

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON JUSTICE FOR ABUSED CHILDREN

January 13, 2020 – 1:30 PM.
Zoom Meeting

Attendance: The November attendance list can be found on the GTFJAC Website.

Agenda Item	Discussion (<i>brief summary</i>)	Action (<i>and by whom</i>)
Meeting called to order	Tammy did a welcome. There was an introduction of Zoom attendees and attendance was taken.	The meeting was called to order at 1:35 pm
Approval of Minutes:	Changes: In the CCA section: Sleep deaths remained relatively even.	There was a motion to approve the 2020 minutes. The motion passed. Nesbitt/DohertyM /S/P
Presentations:	<p>Medical Exams for Child Sexual Abuse cases. – Dr. Andie Asnes and Paula Schaeffer presented on this area. Reviewed some of the findings from the GTFJAC Gaps and Barriers sub-committee and how it relates to medical exams. Highlighted the need for every child to be offered and provided a medical exam. Discussed the hospitals, satellite offices, and pediatric consultants who can conduct these specialized exams for the MDTs around the state. Discussed the implications of telehealth offerings that were put in place since COVID. The medical exception to the hearsay rule was also discussed. A new trial was ordered for a person who was convicted based on the forensic interview being shown at trial.</p> <p>Instances why a medical exam would not occur: Perhaps a referral was not made by the MDT. A misconception that a medical may not be needed based on the presenting allegation (penetration vs viewing pornography), did the family not accept the referral.</p> <p>Training regarding medicals: This has generally been MDT specific. The Bridgeport team has a medical provider present to the team annually to ensure all members are aware of the importance of the exam. Yale has been doing training, especially with their collaborative agencies. There was a suggestion to develop a training or scripted messaging around the medical exam for team members.</p> <p>In New Haven, the pandemic caused the team to pivot some of the ways they interacted with caregivers. Since it's implementation, at Yale, 100% of the families receive a call from a medical provider. This occurs after the forensic interview.</p> <p>Add a question on the OMS surveys around the perceptions of medical exams, and on the team survey, and the caregiver survey. These surveys are anonymous so that may assist with receiving feedback in this area. Clarify the difference between the conversation that occurs during the Forensic Interview and the conversation that occurs during the medical exam to ensure there is no perception of multiples of interviews. Both Dr. Asnes and Michelle Manning stressed that they inform the child that they viewed the forensic interview and stress that each phase has a specific purpose. This piece could be added to training for MDT members so there is a uniform understanding and perhaps include some aspects of the Hearsay workshop.</p>	<p>There was a suggestion to develop a training or scripted messaging around the medical exam and hearsay for team members. Review this at the next Training Committee Meeting.</p> <p>Add a question on the OMS surveys around the perceptions of medical exams.</p>

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	Michelle Manning. – Discussed the appellate course case where the ruling was overturned due to medical exception. Another case in December was highlighted and Michelle discussed that the forensic interview can be used as the child believes that the child is seeking both mental and physical help. Discussed how the satellite offices have made a big difference in her area of the state.	
Budget	Current Fiscal Year: Barry Adams from the Village presented the budget that is managed by the Village. There is a request to understand what needs to be spent by June 30, 2021, at the March 2021 GTFJAC meeting. Discussed the budget timeline in regards to spending funds. We will have three years to spend the current funds in our budget.	
Three Year Assessment	<p><u>Looking at the following four areas:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations (both law enforcement & DCF) • Prosecution • Services for families • Offenders & alleged offenders <p><u>Data gathering to date</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed 16 telephone/Zoom interviews with people on & off GTF • Observed 6 MDT meetings (Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Windham) • Held first focus group with DCF workers; forensic interviewers are scheduled for 1/19; other disciplines to follow; in the process of scheduling them this week; aim to have all focus groups completed by Feb 12 (law enforcement, medical and mental health, prosecution, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Assisted by Jhoselyn Jara, an intern at CT Children’s Alliance • Drafted a survey with narrative questions to be distributed widely – hope to have it go out next week – will go to all members of GTF as well as other stakeholders • Challenge to reach victims, families directly for this process especially during a pandemic • Once the data gathering is done, move to the group task of development of outcome measures and specific recommendations to be submitted under CJA <p>HIGHLIGHTS</p> <p><u>Improvements over the past three years</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better use of Minimal Facts and minimizing the number of interviews - Communication across disciplines - Juvenile justice improvements from moving children from DCF to CCSD <p><u>What CT does well</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career prosecutors and prosecutorial expertise in presenting these types of cases - Response to trafficking – the HART Team and Love146 - Collaboration and good relationship with the Chief State’s Attorney/prosecutors and public defenders <p><u>Impact on families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timing, timing, timing – the length of time it takes for cases to resolve - The complexity of the system for families to navigate - Better access to a more robust behavioral health system is needed - There’s a lack of places to refer juvenile offender cases and more funding in this area is needed 	

