May 28, 2021

Amanda Barlow, Acting Commissioner  
Administration for Children and Families  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Mary E. Switzer Building  
330 C Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Acting Commissioner Barlow:

Attached please find Ohio’s 2021 annual report and application for Children’s Justice Act Grant funding and the Three-year Assessment Report. These documents provide a comprehensive review and evaluation of Ohio’s investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, and the plan to implement task force recommendations over the next three years.

Thank you for your consideration and ongoing support. If you require additional information, please contact Ohio’s Children’s Justice Act Coordinator, Tequilla Washington, by phone at: (614) 802-1324 or email at: Tequilla.Washington@jfs.ohio.gov if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Matt Damschroder
Interim Director
APPLICANT AGENCY: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
30 East Broad Street, 32nd Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

EIN: 31-6402047

CONTACT PERSON: Tequilla Washington
Project Manager
Office for Children and Families
P.O. Box 183204
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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FAX: (614) 466-0164
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I. Task Force Membership and Function

Ohio’s Children’s Justice Act Task Force Roster
Ohio’s Children’s Justice Act Task Force is comprised of a core subcommittee and various workgroups. This roster identifies task force membership by discipline and participation.

Law Enforcement

Sergeant John Blubaugh +
Sergeant, Columbus Police Department
Sgt. Blubaugh works in the Special Victims Bureau/Missing Persons Unit of the Columbus Police Department.

Criminal Court Judge

Honorable Stephen L. McIntosh +
Judge, Franklin County Common Pleas Court.
Judge McIntosh has been a judge in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas since 2008. Prior to his time on the bench, Judge McIntosh worked as a prosecutor, a criminal and civil defense attorney, and a civil plaintiff attorney.

Civil Court Judge

Honorable Anthony Capizzi +
Judge, Montgomery County Juvenile Court
Judge Capizzi was first elected as Montgomery County’s Juvenile Judge in 2004 and he previously serviced as an Acting Judge for Dayton Municipal Court and worked in private practice for over 25 years. Judge Capizzi is also the immediate past president of National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ)

Magistrate Michelle L. Edgar + * # &
Magistrate, Fairfield County Probate/Juvenile Court
Magistrate Edgar has served as Fairfield County’s Probate and Juvenile Court Magistrate since 2013. Prior to this role, she worked as a private practice attorney.

Magistrate Carla Guenthner &
Magistrate, Hamilton County Juvenile Court

Judge Rosemarie Hall + #
Judge, Stark County Family Court
Judge Hall has served in her role in Stark County Common Pleas Court, Family Court Division since 2011. Judge Hall served as a Magistrate in the court from 2004 to 2011. As a magistrate, Judge Hall developed and presented Working Together for Kids, a parent education and mediation program for never married parents.

Magistrate Todd Kohlrieser #
Chief Magistrate, Allen County Juvenile/Probate Court

KEY
+ Core Subcommittee
* Quality Legal Rep Workgroup
^ QRTP Court Oversight workgroup
& CHIPS workgroup
# CFSR/Quality Hearing Project workgroup
Magistrate Katie Lenski &#
Magistrate, Montgomery County Juvenile Court

Honorable Mathew P. Puskarich + ^ &
Judge, Harrison County Probate and Juvenile Court
Judge Puskarich has served as Harrison County Probate and Juvenile Court Judge since 2003. Prior to joining the court, Judge Puskarich was a Harrison County Prosecuting Attorney and a Jefferson County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney.

Magistrate Brenda Rutledge #
Magistrate, Lucas County Juvenile Court

Magistrate Cynthia Thompson #
Magistrate, Greene County Juvenile Court

Honorable Denise Cubbon+^
Judge, Lucas County Juvenile Court
Judge Cubbon was elected Lucas County Juvenile Court Judge in November 2004. She became the Lucas County Administrative Judge in April 2007. She currently serves as the Lead Judge of the Lucas County Juvenile Court NCJFCJ Model Court and in January, 2009, was appointed to serve on The Supreme Court of Ohio Advisory Committee on Children, Families & the Courts. Prior to taking the bench, she served as a Lucas County assistant prosecuting attorney for 23 years, assigned to the juvenile division, criminal division, and senior protection unit.

