>Leanne Reese serves as the Executive Director of the Missouri Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association. She has worked for Missouri CASA for 11 years and previously served as the Deputy Director. Leanne graduated cum laude with her undergraduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1992. She continued her education by earning her Juris Doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1997. After law school Leanne worked as an attorney with Richards, Layton, and Finger, P.A. in Wilmington, Delaware.</p>
<p>Kelly Schultz (Parent Representative)</p>	<p>Kelly Schultz is the Director of the Policy and Partnerships for the Missouri State Alliance of YMCAs. Previously, Kelly was the Child Advocate for the State of Missouri for ten years and spent twelve years working in the Missouri State Capitol. In addition to her public policy experience, Kelly served as the President of the Boone County Foster Parent Support Group; was a house parent at the Rainbow House, an emergency shelter for children; and volunteered at the Women’s Shelter. Kelly and her husband are foster/adoptive parents and have helped to raise 17 children throughout the years. Kelly received her undergraduate degree in Political Science and a Master’s Degree in Public Administration from the University of Missouri.</p>
<p>Danielle Corley (Child Protective Service Agency Representative)</p>	<p>Danielle Corley is a Field Support Manager for the Northern Region of the Children’s Division with a focus on the investigation of child abuse and neglect. Danielle has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Central Methodist College, Fayette, Missouri and a Master’s of Business Administration from Missouri Baptist University, St. Louis, Missouri. Danielle was a Circuit Manager in St. Charles County for the Children’s Division from 1997 to 2010. She also served as the Executive Director of the Child Advocacy Center of East Central Missouri from 2010 to 2013.</p>

<p>Judge Hugh C. Harvey (Circuit Judge)</p>	<p>Hugh C. Harvey is a life-long resident of Saline County, Missouri. In 1981, he graduated from Oral Roberts University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management and Business Administration. In 1985, he graduated from Drake University with a Juris Doctorate in law and a Master of Business Administration degree. Judge Harvey began a private practice and in 1986 was appointed prosecuting attorney for Saline County. He served as prosecuting attorney until 2000 when he was appointed associate circuit judge for Saline County and continues to serve in that role. He is a member of Missouri Bar Association, the Saline County Bar Association, and The Missouri Association of Probate and Associate Circuit Judges.</p>
<p>Rick Gaines (Family Court Representative)</p>	<p>Rick Gaines graduated from Lincoln University in 1986 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. He began his professional career in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit as a Detention Deputy Juvenile Officer in 1986. Rick served in different positions in the Thirteenth Circuit including Chief Deputy Juvenile Officer, Chief Juvenile Officer, and superintendent of the local juvenile detention center. Rick retired from the Thirteenth Circuit in 2016 after a 30 year career and went to work for the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) as the Disproportionate Minority Coordinator for the State of Missouri. In March of 2017, Rick became the Chief Juvenile Officer for the Twenty-First Judicial Circuit. Rick has served on several statewide committees that have helped shape Missouri's Juvenile Justice work, including the recently enacted Missouri Juvenile Officer Performance Standards. Rick has a passion and commitment to the important work that impacts Missouri's youth and families.</p>
<p>Greg Holtmeyer (Adult Former Child Victim)</p>	<p>Greg Holtmeyer is the Access and Abilities Coordinator at Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri and his Master of Science degree in Elementary Education from the University of St. Mary's, Leavenworth, Kansas. Greg was the victim of physical and sexual child abuse at a very young age. Greg has responded to his victimization by speaking about the</p>

	<p>impact and trauma openly, and providing professional presentations to organizations serving children and families all over the United States.</p>
<p>Christopher Jensen (Family Attorney) Co-Chair</p>	<p>Christopher Jensen is a partner at Baylard, Billington, Dempsey &amp; Jensen, P.C. located in Union, Missouri, where he has practiced law since 1995. He graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia receiving his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree with an emphasis in marketing in 1992 and his Juris Doctorate in 1995. Chris has been particularly involved in the juvenile court system in Franklin County over the past 16 years. In addition to his representation of hundreds of parents, he has been a court approved Guardian ad Litem since 2010. Chris also serves as Chairman of the Franklin County Children and Families Community Resource Board, which administers over \$3 million in annual tax revenue for non-profit services within the county. He is a member of the Fostering Court Improvement team of the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit and the Franklin County Cares Trauma Informed Community Initiative.</p>
<p>Judge Leslie Schneider (Circuit Judge)</p>	<p>Leslie Schneider is the Administrative Family Court Judge of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit in Missouri, comprised of Boone and Callaway counties. Judge Schneider received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1976. She received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1979. Judge Schneider was employed as a Missouri Assistant Attorney General before opening her law office in 1983, focusing primarily on family law. Judge Schneider continued in private practice until being elected as an Associate Circuit Judge in 2006. Judge Schneider has served on numerous boards and commissions during her legal career. Most recently she chaired the Child Support Review committee, is a member of Access to Family Courts and the Family Court Committees of the Missouri Supreme Court. She was an adjunct professor teaching Family Law at the University of Missouri – Columbia for approximately five years.</p>
<p>Dan Patterson (Prosecuting Attorney)</p>	<p>Dan Patterson is the Greene County Prosecuting Attorney in Springfield, Missouri. Dan received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law. Dan currently holds the position as Lieutenant Colonel, Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the Missouri National Guard. Dan</p>

	<p>has 17 years of experience prosecuting child abuse neglect cases, is a POST Certified Instructor with the Springfield Police Academy, is the current Chairman of the Stake Holder Committee, and a Board Member of the Child Advocacy Center. Dan also serves as co-chairperson on the Task Force.</p>
<p>Sheriff Clay Chism (Law Enforcement Community)</p>	<p>Clay Chism is the Callaway County Sheriff. Clay is in his 19th year of service at the Callaway County Sheriff's Office and was elected Sheriff in November 2016. During a past assignment as the Investigations Division supervisor, Clay oversaw numerous child abuse and neglect investigations. Clay received his Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Central Missouri-Warrensburg, and his Master of Science in Criminal Justice Administration degree from Columbia College, in Columbia, Missouri. Clay is an active member of the Callaway County Child Fatality Review Panel and also serves on various state committees involving child abuse, neglect, and fatalities.</p>
<p>Chief Bill Carson (Law Enforcement Community)</p>	<p>Bill Carson is the Chief of Police for the Maryland Heights Police Department. He has thirty-nine years of experience as a police officer in the St. Louis metropolitan area, and has served sixteen years in criminal investigation units as a detective, a supervisor and eventually a commander. He is a graduate of the F.B.I. National Academy and holds a Master's Degree in Criminology &amp; Criminal Justice from the University of Missouri – St. Louis. In 2011, Chief Carson was appointed by Missouri Governor Jay Nixon to serve as a member of the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis, and is a member of the Missouri State Child Fatality Review Panel. Chief Carson has written several articles and taught police officers, prosecutors and social service workers on topics related to the investigation of child sexual abuse.</p>