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	<p><u>Issues concerning offenders and alleged offenders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be aware of the impact of the process on offenders and disruption to their families, including the impact on other children - Wait times are an issue as cases can take a long time to move through the system <p><u>COVID challenges and opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The invisibility of some children and reduction in referrals - Telehealth challenges for some families, and yet for other families it makes it easier to have a telehealth appointment since there is no travel involved - Expanding the use of virtual court hearings has sometimes resulted in better attendance <p><u>Opportunities for system improvement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider broadening the number and types of people who receive Finding Words training - Deepen our understanding of racial and ethnic disparities - Create a channel for a more formal way to address problems with services for victims – something GTF could work on <p><u>GTF functioning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Membership – “there’s room for this group to grow” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Children with disabilities o Parents and survivors with lived experience and more recent experience with the system recently - Could the work be more data-driven? Bring in experts from outside the Task Force? - Is GTF maintaining the system, rather than working to improve the system? What should the next focus be; we’ve worked on trafficking; what’s the next piece to work on? <p><u>A note on the complexity of healing and holding offenders accountable</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Healing comes in different forms”; families and victims do not always find healing through the court system. Also, what are the implications when further harm reduction for the victim and the family is to decline to move forward with a case, and not hold the person who caused harm accountable? <p><u>Next steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watch for the survey - Development of outcome measures and recommendations 	
<p>CCA Membership Update</p>	<p>NCATrak- finalized our statewide reporting system allowing us to pull statewide aggregate data. The first round of data needs to be entered into NCATrak by 1/15. A more in-depth overview will be provided during our next meeting.</p> <p>OMS-Outcome Measurement Surveys:</p> <p>MDT Partner Survey- we are still receiving responses to our current survey which included questions about service provision and investigations during COVID. We are hoping to use some of the information we gather from partners to enhance some of the COVID response guidelines that were developed so if we ever find ourselves in this situation again, we don’t need to recreate the wheel. So far, we have 220 responses. Along with NCATrak data, I can provide a more detailed report during our next meeting.</p> <p>Additional Youth Survey- a new survey developed for youth ages 10-18 to provide feedback on their experience with the CAC process. This is survey is a short 9 question survey that was piloted by several CAC across the country in 2020. The survey will be made available next week.</p>	

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	<p>Training- NCA will be hosting webinars on the new survey but we have asked them to provide our membership with training on the new youth survey and a refresher on the initial and follow-up caregiver surveys to review best practices in delivering the surveys.</p> <p>Projects for 2021 Cultural Competency Planning: Received funding to work on a statewide cultural competency plan that can be customized for each area to enhance existing policies and responses. As a part of that, there will be a requirement for implicit biases training. An additional week of finding words: We did receive funding to provide a 3rd week of finding words. Training and Education Coordinator: Through a collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood and NCA, we will be hiring a Training and Education Coordinator to develop and provide more prevention-focused training to family support workers, home visitors, daycare providers, camps and other child-focused service providers. This new position will also assist with CAC/MDT related training and will work to integrate more focus on prevention into the CACs/MDTs. Response to Recovery: We will be continuing to virtually conference workshop series through the year. If you have any trainings you'd like to see, please let us know. Last year we were able to train a little over 900 individuals.</p> <p>CACs 2021 2 CACs are going up for reaccreditation this year(Norwalk and Torrington)</p>	
Training Committee Report	<p>We had our November meeting however, had to cancel our December meeting as committee members had conflicts arise last minute.</p> <p>Committee By-laws: These were reviewed and we placed information regarding the intention of electronic voting.</p> <p>Membership: We have 2 names of members from POST that have been submitted for consideration.</p> <p>Minimal Facts: Discoverers – There were 3 trainings since the last Task Force meeting. They were conducted at Child Guidance Center in Stamford, Hartford Public Schools(all social workers), and Clifford Beers.</p> <p>At the request of the GTF Tri-Charis, Kristen developed Minimal Facts and Finding Words Post Training Surveys. The surveys include a Short-Term Survey given 6 months after the training and a Long-Term Survey that will be given 12-months after the training. The draft was reviewed at the Training Committee meeting on November 9, 2020, and the Finding Words Chairs would like to further discuss how these would be used moving forward.</p> <p>Response to Recovery Training: Kristen and Krystal are working on scheduling the training through February 2021. Here are some of the offerings since our last meeting. December 1st, Checking Your O2 Level: Managing Secondary Traumatic Stress December 8th, The Role of Cultural Humility and Implicit Bias January 5, 2021, Sex Trafficking of Boys & Male Bodied Youth</p>	