Civil Court Administration
Jake Morgan #
Assistant Court Administrator, Stark County Family Court

Nicole Rodriguez + *
Chief Deputy Clerk, Miami County Juvenile Court
Ms. Rodriguez has served as the Miami County Juvenile Court’s Chief Deputy Clerk since 1998.

Doug Schonauer + ^
Court Administrator, Coshocton County Probate and Juvenile Court
Mr. Schonauer has served as the Court Administrator for the Coshocton County Probate and Juvenile Court for over 10 years.

Prosecuting Attorney
Victor H. Perez + &
Attorney, Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services
Mr. Perez is a Child Protection Attorney for Seneca County Department of Job & Family Services. He was named Ohio Public Children’s Services Attorney of the Year in 2010. Mr. Perez serves on the Ohio State Bar Association Board of Governors.

Victor V. Viglucci &
Prosecutor, Portage County
Prosecutor Viglucci has been in his role as Portage County Prosecutor since 1994. He served as the Acting Judge and Referee for Portage County Municipal Court
from 1980-1994, and worked in private practice from 1977-1994. Prosecutor Vigluicci also serves as President of the Board of Trustees for the Portage County Children’s Advocacy Center.

**Defense/Parents Attorney**  
**Alexandria Ruden**  
Attorney at Law, Legal Aid Society of Cleveland  
Ms. Ruden as a Senior Attorney at the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. Prior to this role she worked as an attorney at the Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland and served as a Referee in the Cleveland Heights, Ohio Municipal Court.

**Lauren R. Weller**  
Staff Attorney, Southeastern Ohio Legal Services  
Ms. Weller is a senior staff attorney in the Portsmouth office of SEOLS. She joined SEOLS in 2005 and practices in the areas of housing, consumer, and family law. She is the chair of SEOLS’s Family Law team and co-chair of the Ohio Family Law Taskforce. Lauren received the SEOLS Leadership Award in 2011 for her work on the Family Law team and her work with the Salvation Army Portsmouth Corps.

**Child Advocate/Attorney for Children**  
**Debra Rothstein**  
Senior Attorney, Manager, Butler County Guardian ad Litem Program, Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio  
Ms. Rothstein serves as senior attorney and manager of the Guardian ad Litem Project at the Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio. In addition to her focus on Guardian ad Litem work, Ms. Rothstein also has experience practicing in the areas of family law, immigration law, and children & education law.

**Court Appointed Special Advocate**  
**Alan Futo**  
Lead Child Advocate, Summit County, Ohio CASA/GAL Association  
Mr. Futo serves in the role Lead Child Advocate at the Summit County, Ohio CASA/GAL Association.  
**Doug Stephens**  
Executive Director, CASA Ohio

**Health Professional**  
**Megan McGraw Letson, M.D.**  
Medical Director, Center for Safety and Healing, Nationwide Children’s Hospital  
Dr. Letson is the Program Director for the Child Abuse Pediatrics Fellowship at Nationwide Children’s Hospital. She also is an attending physician for The Center for Family Safety and Healing at Nationwide Children’s Hospital and Assistant Professor of Clinical Pediatrics at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. Dr. Letson is active in the Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.
Section on Child Abuse and Neglect and is a member of the Ambulatory Pediatric Association.

**Mental Health Professional**

**Heidi A. Malott, LISW + * &**
Clinical Manager, Mayerson Center, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital

Ms. Malott is the Clinical Program Manager, Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital. The Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children at Cincinnati Children’s is a premier program that has helped set the national standard for enhancing and strengthening evaluations of child abuse.