<p>Dr. James Anderst (Health Professional)</p>	<p>Dr. James Anderst is a board certified Child Abuse Pediatrician and Director of the Division of Child Adversity and Resilience at Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. He is also a Professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine in Kansas City, Missouri. Dr. Anderst completed medical school at the Medical College of Wisconsin, a residency at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, and fellowship and Master’s Degree at the University of Texas Health Science Center. Dr. Anderst has created educational tools for medical providers and legal investigators that are in use nationally and internationally. Dr. Anderst has published numerous peer-reviewed studies and book chapters regarding child maltreatment, and provides educational and research lectures nationally.</p>
<p>Stacey Goodwin (Persons Working with Children With Disabilities)</p>	<p>Stacey Goodwin has been with the Department of Mental Health (DMH)/Division of Developmental Disabilities for 24 years. She supervises a team of 14 service coordinators for St. Charles County. She was recently nominated and attended the DMH Leadership Academy. Stacey has been the System of Care lead for many years and strives to work together with many agencies to build great wrap-around services for families in need. She volunteers to be a 3<sup>rd</sup> party reviewer for Children Division's Permanency Planning Review Team Meetings. Stacey is a member of the Fostering Court Improvement Board to bring information about Developmental Disabilities to that team.</p>
<p>Lisa Mizell (Child Advocate) Co-Chair</p>	<p>Lisa Mizell has worked in the field of social services most of her professional career spanning over 25 years. She worked directly with child abuse and neglect cases while at the CASA of Lake County, Indiana and the Fredericksburg, Virginia Department of Social Services. Lisa is currently the CEO of the Child Protection Center (CPC), the child advocacy center serving Jackson and Cass Counties. The CPC serves over 800 children a year, all of whom have allegedly been victims of child abuse or witnessed violent crime. In addition, while serving as the Executive Director of Amethyst Place, Lisa worked with women who were in recovery and their children. All residents were homeless prior to admission. She started her career at LifeSkills in St. Louis, Missouri, and later worked as a case manager for the Department of</p>

	Mental Health--St. Louis Regional Center for Developmental Disabilities.
Jill Groff-Rosloniec (Parent/Child Attorney)	Jill Groff-Rosloniec is currently in her eighth year working with the juvenile courts as a guardian ad litem (GAL). For the past seven years, she has worked exclusively as a GAL in abuse and neglect cases for three counties in Missouri. Recently, she has moved to practicing family law as well as maintaining her GAL caseload.
Russell (Russ) Dempsey (Defense Attorney)	Russell Dempsey is employed as a partner at the law firm of MRD Lawyers. Russ graduated from Central Missouri State University with his Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice. He then received his Juris Doctorate from Washburn Law School. Russ began his legal career with the Greene County Prosecutor's office in May of 2002. Russ left the prosecutor's office to form MRD Lawyers in 2014. Currently, Russ is a criminal defense attorney who handles cases in and around Springfield, Missouri.
Rachel Jones (Mental Health Professional)	Rachel Jones is the Manager of Trauma Informed Treatment with the Department of Mental Health, Division of Behavioral Health. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology with a Minor in Black Studies and a Master's Degree in Educational, School and Counseling Psychology from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor. She provides state-wide training, consultation, and technical assistance on implementation of clinical best practices and organizational change through trauma informed policies, procedures, practices and partnerships. She is a POST Certified instructor and provides trauma informed law enforcement and juvenile justice training. She has 15 years of experience working with child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, substance use and mental health disorders with children, youth, and adults. She is a member of Missouri Alliance for Dual Diagnosis and co-authored an article in the professional journal, <i>Current Psychiatry Reports</i> . Rachel is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Interdisciplinary Research Leader Fellow and an Adjunct Instructor for Columbia College.
Dr. Tanya Burrell (Health Professional)	Dr. Tanya Burrell has been a child abuse and neglect pediatrician at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri, since 2013. Prior to becoming part of faculty staff at Children's Mercy, Dr. Burrell completed medical

	<p>school at The Ohio State University College of Medicine, a 3-year general pediatrics residency at Hope Children’s Hospital and a 3-year subspecialty training in child abuse and neglect pediatrics at Children’s Mercy Hospital.</p> <p>Dr. Burrell has participated in various research projects focusing on the improvement of the evaluation of children with injuries. Dr. Burrell serves on the Board of Directors for Sunflower House, which is an accredited child advocacy center in Shawnee, Kansas. She is also a board member of Violence Free Kansas City, which serves to reduce exposures to violence and trauma and increase utilization of supportive resources within the Jackson County area. She serves as a multi-disciplinary team member to effectively communicate medical findings of the children she has evaluated to investigative agencies. Dr. Burrell regularly provides education to various learners including other physicians, nurses, and medical students.</p> <p>One of Dr. Burrell’s areas of focus within the field of child abuse and neglect pediatrics is on prevention. She currently oversees the ACT Program. The ACT Program is a positive parenting program developed by the American Psychological Association that focuses on reducing parents’ use of physical punishment, increasing parents’ nurturing behaviors, and increasing parents’ knowledge base of normal child development. Working closely with various head start programs, elementary schools, and Children’s Division workers within the Jackson County area, Dr. Burrell has been able to provide this service for hundreds of families and help empower caregivers to create safe and nurturing homes.</p>
<p>Shelly Shugart (Child Advocate)</p>	<p>Shelly (Graf) Shugart has worked for the Missouri Department of Corrections for 26 years. She is currently the Planning and Grants Manager in the Office of the Director. She spent approximately 16 years as a field Probation and Parole Officer specializing in supervision of sex offenders. Shelly worked closely with law enforcement and the courts during that time, having been a court liaison for most of those 16 years. She is currently a Board member of Child Safe of Central Missouri, a non-profit organization that conducts forensic interviews for child abuse cases in Central Missouri. She is also President of Cancer Perks,</p>

	<p>a non-profit providing services to cancer patients in Pettis and Saline Counties.</p>
<p>Terrie Martin (Law Enforcement Community— Probation and Parole)</p>	<p>Terrie Martin launched her career with the State of Missouri in 1997, when she became a Youth Specialist with the Division of Youth Services. After serving a year in this capacity, Terrie accepted a position as a Field Probation and Parole Officer with the Department of Corrections. Terrie was a Probation and Parole Officer for 18 years and supervised domestic violent offenders as well as sexual offenders. In 2016, Terrie accepted a promotion to the position of Corrections Training Officer where she was able to teach new Probation and Parole Officers as well as other new employees for the Department of Corrections. In 2019, Terrie promoted to her current position as Probation and Parole Staff Development Manager. Terrie currently supervises eight Probation and Parole Safety Trainers throughout the state. In addition, she organizes new staff training for the Division of Probation and Parole. Terrie is an active member of her parish and is a mother of two wonderful boys in the Jefferson City area.</p>
<p>Lindsey Parton (Experienced in working with homeless children and youth-as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a))</p>	<p>Lindsey Parton, MSW, LCSW, began her career in social work over 14 years ago while employed as a Community Support Specialist. She grew to love the ever-changing environment and welcomed the challenges and successes of the field, which led her to her current position. Lindsey serves as a District Social Worker for Marshall Public Schools in Marshall, MO. She enjoys working with students and families and has a targeted focus on assisting those who are living in McKinney-Vento educationally defined homeless situations. Lindsey has a community-integrated approach, building partnerships and involvement with many groups and organizations. She has served as a board member for the Community Food Pantry, Pinwheels for Prevention (Child Abuse Prevention), the Saline County Inter-Agency Council, as well as co-founded a non-profit homeless shelter for young women. Lindsey currently serves on the board for the Mental Health Association of Saline County, the Marshall Chamber of Commerce and the Saline County Holiday Project. She received her Master's in Social Work from the University of Missouri-Columbia and in 2017, became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.</p>

### **Statement of Needs**

The Task Force on Children's Justice is responsible for providing stable, flexible, and ongoing funding to support efforts to improve the investigative approach and response to child abuse and neglect. Funding granted by the Task Force will assist the State in its efforts to expand training; expand services; provide better staff development opportunities and positive work environments; promote a positive image; and gain public support. The end goal is an improved ability to recruit, train, and retain staff; ultimately, it will enhance the State's ability to respond to child abuse and neglect in the most timely and effective manner.