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	<p>January 7, 2021 Introduction to Labor Trafficking in Connecticut January 19, 2021, Federal Response to Human Trafficking Slightly over 900 unique individuals have been trained. This conference</p> <p>Finding Words: The Finding Words was completed via Zoom by the Zero Abuse Project. This was completed December 14-18, 2020. The days were long, however, the presenters were very good. A faculty meeting will be convened to discuss the training and how the CT faculty can provide the training.</p> <p>TIPP Prosecutors Institute: October 5-6 2021. There will be a diverse offering around child sexual abuse case prosecution and the second day may have some offerings around ethics. Will be doing more logistics around the training in February 2021 with Zero Abuse Project who awarded Connecticut with the TIPP project.</p> <p>Training agenda for FY 2020-2021: CCA was sending out surveys that will assess training needs around the state. We will look to review those results to develop a training schedule. CCA has received 200+ responses. Looked at training needs and also asked questions around COVID response and what worked well in their areas. This will be shared at our March 2021 meeting.</p>	
MDT Evaluation	<p>Evaluations – The committee will meet next week to discuss the schedule of evaluating the teams. The committee will group the teams based upon the CACs they associated with. MDT14 and Hartford team will be the first evaluation. Check this...I think it includes all the MDTs this CAC covers...but not certain.</p> <p>MOUs- The CCA membership reviewed the MOUS and they provided input on the standard documents that were developed by the committee.</p> <p>Membership on the Committee- This will be reviewed to ensure that we have discipline and geographic diversity.</p> <p>Krystal and Paula will record a training of the Connecticut Standards and Protocols similar to the one that was conducted last year at a GTFJAC meeting.</p>	
HART	<p>National Human Trafficking Month in January. There are many offerings for training and activities.</p> <p>Wear Blue Photo Challenge- this will be voted on at the next HART meeting.</p> <p>Data – This past year and a half has been a challenge around ensuring accurate data. The 3rd quarter data has seen a spike in cases and online exploitation has been on the rise.</p> <p>Youth Awareness Training and Internet Safety Training have been made available.</p> <p>Labor Trafficking – There is a need to increase this training in Connecticut. There was a recent TOT and there are additional trainers available.</p>	
Other Business:	<p>Legislative Priorities. We can share legislative agendas with the members and Kristen can send out an email to the membership.</p> <p>CASA - Thanks in advance to everyone for taking a look at our new YouTube channel, through which we hope to recruit additional volunteer court-appointed special advocates (CASAs) for children who have experienced abuse/neglect. Please subscribe and share: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtmqZhw_hSmo0RWYi63sLyg</p> <p>Disabilities – Oak Hill has traditionally sat on this committee. Perhaps someone from the Office of Early Childhood has an offering.</p>	
New Business:	<p>Future Presentation Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech therapist working with children with disabilities. (This is on hold as Kate Hanley has left her position) • CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence – Future presentation 	

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	Female victims of genital mutilation and cutting – Faith and Krystal have been working with a grassroots organization in Connecticut. There was a panel on this topic in late 2020 that was shared with GTFJAC. There are estimates that there are about 2,500 girls at risk for this and looking at the associated medical implications. Perhaps have a presentation around this for the GTFJAC.	
Announcements:		
	Meeting adjourned at 3:27 pm . There was a motion to adjourn. The motion passed. Vos Winkel/Schaeffer M/S/P	

Respectfully Submitted

Kristen M. Clark
GTFJAC Coordinator

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