

Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

Thursday, August 24, 2023 – 11:00 AM

Hall of Justice, 925 W. Ottawa St., Lansing, MI 48915

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Ursula Ahart, Kyleen Gee, Stacey Goodson, Dr. Alane Laws-Barker, Ivana Maplanka, Joseph Merritt, Hon. Chris Ninomiya, James Perlaki, Hon. Yasmine Poles, Nichole Smithson, Dir. Demetrius Starling, Matthew Way, Alex Brace, Annie Harrison.

Members Absent: Kimberly Clemons, Jacki Igafo-Te'o, Jametta Lilly, Lynda McGhee, Patricia Sabin, Suzanna Shkreli

Agency Representation: Steven King, CACMI; Josh Bissell, CACMI; Lynette Durnell, SCAO Katie Todd, SCAO; Mary Lou Mahoney, MDHHS; Veronica Flores, MDHHS; Julie Knopp, MDHHS/PAAM; Pam Mass, PAAM.

I. Call to order

- a. Attendance was taken by roll call.
- b. Chairperson Harrison called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m.

II. Welcome

- a. The Chairperson welcomed all attendees.

III. Consideration of minutes from GTFCAN meeting on May 25, 2023

- a. A **MOTION** was made by James Perlaki to approve the May 25, 2023 minutes as presented without a reading. The motion was seconded. The motion carried.

IV. Public comment

- a. No public comment was made

V. Chairperson report: Detective Annie Harrison

- a. Recognized three task force members who received statewide awards: Veronica Flores for the Champion of Advocacy Award; Alex Brace for the Champion of Children Award; and Detective Joseph for the Champion of Justice Award. Task force members joined in congratulations.
- b. Reported the task force is continuing to sponsor attendees for conferences and trainings. She asked for members to report out on trainings they attended on behalf of the task force.

VI. Vice Chairperson report: Alex Brace

- a. Commended the award winners, and thanked the task force for their continued work.
- b. Recognized CACMI for the successful 13th Annual Child Advocacy Conference.

VII. Department of Health and Human Services report: Children's Services Administration Executive Director Demetrius Starling

- a. Highlighted the upcoming first Human Trafficking Conference scheduled for September 6 at the Lansing Center. This conference aims to raise awareness and provide resources for combating human trafficking.
- b. Shared the first Baby Court forum is scheduled for September 1 at Lansing Community College. He emphasized the significance of this expansion in improving services.
- c. Director Starling and Mary Lou Mahoney updated the task force on ongoing department projects and priorities. Information was shared on the redesign, intake, 211 partnership, and revision of the mandatory reporter training.

VIII. Coordinator report: Veronica Flores

- a. Veronica Flores reviewed the financials as presented.
- b. Chairperson Harrison shared the Executive committee reviewed the 2024 budget and recommends the task force move to approve as presented.
- c. A **MOTION** was made by Joseph Merritt to approve the 2024 spend plan as presented. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

IX. Report from Agency representatives:

a. State Court Administrative Office Child Welfare Services: Katy Todd

- Report provided on training from the last quarter, including the two-day in person training, "Understanding Sexual Offenders," which garnered positive feedback from attendees.
- Resiliency Court Training set for 9-13-23.
- SCAO is now accepting proposals for upcoming GTF sponsored trainings.
- SCAO will be hosting the Annual Adoption Day Celebration,

and task force members are encouraged to express interest to Katy Todd if interested to attend.

b. Children’s Advocacy Centers of Michigan: Josh Bissell

- The 13th Annual Child Advocacy Conference drew 345 professionals, featuring workshops, keynote speeches, and engaging activities. Survey responses highlighted positive feedback, and suggestions for improvement.
- CACMI continues collaboration in GTF subcommittees.
- The Honoring Cultures workgroup introduced innovative training for forensic interviewers.
- Virtual training sessions addressing bias and forensic interviewing were announced. Q1 2024 plans involve trauma play training and forensic interviewing training for survivors of human trafficking.
- Upcoming improvements at CACMI include an upgraded membership services program.
- CACMI welcomed new staff.

c. Other agency reports

- No additional agency reports.