The term investigator will be used several times throughout this report. In Missouri, this term refers to the Children's Division workers who are conducting child abuse and neglect investigations and assessments.

### **Task Force Activities, Outputs, and Outcomes**

#### **Recruitment Committee**

The Recruitment Committee is responsible for monitoring CJA's membership to ensure it consists of a minimum of 21 members and represents the required disciplines as specified in Section 107(c)(1) of the Act. The Missouri TF achieved full membership in Spring 2021 and has continued to sustain into 2022.

Applications for membership will continue to be accepted and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Those interested may attend all open meetings in advance of selection to the Task Force. The membership application is posted on the Task Force's state website.

#### **Goal Committee**

The committee was formed to assist the Task Force in maintaining focus on the three goals identified as well as reviewing the annual report to ensure that the Task Force is aligning grant funding and efforts with statutory requirements. Goals that the Task Force identified were:

- Improve Mandated Reporting
- Create High Functioning Multi-Disciplinary Teams
- Support and Collaborate with Multi-Disciplinary Teams in Response to the Substance Abuse Epidemic

The Goal Committee met several times via WebEx technology during 2021. With the focus on the upcoming Three-Year Assessment being forefront, the Goal Committee, with the approval of the full Task Force, began working with a consultant, With Insight, to assist in the evaluation of programs and grant funding over the last three years.

## **Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee began to see an uptick in grant requests in 2021. Several of the grants that were approved in late 2019 and 2020 were held in 2021. The Finance Committee held discussions and scoring via e-mail and presented recommendations to the full Task Force. Through focus groups that assisted with the assessment of the Task Force in the last three years, it was a recommendation that the grant application and process could be updated and improved upon to assist in the ease of completion. The Finance Committee will be looking at improvement planning for the grant application and process throughout 2022.

At the November 2021 quarterly meeting of the Task Force, the Children's Division Fiscal Liaison gave a presentation and explanation of the CJA Grant process. A Power Point presentation was provided to the Task Force Members explaining how funding was awarded through the Federal Government. It was explained that funding comes from the Crime Victims Fund that is administered by the US Department of Justice & Office of Victims of Crime. The grants are awarded by the Administration of Children, Youth and Families. She also explained how the locally awarded grants were tracked and was able to show the Task Force funding amounts and how they were used over periods of years.

## **Critical Events Committee**

In early 2021, it was anticipated that the Task Force's Critical Events Committee would join a second level of multi-disciplinary team (MDT) members that would collectively look at critical events and trends identified from a first level review by the Children's Division and multiple other MDT professionals. The Children's Division's first level review process meets monthly and looks for improvement opportunities by reviewing critical event cases involving fatalities or near fatalities of children with recent or active agency involvement.

The purpose of the second level review is to take improvement opportunities that have been identified and dig deeper into those to recommend systematic improvements. It has taken longer than anticipated to develop a system's improvement tool and a data use agreement. The data use agreement has been approved and access to the database was obtained in February 2022. There are several groups that have had involvement with critical event reviews in recent years and it is the hope to integrate these groups. The Task Force Critical Events Committee has an array of professionals whose vast experience could help reduce future critical events. The Children's Division's second level group would meet quarterly and it is anticipated to commence in the Fall of 2022. The Task Force hopes to be able to support this process in the coming year.

## **Legislative Committee**

The Legislative Committee has voiced that it might be beneficial to continue to help educate our legislators on child abuse/neglect cases. It suggested creating a short video to walk our legislators and other collaborators through the different elements of child abuse and neglect cases, including involved agencies and their respective roles. It stressed the importance of

information coming from the diverse Task Force versus other sources that might be perceived as bias. Instead of videos some may never see, it suggested educating legislators in a different way. It proposed moving the November 2022 Task Force meeting to December 2022 as December 1 is when bills are pre-filed. The Legislative Committee then would have the ability to look over the pre-filed bills and see what legislative proposals may affect the Children's Division or the investigation/prosecution of child abuse and neglect. The Committee could then identify what legislators might have an interest and invite the legislators to the February 2023 meeting and answer any questions they may have as a MDT/stakeholder group. This would give the Task Force an opportunity to educate the legislators.

### **Project Impacts and/or Progress**

In 2021, the Task Force continued examining needs identified during the three-year assessment in 2019, including multi-disciplinary team collaboration.

The Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (MOPS) received The Task Force on Children's Justice funding for a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Train the Trainer event to improve the work of multi-disciplinary teams in the state by developing a group of individuals who could provide local training and assistance to these teams. The session, which had been originally intended for April 2020, was held to September 15-16, 2021, in Jefferson City, Missouri.

The MDT curriculum is based on an MDT Module which was created and developed by the MDT Workgroup, a committee of the Task Force on the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse. The module is comprised of approximately 170 power point slides. The slides present key components from every core MDT agency to help inform and increase participation in MDT case reviews and case investigations. The MDT Module training was offered ten (10) times to various multi-disciplinary teams in Missouri between October 2018-November 2019. The training is comprised of six (6) hours of lecture and 2 hours of group work. The Train the Trainer curriculum focuses on ensuring that trainers understand the content of the MDT Module and teaching facilitation skills for the group work component of the MDT curriculum. As a condition of accepting a scholarship to this training, trainees committed to providing at least two MDT trainings with a total of at least 30 participants within 18 months of the Train the Trainer event. Given the ongoing global pandemic, participants were authorized to conduct these trainings virtually, and in segments. The training is set up for group work and to enhance communication within the group. Different topics include:

- Completion of the MDT Assessment Tool
- The Child Advocacy Center Model
- Statutory Compliance
- Case Processing (This is a popular group activity that highlights strengths and weaknesses and how to mitigate weaknesses)
- Identification of Abuse and Neglect (It was found that some LE agencies had very little experience with investigating abuse and neglect. (The team will

examine different agencies' definitions and burdens of proof, as well as their goals and objectives.)

- Cursory Statements and Referrals to CACs
- Dynamics of Coercive Control
- MDT Protocol and Functioning as a Team (Group work. Uses case scenarios to create ideas for functioning as a MDT. Participants discuss pros and cons of removing children from their home)
- How to Conduct Case Reviews and ways to improve.