**Child Protective Service Agencies**

**Kristen Fox Berki #**
Deputy Director, Lorain County Children Services

**Jeffery Van Deusen +**
Deputy Director, Office of Families and Children at Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Mr. Van Deusen serves as the Child Welfare Director for the state of Ohio overseeing child abuse prevention, protective services, foster care, and adoption services. Additionally, he provides oversight for adult protective services. His previous experience includes both the public and non-profit industry managing programs working to better serve children and families in Ohio. Prior to his current position, he worked in the Office of Families and Children at ODJFS overseeing childcare licensing and the Step Up To Quality programs.

**Barbara Cline #**
Quality Assurance Supervisor, Athens County Children Services

**Timothy Dick #**
Assistant Director, Clermont County Job and Family Services

**Christine Dobrovich # &**
Chief, Bureau of Child/Adult Protective Services, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

**Jeremy Harrigan #**
SACWIS team, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

**Amy Reinhart #**
Technical Assistance Specialist, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

**Timothy Schaffner &**
Executive Director, Trumbull County Children Services

Mr. Schaffner was named the executive director of Trumbull County Children Services (TCCS) in November 2012. As a leader in behavioral health and residential care for children, he has provided consultation and training for many educational, residential and child welfare facilities and brings a wealth of management and
child mental health treatment experience to his role as executive director. Prior to joining TCCS, he was the executive director of Valley Counseling Services, corporate director/corporate clinical executive for the Center for Behavioral Medicine at Forum Health and director of youth services at Tod Children’s Hospital in Youngstown.

**Susan Shafer**
Technical Assistance Specialist, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

**Rick Tvaroch**
Quality Assurance Administrator, Trumbull County Children Services

**Kristi Burre**
Director of Children’s Initiatives, Governor’s Office of Children’s Initiatives
Kristi Burre is responsible for leading Governor DeWine’s efforts on home visiting, quality child care, children's mental and physical health, and the foster care system. For the last two years, Burre lead the Office of Children Services Transformation, an initiative launched by Governor DeWine through an executive order signed moments after he took his oath of office. This role included overseeing a nimble policy team and the Governor's Children Services Transformation Advisory Council focused on improving services to some of Ohio’s most vulnerable citizens, children impacted by abuse and neglect, and children in foster and kinship care

**Kara Wente**
Assistant Director, Health and Human Services, ODJFS
Ms. Wente leads the ODJFS Offices of Child Support, Families and Children, and Family Assistance. She is responsible for providing strategic direction, external relationship development, and funding management for programs serving vulnerable populations.

**Karen McGormley**
Project Manager, ODJFS
Karen McGormley is the project manager over the Children Services Transformation (CST) at the Office of Families and Children. In this role, she oversees the implementation of the 37 CST Advisory Council final recommendations. Karen has over 27 years of experience in child welfare in Ohio.

**David Haverfield**
Director, Tuscarawas County Job and Family Services
Mr. Haverfield has been Director of Tuscarawas County JFS since January of 2015 after serving as the agency’s chief legal counsel for 15 years. He is currently President of the Board of PCASO. He also has been a trainer and consultant in child welfare on issues related to the court process; testimony; liability; mandated reporting; and human resources issues for over 15 years.
Fred Lord
Director, Williams County Job and Family Services
Since 2016, Fred Lord has been director over a quadruple-combined agency in Williams County that consists of adult and child protection, workforce, public assistance and child support. Prior to becoming director, he worked as a human resources consultant at Clemans, Nelson and Associates. He also has experience in workforce development programs, child welfare casework, and law enforcement.

Susan Walther
Director, Warren County Children Services
Susan Walther became the director of Warren County Children Services in 2017. She began her career in 1992 with Hamilton County Children Services and came to Warren County Children Services in 2011. Susan has held different roles in child welfare, working as an ongoing caseworker, investigator, court liaison, supervisor, deputy director, and director in Warren County.