X. Committee Activity (Written Reports submitted)

a. Executive Committee: Detective Annie Harrison

- Two new subcommittee were announced:
 - Child Eyewitness Identification Subcommittee: Chair Joseph Merritt
 - Conference Subcommittee: Chair Annie Harrison
- Any task force members interested in serving on these committees, please reach out directly to the Chair.

b. Citizen Review Panel: Dr. Alane Laws-Barker

- The Citizen Review Panel (CRP) has submitted its 2023 Annual Report and Recommendations, with MDHHS providing responses to each recommendation. Some of the recommendations include promoting trauma-informed training for child welfare specialists, collaborating with the CRP in reviewing and distributing information

from a newly developed learning center, and updating the Mandated Reporter Training Guide annually. The creation of an educational portal in collaboration with CACMI is nearly complete.

- Openings are available for new panel members.
- Updates about the CRP ongoing project. Soft launch is set for September.

c. Protocol Subcommittee: Alex Brace

- The 5th edition of the forensic interview protocol is in progress, with designs for its front and back covers underway. A rollout package, containing a crosswalk and video, is being prepared to coincide with the protocol's release in November.

d. Training/Protocol Subcommittee: Joseph Merritt (reporting on behalf of Suzanna Shkreli)

- The Training Subcommittee held meetings on June 26th and July 24th to further develop the child fatality protocol. Discussions focused on a multidisciplinary approach involving agencies like policing, CPS, Medical Examiner, Prosecutor, and medical personnel. The subcommittee established notification processes and investigation commencement for child fatalities. A smaller workgroup is creating a framework for broader subcommittee consideration, involving representatives from relevant fields. The subcommittee will reconvene on August 28th, aiming to collaboratively craft a comprehensive protocol, while also planning FY 2024 training. There will be 4 web-based programs, and an in-person conference.
- Added a new member from a medical perspective. Developing the investigative portion. There is a workgroup that has been meeting to build this.

e. Legislative Subcommittee: Alex Brace

- The Legislative Committee initiated its activities on July 14th. Phil Decter from Evident Change briefed the committee about the CPS category system's status and suggested improvements. The committee aims to aid the Department's legislative endeavors in eliminating this system from statutes. Their initial step involves crafting a concise document outlining the changes' significance and finding a legislative sponsor to support these modifications.

XI. Public comment

- a. No Public Comment was received

XII. Adjournment of meeting

- a. Hearing no further business, Chairperson Harrison adjourned the meeting at 12:16pm.

Next meeting is set for Thursday, November 16, 2023

11am to 1pm (Virtual)

Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect Executive Committee Report

The Executive Committee met on August 2nd and discussed:

- The Executive Committee reviewed the FY24 proposed spend plan and recommends the task force approve as presented.
- The Executive Committee supports the Chair calling a subcommittee with the task of drafting a child eyewitness identification guideline for the state.
- Subcommittee Chairs provided the below written reports as to subcommittee activity.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annie Harrison

Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect Training Subcommittee Report

The Training Subcommittee met June 26th and July 24th to continue development of the child fatality protocol. The subcommittee continued in discussions around the protocol, specifically dialing in on the multidisciplinary approach to agency coordination in the child death investigation. The committee considers the important role all agencies play in the fatality investigation, including the respective policing agency, CPS, Medical Examiner, Prosecutor, and medical personnel. Thus far, the subcommittee identified the proper notification process following a child fatality and the commencement of child fatality investigation.

Given the nuanced nature of investigations a smaller workgroup is meeting to formulate the framework which will be presented to the broader subcommittee for deliberation and discussion. This workgroup includes representation from policing, a medical examiner's office, a prosecutor's office, a defense attorney and CPS.

The subcommittee will meet again on August 28th, to continue the development of the protocol. The process is deliberative while generating nuanced and informed discussion. We look forward to continuing the work with this group of extremely qualified and engaged professionals. Every member is dedicated to establishing a quality protocol that takes consideration of every perspective at the table.