The Train the Trainer event included a mixture of lectures and small group activities over a 1.5 day period, including a total of 10.5 hours of coursework. The former Child Abuse Resource Prosecutor, Erin Lueker, provided her guidance and expertise on how the curriculum was developed by the MDT Working Group, how she had taught the course over the 10 previous presentations during her tenure as the Child Abuse Resource Prosecutor, and what she had learned during her experiences. Wentzville Child Advocacy Center Supervisor of Forensic Services, Amy Robins, assisted Ms. Lueker in her instruction of the slides. MOPS Special Victims Resource Prosecutor, Catherine Vannier, provided an additional session to offer participants practical suggestions for planning their own trainings, how to obtain certifications and how to achieve the most successful learning environment.

Despite extensive recruitment efforts by members of the MDT Working Group, as well as additional persons enlisted from CACs and prosecuting attorneys' offices, attendance was less than initially anticipated due to the ongoing pandemic, including an untimely rise in COVID cases due to the Delta variant, as well as staffing shortages at the Children's Division, Child Advocacy Centers and Prosecuting Attorneys' Offices.

With three (3) faculty members and a total of twenty (20) attendees, as well two (2) additional persons auditing the course (from the Children's Division and Missouri KidsFirst respectively), the Train the Trainer event was smaller than originally planned, but still successful in enhancing the MDT training scope and availability across the state. This Train the Trainer session engaged a geographically diverse multi-disciplinary group of experienced professionals who are now committed to offering this standardized training over a much larger area and audience group than ever before. This event will have ripple effects across the state of Missouri to increase the quality and coordination of the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases for years to come.

A follow-up meeting was held February 1, 2022 via Zoom to get updates from the various teams and their trainings. Meg Boyko from Missouri KidsFirst presented information obtained from a training held in December 2021. Overall, the training was well received and the trainees felt it was very helpful in learning roles and improving their own skills and knowledge of MDTs. Each of the attendees of the Train the Trainer session gave updates on trainings they have completed and upcoming trainings they are planning. Meg also gave an overview on updates to the training material and tips on improvements to assist trainers in future sessions. The Task Force will continue to monitor the progress of this initiative.

### **Linkage to CFSR/CFSP:**

Task Force member Leanne Reese sits on the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Advisory Committee and attends multi-disciplinary meetings to discuss areas of improvement needed on the CFSR. Leanne is able to share information from the CFSR Advisory Committee to the rest of the Task Force. The Task Force discusses any needs identified and makes recommendations as necessary. Recommendations are then taken back to the CFSR Advisory Committee. The purpose of this collaborative advisory committee is twofold: first, to serve as a vehicle for cross-system collaboration to promote the achievement of better outcomes for the children, youth, and families; and second, to fulfill an ACF requirement for a collaborative process.

Children's Division's CFSR and Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) Coordinator, JoDene Bogart, gave a presentation at the February 2022 quarterly meeting of the Task Force. The Children's Division is finishing up Round 3 of the CFSR and will be beginning Round 4 in July-September 2023. Missouri has opted for a traditional review which will bring a team in to Missouri to complete the review. The CFSR uses a statewide assessment using case-level reviews and interviews with key stakeholders and partners. It was discussed that the Task Force members could play a role with stakeholder interviews that are being set up for spring/summer 2022. Further discussions and focus groups will be developed into 2022 for the Task Force and CFSR activities.

Timely initial contact of victim children was a goal for Missouri in the last CFSP and during Ms. Bogart's discussion with the Task Force, timely initial contact was still identified as an area of improvement regarding child abuse investigations. Through the Task Force's enhancement project with the MDTs, collaboration between the parties can be used to improve initial contact with victim children by building communications and relationships between the Children's Division and MDTs.

### **Linkage to Anti-Trafficking Efforts:**

Children's Division staff, Kara Wilcox and Kate Watson are appointed members of the Missouri Supreme Court's Combatting Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence Commission. The Commission is currently working on finalizing recommendations to the Supreme Court to improve the judicial response to these issues. In alignment with the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, the Children's Division provides an Advanced Human Trafficking Training curriculum for all staff. This advanced training helps strengthen skills in the areas of identifying, assessing, and engaging child trafficking victims. To coincide with the Advanced Human Trafficking Training, the Children's Division updated policy and procedures in August 2021 to require the utilization of a comprehensive assessment tool to assist in the identification of child victims of human trafficking. Furthermore, the Children's Division Training Unit developed an enhanced version of the Introduction to Human Trafficking training, including four pathways intended for administrative staff, field staff, supervisory staff, and caregivers, to educate on the basics of understanding trafficking and its implications.

Children's Division staff continue to expand their awareness of and response to concerns of human trafficking by developing local protocols within multi-disciplinary teams, collaborating with federal law enforcement agencies for assistance in investigating cases of suspected trafficking, participating in various local human trafficking task forces, and developing local procedures to address youth who run away from foster care.

The Children's Division has partnered with the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Texas Department of Public Safety to provide Interdiction for the Protection of Children Training (IPC) statewide. IPC is designed to provide expertise and investigative assistance on human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and child sex crime investigations to patrol officers. IPC training teaches officers what to look for during traffic stops and appropriate questions to ask children and adults. IPC opens communication between the Missouri Children's Division, Child Advocacy Centers, medical and mental health professionals, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to help identify if a child is in danger during a traffic stop.

The Task Force has been discussing how to better support anti-trafficking efforts with its MDT partners in hopes of either providing grant support or technical assistance from our panel of expert professionals. The Task Force has identified this is an area they would like to explore further in 2022 as both Children's Division and other MDT members have identified a need to train and provide services for victims. Two different entities have recently reached out to the Task Force regarding their work with human trafficking and how the Task Force could assist them. They expect to be working on grant requests for the summer or fall of 2022.

### **Linkage to the Court Improvement Program**

To ensure compliance with the CJA program instructions and 107(e) of CAPTA, and to further improve the collaboration efforts of the Task Force with other groups and committees developed to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect, as well as improving court programs, the Task Force utilized Kim Abbott of the Office of State Courts Administrator (OSCA), to keep the Task Force informed about the progress of efforts, initiatives and programs being developed and implemented by the Court Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP partners with the Children's Division on projects and to assist local courts in work related to child abuse and neglect.

The Partnership for Child Safety and Well-Being (Partnership) meets monthly and includes the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, a leading juvenile officer, staff from the Department of Social Services and the Office of State Courts Administrator, which includes the Court Improvement Program Coordinator. The Partnership meets to ensure child welfare stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities in the formal court process and make decisions in the best interests of children while safely and timely achieving permanency for abused and neglected children. The joint effort focuses on practice, policies, and data; and utilizes trainings and various information sharing techniques to engage staff across the state.

The Partnership had planned for CIP sponsored multidisciplinary workshops to occur, but they were postponed due to the pandemic situation. Consequently, focus has moved to updating

the roles and responsibilities for the case flow of child abuse and neglect cases and planning for future multidisciplinary workshops.