Individual Experienced in Working with Children with Disabilities
Alexandra Nardo
Program Administrator, Ohio Department of Education
Ms. Nardo serves as a program administrator for the Office of Integrated Student Supports. She oversees programs that address the needs of the whole child, including programs for foster care students, homeless students, adjudicated youth, immigrants and English learners. Her office coordinates and supports resources for positive and safe schools, such as school-based health centers, programs related to safety, anti-bullying, mental and behavioral health, positive behavioral intervention supports (PBIS) and trauma-informed care.

Parent Representative
Carlee Perdue
Parent Representative, Access Ohio
Ms. Perdue is Case Manager / Care Coordinator at Access Ohio, a leading behavioral health treatment provider that specializes in the treatment of adults, adolescents, and children affected by mental illness and/or addiction.

Adult Former Victim of Maltreatment
Terry Green
Executive Director, Think Make Live
Mr. Green’s experience has a former foster and justice-involved youth led him to becoming the Founder and CEO of Think Make Live social enterprise, a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering community engagement. Mr. Green is a
national social justice consultant providing a hallmark experience in supporting opportunities for justice-involved young adults, innovative civic engagement practices and workforce development strategies.

**Cloe Cooper**
Intern, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Ms. Cooper is a former foster youth who serves as Housing Liaison for ACTION Ohio. She also serves as a Children’s Services Transformation Intern for ODJFS, as a member of the Ohio Supreme Court subcommittee responding to Child Abuse Neglect & Dependency, as a member of the OhioRISE Advisory Council, and as a Peer Mentor through Ohio Children’s Alliance and Americorps. ....

**Individuals experienced in working with homeless children and youth**

**Bonita Campbell, MS, LSW**
Director, Lighthouse Youth Services
Ms. Campbell provides organizational leadership for Youth Housing Opportunities. She is responsible for fiscal management, strategic planning, and quality assurance. Additionally, she represents the agency locally, statewide, and nationally for transition age youth and housing-related initiatives.

**Other**

**Linda Maxwell**
Therapist, White Crane Counseling & Consultation, LLC
Ms. Maxwell is an experienced therapist with a demonstrated history of working in the mental health care industry. She is skilled in nonprofit organizations, relationship counseling, crisis intervention, family therapy, and case management.

**Description of how the Task Force works together**

**Information Related to How the Task Force Works Together**

1. **Structure**
   a. **Organization**
   Ohio’s multidisciplinary task force that complies with the Children’s Justice Act (CJA) requirements set forth in Section 107 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) is established as a subcommittee of the Supreme Court of Ohio (SCO): the Subcommittee on Responding to Child Abuse, Neglect and Dependency (CAND). CAND functions under a standing Advisory Committee on Children and Families appointed by Chief Justice Maureen O’Connor. This report uses the terms CAND and Task Force interchangeably to describe Ohio’s multidisciplinary CJA task force.
b. Membership

The Task Force is comprised of a core subcommittee and various topic-specific workgroups. These workgroups are comprised of both core subcommittee members and additional members with topic-specific expertise and knowledge. As described in previous reports, this work functionality has significantly enhanced the Task Force’s professional participation and diversity in membership while meeting the letter and intent of the federal regulation. Representation that complies with federal multidisciplinary requirements is maintained at all times.

Because the Task Force is established as a subcommittee under the Supreme Court of Ohio’s standing Advisory Committee on Children and Families, the Task Force may additionally focus on topics and recommendations that extend beyond CJA-funded initiatives. These activities will not be discussed within this report.

c. Staffing

The Family and Youth Law Center (FYLaw) at Capital University Law School (Columbus) provides research and support services to the Task Force and workgroups. The Task Force is jointly staffed by ODJFS’ CJA coordinator and SCO’s Manager of the Children and Families Section, the organizational area responsible for administration of the Court Improvement Program (CIP).
d. Frequency of Meeting

The Task Force meets in full three times per year. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the Task Force meetings occur virtually via Zoom. During the period of May 2020 – May 2021, the full task force met on the following dates: August 12, 2020, October 28, 2020, and March 4, 2021. The topic-specific workgroups meet with more frequency, based upon the work plans and associated timelines for each workgroup. Workgroup meetings are also being held virtually via Zoom due to continued COVID-19 restrictions. Some of the workgroups also create sub-workgroups for very specific research (i.e. for all of the group’s legal professionals to examine necessary statutory changes related to the group’s work).