Planning for FY 2024 trainings is underway. The chair and co-chair are working with SCAO to develop the annual Request for Proposal (RFP) for our anticipated training schedule. Subcommittee members will be asked to take part in the RFP process in the upcoming weeks. Training on the updated Child Fatality Protocol is expected to be included in the FY 24 training schedule. In addition, there will be 4 web-based programs, and an in-person conference. We will share updates as plans are finalized.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanna Shkreli

**Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect
Citizen's Review Panel (CRP) Subcommittee Report**

Activities

Monthly committee meetings on the 3rd Thursday of each month 4-6pm

Annual Report submitted in March 2023- Responses from MDHHS have been received and reviewed. Action has already been taken on the first 2 request from CRP

ACES Initiative Identifying Opportunities- The Michigan Ace Initiative (<https://www.miace.org/>) plans through 2024 include a widespread effort to train as many people as possible.

Phase 1: Dissemination of a self-reflective survey that citizens participated in.

This survey helped generate some important information regarding the understanding of ACES across the state. **We received 4596 Completed Surveys! COMPLETED**

Phase 2: Committee reviewed and analyzed the data. **COMPLETED**

Phase 3: Creation! The committee suggested recommendations to MDHHS, for education, training and use of ACES in a manner that is child-centered, trauma-informed, forensic, and equitable. **IN PROGRESS**

Project 2023:

Continuation of the ACES project and Training: Focus- Educating Parents and Mandated Reporters on ACES

Social Media Education Portal

-In collaboration with CACMI our committee is building and educational space.

The work on this project is well underway. We anticipate a soft opening in September with a full site unveiling in October.

-The feedback we received from survey respondents is the foundation for this project.

- Information on the site will include: How to talk with children about sexual abuse, ACES, parent resources, impact of pornography, training information.

Our committee is committed to providing a site that houses comprehensive information to support families and those that do this work.

The committee is reviewing our 2022 work and developing recommendations to MDHHS that builds on the work that has been completed.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The following committee members serve as our DEI Representatives

Ursula Ahart/Kim Steed-Page/Portia Watkins

Purpose: Strengthening the Michigan child welfare system through citizen participation and review, to effect positive change. The Citizen's Review Panel will review service networks, procedures, policies, research, surveys, to improve child safety, permanency and well-being for Michigan children and families.

2023 Goal 1: Continue to work collaboratively with the other Citizen Review Panels, multidisciplinary ~~ans~~ throughout the state (through trainings), and MDHHS, to strengthen the child welfare system.

2023 Goal 2: Work collaboratively with the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse, Adoption and Neglect and contract provider(s) regarding training focused on Adverse Childhood Events and Trauma Informed Care.

2023 Goal 3: Identify best practices regarding implementation of training for stakeholders about ACEs in a culturally competent way.

Panel Openings:

If you are interested in the work of the CRP, please contact Dr. Laws-Barker, Steven King or Veronica Flores. We are welcoming new panel members.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alane Laws-Barker, M.D.

Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect Protocol Subcommittee Report

The front and back cover of the 5th edition forensic interview protocol are being designed.

A roll-out package is being created to accompany the release of the protocol, including a crosswalk and video. The protocol is expected to release in November.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alex Brace

**Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect
Legislative Subcommittee Report**

The Legislative Committee held its kick off meeting on July 14th. Phil Decter from Evident Change, who has been working with the Department on their redesign gave a presentation to our group on the current status of the category system used by CPS when investigating cases and the recommended changes to support CPS workers and the families they serve. Our goal in this committee is to support the legislative efforts of the Department to get this removed from statute. The first effort in this regard would be creating a one-page document highlighting the importance of these proposed changes and looking for a bill sponsor in legislature to support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alex Brace, MA LPC

**Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect
Conference Subcommittee Report**

The Conference subcommittee, formerly called the Summit subcommittee, is in formation and anticipated to commence in September. Members may express interest to Annie Harrison via email at aharrison@ingham.org.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annie Harrison

**Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect
Child Eyewitness Identification Guideline/Protocol Subcommittee Report**

The subcommittee is in formation and anticipated to commence in the fall/early winter. Members may express interest to Joseph Merritt via email at jmerritt2@mijackson.org

Respectfully Submitted,
Joseph Merritt