In addition, CIP staff have continued to work with the Children's Division to support a joint safety assessment tool that has been developed for use in the early stages of an investigation and a child is removed. This effort is in response to recent legislation and was implemented in January 2022. Child welfare legislation has also directed several other initiatives that the CIP has been involved in such as the process involving the juvenile officers and courts with temporary alternative placement agreements (TAPAs), an evaluation process for the agency and contractors, as well as qualified residential treatment placement requirements set forth from the Families First Prevention Services Act. Children's Division and members of the CIP will continue to advance this effort throughout 2022.

### **Linkage to Court and Legal Representation Improvement**

The Children's Division recognizes that child welfare is a multi-disciplinary practice through which the best outcomes are achieved when Children's Division effectively collaborates with court partners. To that end, the Children's Division continues to collaborate with the Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA) through the Partnership for Child Safety and Wellbeing (PCSW).

Over the last year, the statewide PCSW has continued to convene on a monthly basis in a virtual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic, though some meetings have been able to be in person as restrictions are lifted. Much of the work of the PCSW has focused on maintaining system collaboration in these unique and challenging times.

The priorities of the group had to shift over the last two years due to the inability to have circuits meet together in an in-person format. Conversation and planning continue for holding another round of regional convenings to include a greater number of participants from each site when it is safe to do so. There is also ongoing support for court technical assistance (TA) via the Court Engagement Manager meeting with circuits and by providing support and training as needed.

A great deal of work has been done by the sub-group working on addressing legal representation for parents and children through Title IV-E funding. It was decided a pilot project would be implemented for interested jurisdictions around this process. A process and supporting documents were created and approved by the PCSW group. Informational sessions were held for interested circuits and the pilot program began for those circuits on or about April 1, 2021.

### **Juvenile Court Judges/Commissioners Educational Conference**

On April 17, 2020, the PCSW was scheduled to host juvenile court judges and commissioners to provide training specific to several areas of concerns. The training was to include education with regard to the American Bar Association's Judge's Guide to Safety and Framework for Safety, crossover youth initiatives, family first initiatives and legislative updates. This training

was postponed due the national pandemic outbreak of COVID-19. A judicial conference was held in November 2021 which included some of the mentioned topics.

### Regional Court Convenings

A series of regional convenings were held in the fall of 2018. The teams consisted of the judge, juvenile officer, Guardian Ad-Litem (GAL), Children's Division staff and contracted foster care case managers. At each court convening, participants were provided a binder/ toolkit which included information about roles and responsibilities, and information about the Family First Act. The convenings introduced the expectation that each circuit would begin or renew multi-disciplinary court partnership efforts.

It was hoped that a second series of regional convenings would be held in the summer of 2020 but these had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the belief from the group that this work is best completed when it is safe to meet in person. The convenings will include additional participation from local stakeholders, to include up to ten (10) members of the multi-disciplinary team and are in the process of being rescheduled for 2022.

### Court Technical Assistance (TA) Teams

The Court Engagement Manager began work in March 2020 supporting technical assistance (TA) work around the state. The Court Engagement Manager has also assisted in the utilization of Division of Legal Services and Permanency Attorneys to help work towards permanency goals. The Court Engagement Manager continues to provide TA to individual circuits on a case-by-case basis providing support, training or linking with resources as appropriate.

### Staff Competency in Court

The Children's Division's Legal Aspects Trainers have created and completed a Legal Aspects 360 that all circuit managers participated in during January 2021 to refresh their knowledge of legal aspects in both investigations and alternative care. A contract attorney was brought on to the Children's Division in the summer of 2021 to assist in courtroom coaching in specific areas of the state and to assist the Legal Aspects trainers in developing courtroom skills training. The Legal Aspects trainers will collaborate with the local jurisdiction attorneys, permanency attorneys and court personnel along with Children's Division staff.

### Other Activities

The Children's Division's Quality Assurance Unit continues to produce quarterly data reports for all 46 Circuits to be used as a conversation starter at court partnership meetings. The information provided to the Circuits includes; number of children in alternative care, number of children in relative placement, the number of children exiting care, the number of children entering care, the number of children re-entering care and the number of children reaching permanency within a specific timeframe. This allows the Circuits to present data to their Court Teams to better enhance the collaborative effort of keeping children safe, move them swiftly and safely through the alternative care process and return them to a safe home. Circuits report that sharing the data presents a more transparent snapshot of the number of children in care and their placements which the Court Teams appreciate.

## **Enhanced Response to Children and Families Impacted by Domestic Violence**

The Children's Division Prevention and Safety Unit has a lead member and back up member involved with the St. Louis Domestic Violence Fatality Review Panel. The panel was organized in January 2022 to review select intimate partner violence fatalities to help improve community interventions and learn how to reduce the incidence of intimate partner fatalities. The panel's permanent members consist of circuit attorney, medical examiner, law enforcement, public health, emergency medical services, victim services, domestic violence shelters/organizations, Children's Division and rape crisis centers. Other individuals that may participate in reviews include, batterers intervention programs, defense attorney, substance abuse counselors, judges, probation and parole, FBI, survivor and survivor family members.

### **CJA Funds Allocated/Prior Year Performance Report:**

In 2021, the finance committee met quarterly via conference call to review grant applications and to actively monitor the expenditure of funds. The committee was able to thoroughly review grant applications, and discuss all aspects of the applications prior to the quarterly meeting of the entire Task Force.

The finance committee recommended and the Task Force voted to fund the following projects which were successfully completed in 2021:

#### **Missouri Office of Prosecutor (MOPS) MDT Train the Trainer**

Initially set for 2020, due to COVID-19 restrictions, this training was held September 15 and 16, 2021. The purpose of this program is to improve the investigation and handling of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner that reduces additional trauma to the child. Specifically, this program will seek to improve the work of multi-disciplinary teams in the state by developing a group of individuals who can provide local training and assistance to these teams. The curriculum is based on the MDT Module developed by members of the Missouri Task Force on the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse. The Train the Trainer curriculum focused on ensuring those teaching the course understand the content of the MDT Module and assisting with facilitation skills for the group work component of the MDT Curriculum. See Projects and Progress above for further detail.

**Total: \$2,681**

#### **Missouri KidsFirst Virtual Course: ChildFirst® Forensic Interviewing**

Missouri KidsFirst coordinated with the Zero Abuse Project (ZAP) to deliver a virtual session of ChildFirst®: National Course October 4-8, 2021. Twenty-seven individuals participated in the five (5) day training for a certificate of completion. In addition, one faculty member and one Missouri KidsFirst staff person audited the training. The faculty member audited to provide Missouri specific content where applicable.

Attendees included juvenile court officers, detectives, child/family victim advocates, other Child Advocacy Center (CAC) staff members, assistant prosecuting attorneys, law enforcement officers, Children's Division investigators, and forensic interviewers. 100% of attendees received education on the benefits of using a multi-disciplinary team approach to investigating child abuse/neglect allegations; age-appropriate, non-leading child interviewing techniques; and the research supporting the interviewing/investigative methods that were taught. All attendees practiced applying the ChildFirst® interviewing protocol and methods through mock forensic interviews.

Because MKF is licensed by Zero Abuse Project to conduct ChildFirst® in Missouri, they didn't have the ability to modify or adapt the training. However, ZAP was required to get approval by the National Children's Alliance to change the curriculum to assure it would sufficiently meet the training requirements set out by the national CAC accreditation standards when delivered in a virtual setting.