The Task Force workgroups which were active during the period of May 2020 – May 2021 include: Child In Need of Protective Services Workgroup (CHIPS); CFSR/Quality Hearing Workgroup; and the Family First Prevention Services Qualified Residential Treatment Program Court Oversight Workgroup. The Task Force’s active workgroups met on the following dates during the period of May 2020 – May 2021:

**CHIPS workgroup meetings:**
- March 31, 2021
- April 29, 2021

**CFSR/Quality Hearing workgroup meetings:**
- November 9, 2020
- December 4, 2020

**FFPSA QRTP Court Oversight workgroup meetings:**
- May 29, 2020
- July 31, 2020
- September 23, 2020
- November 12, 2020
- February 25, 2021

**Quality Legal Representation workgroup meetings:**
- August 26, 2020
- November 5, 2020
- December 9, 2020
- January 13, 2021
- February 10, 2021
- March 10, 2021
- April 14, 2021
- May 12, 2021
2. **Linkage to Anti-Trafficking Efforts.**  
   In the fall of 2019, the CJA task force, the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force and the Children’s Trust Fund collaborated to establish the Human Trafficking Prevention, Intervention, and Training Services Initiative. The initiative provides funding to support human trafficking prevention, intervention, and training services throughout Ohio aimed at eliminating the crime of human trafficking and child exploitation. Additional information about this initiative will be discussed in the prior year performance review and application for proposed activities sections of this report.

3. **Linkage to the Children’s Bureau Processes- CFSR, CFSP, ASPR, PIP, CIP**  
   Ohio has been very strategic in the alignment of various state and federal initiatives through the intentional coordination of activities that promote cross system collaboration. ODJFS Deputy Director, Jeffery Van Deusen, serves as co-chair of the Task Force and a member of the Advisory Committee on Children and Families. The CJA taskforce also serves as the Court Improvement Taskforce (CIP). Ohio’s CJA Coordinator and CIP Coordinator and Manager of the Supreme Court of Ohio’s (SCO) Children and Families Section meet biweekly to ensure coordination of efforts. Additionally, the CJA Coordinator attends a monthly SCO-sponsored Family Law Team meeting. This meeting draws from the various organizational areas of SCO that touch upon the families and children who appear before Ohio’s courts. This includes the Ohio Judicial College, Caseflow Management, Dispute Resolution, Domestic Violence, Specialized Dockets, and Families and Children areas, as well as other areas upon request. At the time of this writing, Ohio is in the 8th and final quarter of the Round 3 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (PIP). The taskforce provides oversight of two PIP strategies and thirteen action steps developed to ensure that children receive permanency in a timely manner. As in prior years, Ohio’s Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) developed in 2019 includes five strategies that are overseen by the Task Force.

4. **Linkage to Court and Legal Representation Improvement work**  
   A majority of CJA projects and initiatives are co-led and/or co-funded by the state court improvement program. To that end, we have one Task Force responsible for recommendations and guidance of CJA and CIP projects. In the fall of 2020, the task force established a Quality Legal Representation Workgroup to help increase and improve access to quality legal representation for children and parents. This workgroup is comprised of three subcommittees: Training & Standards, Pre-Petition, and Multi-Disciplinary.

5. **Work Plan**  
   The Task Force’s work is guided by the needs identified in each three-year assessment. Additional items that are consistent with the subcommittee’s purpose may be referred
for subcommittee consideration at any time. Based upon the needs identified in the 2021 assessment, the task force developed the following recommendations:

- Continue support for statewide expansion of the Safe & Together model to increase positive outcomes for domestic violence survivors and their families.
- Support development and implementation of legislative framework for handling child welfare cases that replaces the current abuse, neglect, dependency model.
- Identify and promote strategies and best practices for stakeholders to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases and achieve greater accountability.
- Provide support to ensure that child victims of human trafficking or children at risk have access to skilled and competent services regardless of geography.
- Support experimental, model, and demonstration programming that addresses a multidisciplinary legal representation approach for families.
- Support experimental, model, and demonstration programming that promotes a multidisciplinary approach to improving outcomes for dual status youth.
- Provide continued research, communication and support services to the Task Force and its workgroups.
- Maintain compliance with eligibility criteria and ensure adequate administration of Children’s Justice Act programming.