**Total: \$13,365**

#### Missouri KidsFirst: In-person Course: ChildFirst® Forensic Interviewing

Missouri KidsFirst (MKF) coordinated ChildFirst® Forensic Interviewing for Missouri October 25-29, 2021. Thirty-one individuals participated in the five (5) day training for a certificate of completion and one additional participant completed three (3) out of five (5) days, but was not counted as complete as they missed the last two days due to illness. In addition, five (5) faculty members, three (3) expert presenters and five (5) Missouri KidsFirst staff were in attendance.

Attendees included juvenile court officers, detectives, child/family victim advocates, other Child Advocacy Center (CAC) staff members, assistant prosecuting attorneys, law enforcement officers, Children's Division investigators, and forensic interviewers. Eight (8) of the participants were employed as forensic interviewers. All attendees received education on the benefits of using a multi-disciplinary team approach to investigation abuse/neglect allegations; age-appropriate, non-leading child interviewing techniques; and the research supporting the interviewing/investigative methods that were taught.

The attendees practiced applying the ChildFirst® interviewing protocol and methods through mock forensic interviews. During these mock interviews, ChildFirst® Missouri faculty and the attendees peers filled out feedback forms to provide every participant with reflections on strengths and areas for improvement.

**Total: \$31,000**

#### Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) Spring Conference

The Missouri Juvenile Justice Association provided four plenary sessions as well as twenty break-out workshops for professionals during the Spring 2021 Educational Conference. Several plenary and workshop sessions were applicable to the requirement of the Missouri Task Force on Children Justice in that these seminars will assist various disciplines who work in the child welfare system to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases as well as

making sure multi-disciplinary team members receive ongoing training and education in order to improve the investigation and prosecution of abuse and neglect cases.

Those sessions that were applicable to the Task Force purpose/mission were the following: 1) *Dealing with the Judge*; 2) *Temporary Alternative Placement Agreement*; 3) *What's Right With Our Children Today*; 4) *Prosecutorial Discretion and Implicit Bias; Truth or Consequence*; 5) *Flexible Thinking: Stretching JO's to think like CD Workers and CD Workers to think like JO's and everyone to think like Attorneys-Investigation to Assessing Imminent Danger and Protective Custody Hearing Through Adjudication*; 6) *Independent Assessor and Families First Update*; 7) *Ethics for Social Workers*; 8) *Juvenile Sex Offender Registry*; 9) *Clark Flatt's Plenary on Youth Suicide Prevention and finally, the keynote from Missouri Teacher of the Year, Darrion Cockrell who was in foster care and ultimately adopted.*

Overall, the evaluations were very positive. 70% of attendees rated their conference as Excellent, followed by 30% who rated it as Good. Attendees noted that the information provided was relevant and useful to their positions. 77% said the plenary and workshop sessions increased their knowledge of child welfare and juvenile justice; 22% said it increased their knowledge somewhat and just 1% felt they did not learn anything.

**Total: \$10,911**

#### The Child Center Inc. Hiding in Plain Sight: Improving the Response to Child Sexual Abuse

The safety and well-being of children continues to be a top priority for all those in the field, and effectively protecting children from abuse requires a coordinated, collaborative, and multi-disciplinary approach throughout every community. "Hiding in Plain Sight: Improving the Response to Child Sexual Abuse" was a one-day training is intended to teach, empower, and inspire each person to continue in the fight to end child abuse and exploitation, and be better equipped to make a positive difference for every child served. The target audience for the training included a variety of multi-disciplinary (MDT) members as well as school counselors, social workers, clergy, mental health professionals, educators, advocates, CASA, health care providers, foster parents, and case managers. . The Missouri CJA's Task Force Member Greg Holtmeyer conducts this training as a former child victim. The training is always well received by attendees.

**Total: \$1,811**

#### 16th Annual Midwest Justice for Children Conference

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Justice for Children Conference was held on September 22-23, 2021, in St. Louis, Missouri. The initial grant award was approved in 2019, but due to COVID and yet another postponement, the Child Center decided to put off the conference until 2021 and shortened the training to two days. The goal of the conference was to improve the investigative response, expertise, and understanding of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, child sexual abuse, and child sexual exploitation for multi-disciplinary team members and professionals. The conference also hoped to improve the mental health and medical response, expertise, and understanding of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, and

child sexual abuse and exploitation to professionals working with this population. The two-day version of this training was very well-received as it was easier for participants to take time away from work for two days versus 3.5 in the past. The Center plans to modify the format to give fewer speakers more time to present, as suggested by participants.

**Total: \$26,500**

### Show Me a Helping Hand Conference

The Missouri Children's Justice Act Task Force sponsored the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Show Me a Helping Hand Conference on November 4-5, 2021. This two day event was hosted on the Lincoln University campus in Jefferson City, Missouri. It was a lecture/question/answer session format. There were nine (9) speakers from various backgrounds dealing in all aspects of child abuse. Topics covered were:

1. Jerri Sites: Recantation. Recommendations for the MDT and CAC Response;
2. Jason Williams: Living Beyond Fear. A Survivors Story;
3. David Finkelhor: Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse;
4. Greg Holtmeyer: Surviving Generational Trauma;
5. Drew Wiggins: From Victim to Empowered Survivor;
6. Trish Davis-Fordyce: Trauma, The Brain, and Human Development;
7. Albert Grieve: One Generation to Break the Cycle;
8. Jim Struve: Social Justice, A Critical 3<sup>rd</sup> Rail for Evidence-Based Trauma-Informed Care;
9. Collaboration of the Missouri Children's Division, State Prosecutor's Office, Probation and Parole and Adult Services: Preventing Tragedies. An Examination of Case Studies.

The event was a hybrid of in-person lecture as well as two virtual sessions. Continued Education Units and POST credit was given free to qualified attendees. Overall evaluation of the speakers and sessions were extremely positive and the Task Force is planning on holding the next conference in late 2022.

**Total: \$13,000**

### **Consistent with the requirements of section 107(e)(1) the 2021 priorities were:**

#### (A) Activities to Improve the Investigative, Administrative, and Judicial Handling of Cases

The following are the activities completed/in progress and recommendations of the Task Force and its subcommittees for the 12-month period preceding the date of submission:

- (1) The Task Force has continued to support the process of investigation through prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases by funding "The Basic of MDTs" training curriculum. The training will foster cooperation among state, local, and private agencies to best serve the targeted population and assist in the

investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases. The Task Force would like to continue to monitor the independent training pods to assess the success of the train the trainer program.

- (2) The Task Force supported Missouri KidsFirst by assisting in the funding of ChildFirst® programs, offering both an in person and a virtual training course of child abuse investigation training. Priority was given to prosecutors, law enforcement, forensic interviewers, Children's Division staff and child advocacy center staff when allocating scholarships. The training assisted in the improvement of the investigative response to child sexual abuse by increasing the expertise of professionals addressing the investigation, treatment, and prosecution of cases of child sexual abuse. The Task Force will continue to support this endeavor as grant applications are submitted.

(B) Steps to Establish Experimental, Model, or Demonstration Programs

- (1) The Task Force sponsored Children's Justice Act Show Me a Helping Hand conference in November 2021. CJA Task Force Member, Greg Holtmeyer, spearheaded the effort by co-organizing and speaking at the event on past childhood trauma. The focus included male sexual abuse, human trafficking and past trauma. The target audience included counselors, therapists, law enforcement, Children's Division, schools, and other related professions. The conference was free to all attendees and also provided free CEU and POST credit hours to qualified attendees, as well as sponsoring 25 hotel rooms for attendees.
- (2) The Task Force has approved funding for a multi-year MDT Enhancement Project which is intended to build more highly functioning MDTs across the state that in turn will assist in the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect. The enhancement initiatives will likely lead to cases being referred and completed in a timelier manner as well as few cases falling through the cracks with teams working together more cohesively throughout the life of the case. Phase 1 will begin Spring 2022.

(C) Activities to Reform State Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, Procedures or Protocols

The Task Force will continue to review Children's Division policy and law related to the investigation of child abuse and neglect.

- (1) Birth Match: The Birth Match Program, authorized in Sections 193.075, 210.150, and 210.156, RSMo, allows data sharing between Children's Division and the State Registrar of Vital Statistics so that parents of newborns who may be at higher risk for child abuse/neglect, due to the parents' history of certain criminal convictions or

involuntary termination of their parental rights to other children, are identified. When a data “match” is potentially produced, the information will be provided to the local CD office, so CD can attempt to contact the family and offer appropriate services. All contact with the family and services offered must be documented in FACES.

(2) Orders of Protection: Laws in Chapter 455, RSMo were amended regarding Adult and Child Protection Orders to afford petitioners and their children additional protections, including:

- Such orders can now be granted to prohibit a respondent from committing or threatening to commit abuse against a pet and could grant possession of a pet to a party, plus money for medical bills for any abuse of the pet;
- The definitions of course of conduct and stalking were broadened; and
- If the court makes specific written findings that the respondent poses a serious danger to the physical or mental health of the petitioner or of a minor household member of the petitioner, the protective order shall be valid for at least two years and not more than ten years, but can be renewed for the life of the respondent.

(3) Newborn Safety Incubator: The “Safe Place for Newborns Act of 2002” in Section 210.950, RSMo was amended define a newborn safety incubator, a medical device used to maintain an optimal environment for the care of a newborn infant, and allow a parent of a child up to 45 days old to voluntarily deliver the child with the intent not to return, without being prosecuted, to one of these incubators. The Department of Health and Senior Services may promulgate rules relating governing the specifications, installation, maintenance, and oversight of such newborn safety incubators. This placement into a newborn safety incubator is another choice for birth parents, in addition to relinquishment to the persons already identified in statute, such as firefighters, law enforcement or hospital personnel.

(4) Temporary Alternative Placement Agreements (TAPAS): These agreements were created by legislation in 2020, for implementation once rules were promulgated. Those rules were filed on an emergency basis with the Missouri Secretary of State and became effective on August 2, 2021. On August 2, 2021, policy went into effect regarding implementation of Temporary Alternative Placement Agreements (TAPAs) as a result of legislation that passed in 2020. Pursuant to Section 210.123, RSMo and 13 CSR 35-30.030, a TAPA is a voluntary agreement between the Children’s Division, a relative of the child, and the parent or guardian of the child to provide a temporary, out of home placement for a child if the parent or guardian is temporarily unable to provide care or support for the child and the child is not in imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury or being sexually abused.

(5) Child Abuse/Neglect Review Board (CANRB): Regulations were also filed to change the review process for preliminary findings of child abuse and neglect and become effective October 30, 2021, at 13 CSR 35-31.025. Primary changes include a streamlined process for review upon request so that circuit level review is not required; resolution of

many unnecessary delays for alleged perpetrators with pending criminal charges; and differences in the way cases are presented to the CANRB Boards.

Assessment Tools:

#### The Structured Decision Making (SDM) Safety Assessment

The SDM Safety Assessment tool assists staff in assessing whether a child is likely to be in imminent danger of serious harm that may require protective intervention. The SDM Safety assessment is required for all Investigations, Assessments, Newborn Crisis Assessments, and Out of Home Investigations (OHI) reports. The SDM Safety Assessment will not be required for Non-caretaker Referrals, Preventative Service Referrals, and for now, Juvenile Assessments. A FACES system change has been requested to include Juvenile Assessments. The SDM Safety Assessment is required to be completed on all victim and non-victim children within 72 hours.

For a new Child Abuse/Neglect Report, the SDM Safety Assessment is completed following the initial face-to-face contact with all child victim(s). The safety assessment should be entered into FACES within seventy-two (72) hours of the report date. Staff should attempt to see all children (victim and non-victim) per policy timeframes as well as interview the parents within 72 hours of the report being alerted. If all victim and non-victim children are not present upon initial contact and verification of safety, staff must complete a review/update safety assessment when the other children have been seen and verification of safety has been completed.

#### **Summary of 3-year Assessment (See attachments)**

The 3-year assessment focused on the following evaluation questions:

- To what extent did the training CJA funded increase participants' skills and knowledge?
- How have the trainings changed practices in the field?
- How well are the trainings offered matching participants' level/skill set?
- To what extent have the trainings reached a statewide audience?

Attached is the full 3-year assessment report with all of the findings and details. The highlights from the report include:

- Feedback from survey respondents and focus group participants indicates that participants gained new skills from the training and conference opportunities offered. Overall, trainings and conferences were highly rated, with strong participant satisfaction and high-quality implementation to further their work in child abuse and neglect investigation.
- Most survey respondents (70%) reported that the CJA-funded opportunities had a positive impact on investigative field work. Fewer respondents (54%) agreed the opportunities improved the investigation process.

- The majority of respondents reported that the content level met their needs; however, grantees expressed a desire to offer more advanced trainings in areas such as investigation.
- There are participants from across the state; however, grantees acknowledged that it is more challenging to recruit participants from rural counties and smaller organizations.

Based on the findings of the assessment, the following recommendations were made to the Task Force:

1. Seek out and fund opportunities that address the most requested content outlined in the 3-year assessment. See attached Appendix B for a listing of training needs by discipline.
2. Work with grantees to improve communication efforts to increase reach across the state and disciplines. Encourage grantees to share marketing and communication strategies with one another and leverage each other's networks to share opportunities. The Task Force could also look into creating a shared distribution list or website with information about CJA-funded opportunities and the links to register.
3. Partner with state and local law enforcement leaders to learn how to better engage law enforcement professionals. The Task Force could conduct a focus group with law enforcement professionals to learn more about their specific barriers to participation and training needs.
4. Work with grantees and partner organizations to better understand why participation is lower in rural counties and how it could be bolstered. Explore the ideas generated in this evaluation, including additional scholarships and virtual opportunities.
5. Prioritize conference and training opportunities that include aspects that attendees value, outlined in the 3-year assessment. See Appendix B.