6. Communication of Activities

CAND’s project website, [http://www.ohiochildlaw.org](http://www.ohiochildlaw.org) has proven to be an effective tool to communicate the subcommittee work and provide resources. It is updated with Task Force meeting dates, rosters, and finalized work products.

ODJFS’ Office of Families and Children’s website posts the CJA annual report and program application to ensure that there is full access to this and other strategic planning documents such as the CFSR Final Report, Annual Progress and Services Report, CAPTA State Plan Update, and Child and Family Services Plan. These can be found at [http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/Reports-Plans-and-Presentations.stm](http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/Reports-Plans-and-Presentations.stm). The SCO’s website provides a link to the ODJFS Office of Families and Children page as well as other reports developed by CAND.

Information regarding these reports and CAND activities are highlighted in ODJFS’ Office of Family and Children Services’ monthly update, First Friday. This publication has a wide distribution across disciplines and geography.
II. Prior Year Performance Report

Investigative, Administrative and Judicial Handling of Child Abuse and Neglect

Training and Support of First Responders

Task Force Recommendation: Ensure that child victims of sexual abuse have access to skilled and competent services regardless of geography.

CJA funding to provide training and support to child sexual abuse first responders through Ohio’s consortium of children’s hospitals concludes on June 30, 2021. A final review of the training performance for the four interlocking components is below:

1. Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurses/PSANE Instruction

The Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children trains medical providers from medically underserved Ohio communities to conduct skilled, medical evaluations for sexual abuse and severe physical abuse cases. Previous reports have documented the objectives and benefits of Ohio’s long-term investment. These opportunities allow PSANE to retain competence, meet continuing education requirements and maintain quality assurance for experienced Ohio Registered Nurses and Advanced Practice Nurses as Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners.

The Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children held two five-day didactic PSANE Instruction & Assessment courses to develop necessary skills, educate and meet certification requirements for new Ohio RNs and APNs as Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and provide education and understanding of the Child Advocacy Center process for those professionals dealing with child sexual abuse. PSANE training was held September 21-25, 2020. There were 9 participants including nurses from Nationwide Children’s Hospital, the Nord Center, Xavier University, Tri-County SANE/SART program, and Cincinnati Children’s Hospital. The second PSANE training is scheduled for May 10-14, 2021.

Evaluations from the September training were very positive, and select questions/responses from each date are detailed below, which used the following Likert scale (1-7 ratings):

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<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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All respondents reported across the five-day September training that they found the information shared by presenters to be beneficial and that they would use the information learned in their clinical practice. Noted barriers to implementing the knowledge learned in their practice were time, infrequency of related cases seen, and team member’s reluctance to change.

2. Medical Peer Review

Statewide Medical Peer Review takes place quarterly or four times per year. The first quarter session was rescheduled to take place on November 10, 2020 due to clinical issues related to the coronavirus pandemic. This session included eleven participants from Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, Dayton Children’s Hospital, and Cleveland’s MetroHealth.

The second quarter session took place on December 18, 2020. This session included fifteen participants from Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, Dayton Children’s Hospital, and Akron Children’s Hospital.

Attendees for sessions included physicians, forensic nurses, and trainees (fellows and medical students).

3. Peer Review of Forensic Interviews

Statewide Peer Review of Forensic Interview takes place on the third Thursday of every month. Sites include Clark, Fairfield, Franklin, Greene, Hamilton, Ross, Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas, Warren, and Wayne counties.