### **Application for Proposed Activities in FY22**

#### **Compliance with Section 107 (e) (1) (A) and (B):**

In 2022, the Critical Event Review Committee will embark on a new process of critical event reviews that will include not only members of the Task Force, but other crucial MDT members that work to keep children safe. These reviews will consist of reports of severe abuse, fatality and non-fatality child abuse and neglect. The group will look at holistic systematic improvements and make recommendations to support not only the Children's Division, but other MDT members as well.

In 2022, the Finance Committee will continue meeting quarterly to review grant applications, monitor expenditures, and evaluate the use of CJA funds. The Finance Committee will continue to support the improvement of the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect by recommending the funding of grants from programs designed to improve the investigative response and the prosecution of child abuse and neglect. The Task Force will focus on funding projects aligned with the Task Force's recommendations for systemic improvement. The Task Force will continue to align their efforts with training aimed at growing strong and healthy MDTs.

The Goal Committee will take data and recommendations taken from the Three Year Assessment and work with Within Insight to modify and develop goals for the coming three (3) years. The Goal Committee has made recommendations to continue with collaborating with Within Insight to work on evaluation methods for future grantees and also to update the grant process. The Goal Committee is also eager to work with Missouri KidsFirst on the approved MDT Enhancement Initiative as described in the next section. The Goal Committee will meet as needed to support the goals developed to keep them moving forward.

**Compliance with Section 107 (e) (1) ( C ):**

In order to remain in compliance with the reform of State laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols and procedures to protect children from abuse, the Legislative Committee will continue to follow legislation pertinent to the work of the Task Force. The Task Force will review prioritized recommendations made as a result of the critical event review committee and the three-year assessment. They will determine whether the pursuit of legislative proposals to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect may be appropriate in the coming year. The Legislative Committee is committed to involving legislators to better help them understand the needs of the children and families of Missouri. The Committee also feels education regarding what each MDT entity does would assist legislators in the support of the various bills and initiatives that come across their desks with both constituents and agencies that serve that population.

In 2022, the Recruitment Committee will continue to ensure the Task Force is at full membership and remains in compliance with Section 107(c)(1) of CAPTA. The Recruitment committee will also continue to work on ways to promote the work of the Task Force that would attract the interests of qualified persons to fill future vacancies.

Proposed activities for the Task Force and projects approved for 2022 CJA funding include, but are not limited to, the following projects:

**Task Force on Children’s Justice Operating Expenses and Projects**

Funding is needed to support and maintain the activities, correspondence, teleconferences, quarterly meetings of the Task Force, meetings of Task Force subcommittees, and attendance for a minimum of two persons at a CJA annual conference, in addition to funding grant project requests that may arise as appropriate.

**Total: \$10,000**

**Missouri KidsFirst: MDT Enhancement Initiative—Phase 1**

The purpose of this proposal is to improve the investigation of child sexual abuse by working with multi-disciplinary team (MDT) members and stakeholders to implement structures, activities and processes that facilitate effective team functioning statewide. This MDT Enhancement Initiative will be a multi-year project. This proposal is for the **first year** (12 months) of planning with MDT members across Missouri, with an estimated timeline of April 1, 2022-March 31, 2023. It is anticipated that activities will be piloted activities to cultivate the

role of the MDT Facilitator at CACs, provide professional support to MDTs including training and technical support, and create intentional messaging with the CAC network and partner agencies as modeled in other states with an MDT Enhancement Initiative. The goal of this grant is to improve the MDT response to child sexual abuse by increasing the capacity and coordination of MDTs through a multi-year MDT Enhancement Initiative which will improve effective team functioning statewide and increase access to services for children impacted by abuse.

**Total: \$54,650**

Missouri KidsFirst: *ChildFirst*®

The purpose of this proposal is to improve the investigation of child sexual abuse by providing training to multi-disciplinary team members on the dynamics of child sexual abuse cases, considerations for interviewing children about an alleged incident, and the *ChildFirst*® Forensic Interviewing Protocol. This in-person offering of *ChildFirst*® Missouri Forensic Interviewing training will take place in Kansas City the week of May 2nd. MDT members from around the state are invited to apply to attend the training. A convening of *ChildFirst*® Missouri faculty will take place at the Missouri KidsFirst office in the first quarter of 2022 to ensure that curriculum updates and planning take place in advance of *ChildFirst*® Missouri in Kansas City.

The goal of this grant is to improve the investigative response to child sexual abuse by increasing the expertise of professionals addressing the investigation, treatment and prosecution of cases of child sexual abuse. These goals will be achieved through this interactive, intensive training that combines lecture with hands on experience. From the pre-course materials on linguistics, child development, memory, suggestibility and other pertinent topics, to required-reading in the form of homework each day, students are expected to study a significant amount of literature relating to child sexual abuse. In addition, Missouri KidsFirst will invest in building the capacity of *ChildFirst*® Missouri faculty to provide consistent, high-quality trainings across the state by convening existing Missouri KidsFirst- *ChildFirst*® Forensic Interviewing Training faculty for planning and professional development and beginning the training process for two more faculty candidates.

**Total: \$50,000**

Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) Spring Conference

The Missouri Juvenile Justice Association will provide four plenary sessions as well as twenty break-out workshops for professionals during the Spring 2022 Educational Conference. The MJJA Spring Conference is scheduled for May 11-13, 2022 in Springfield, Missouri. Several plenary and workshop sessions will be applicable to the requirement of the Missouri Task Force on Children Justice in that these seminars will assist various disciplines who work in the child welfare system to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases in such a way that minimizes the amount of trauma to the child and their family as well as make sure multi-disciplinary team members receive ongoing training and education in order to improve the investigation and prosecution of abuse and neglect cases. MJJA is committed to having a conference track that is geared toward identifying, investigating and prosecuting abuse and neglect of children while at the same time minimizing the child and family's exposure to

trauma. Plenary and break-out sessions allow workers to connect, collaborate and obtain new strategies, theories and trends.

There are plenary sessions which address strategies for helping children succeed in schools; fine tuning the multi-disciplinary team; effective practices to improve the life outcomes of children who have experienced the juvenile justice system as well as a survivor's story of overcoming domestic violence and abuse. There are workshops planned that address how children cope with abuse and neglect and how the child welfare system can respond to their needs; practicing self-care; understanding characteristics/behaviors of child rapists and strategies for investigating these suspects and the crime scene; and the Handle with Care Project.

**Total: \$21,314**

Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (MOPS): Child Sexual Abuse Trial School

The purpose of this proposal is to improve the prosecution of child sexual abuse by offering training to prosecutors and other multi-disciplinary team members in the investigation and preparation of criminal trials for crimes against children. Child Sexual Abuse Trial School is scheduled for September 2022 in Jefferson City, Missouri.

The goal of this training is to improve the investigation and prosecutorial response to child sexual abuse by increasing the expertise of professionals in the preparation and execution of child sexual abuse trials. Approximately 60 professionals will be trained and able to articulate the role they play in the investigation and prosecution of child sex crimes as measured by a post training participation evaluation. A minimum of 80 percent of professionals trained will have an increased knowledge about the dynamics of sexual abuse, corroboration of evidence, charging decisions of prosecutors, how to be an effective witness, testifying in court, selecting jurors, and the presentation of the case in trial as measured by post training participant evaluations.

**Total: \$15,840**