The opportunity to join peer review is announced at each Beyond the Silence (Ohio’s forensic interviewing) training. Ongoing peer review and support are critical quality assurance and continuing education components of the forensic interviewing program supported through these funds.

4. Beyond the Silence Forensic Interview Training

Oversight for Ohio’s forensic interviewing instructional and training program, Beyond the Silence, continues to be offered through the Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children. Instructional sessions are linked to the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program and held at regional training centers unless an on-site session appears more appropriate or needed. The curriculum meets the National Children’s Alliance standard for forensic interview training. The manual was revised to include the OJJDP Publication, Child Forensic Interviewing: Best Practices. Recommendations from this paper have been added to the curriculum.

Two levels of instruction are offered through the programming: a three-day introductory (BTS 1) course and a three-day advanced (BTS 2) course. Since the trainings are held at the regional training centers, they attract a multi-county audience and multidisciplinary audience. The following trainings were held during the past year:
BTS1 - August 19-21, 2020 – Summit County. This training had fifteen participants from Ashtabula, Champaign, Lake, Mahoning, Richland, Stark, Summit and Trumbull counties. Participants included 13 children’s protective services workers and two child advocacy center workers.

BTS 1 - September 2-4, 2020 – Lorain County. This training had 12 participants all from Lorain County. Participants included 6 children’s protective services workers and 6 law enforcement officers. Lorain County JFS requires their children’s services workers go through Beyond the Silence prior to them being able to take sexual cases. The Lorain County Prosecutor requires law enforcement to go through this training prior to doing child abuse investigations.

BTS 1 - September 16-18, 2020 – Cuyahoga County. This training had 12 participants from Columbiana, Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Lorain counties. Participants included 9 law enforcement officers and 3 children’s services workers.

BTS 1 - September 30-October 2, 2020 – Lake County. This training had 18 participants from Lake County. Participants included 12 children’s protective services workers and 6 law enforcement officers. Lake County DCJFS with the Lake County Prosecutor has adopted Beyond the Silence as their county forensic interviewing protocol and have now trained all of the Lake County staff in Beyond the Silence.

BTS 1 – October 21-23, 2020 – Lucas County. This training had 17 participants from Defiance, Fulton, Hancock, Lucas, Ottawa, Sandusky, Williams counties. Participants included 8 children’s protective services workers and 9 law enforcement officers.

BTS 2 – November 18-20, 2020 – Summit County (Akron) – rescheduled due to COVID.

BTS 2 – December 2-4, 2020 – Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) – rescheduled due to COVID.

BTS 1 – January 20-22, 2021 – Summit County (Akron) – rescheduled due to COVID.

BTS 1 – February 24-26, 2021 – Lorain County. This training had 12 participants from Lorain County. Participants included 7 children’s protective services workers and 5 law enforcement officers.

BTS 1 – March 17-19, 2021 – Summit County (Akron). This training had 13 participants from Champaign, Clark, Lake and Summit counties. Participants were all children’s protective services workers.
**CFSR/Quality Hearing Project Workgroup**

*Task Force Recommendation:* Explore current practice in statewide abuse, neglect, and dependency cases and identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.

The Quality Hearing Project that began as a direct result of feedback received through the CFSR PIP process is nearing completion. Utilizing the summary of findings and recommendations from the review of shelter care and permanency/annual review recorded hearings, the workgroup developed a Court Report and Bench Guide. The court report was developed to enhance testimony and provide additional information during annual review hearings or at the court’s discretion or request for other hearings. The Bench Guide includes meaningful questions to help prompt the judicial officer to gather needed information to make required findings and to help increase parental engagement during court hearings.

The final draft of the Court Report is being reviewed by additional stakeholders. Once a final Court Report is approved and the Bench Guides are updated as needed, the workgroup’s next steps will be developing an implementation plan and associated training. The timeline of approval has been somewhat stunted due to COVID-19, but the Court Report and Bench Guides are currently in the internal review approval process with the Supreme Court of Ohio.

**Family First Prevention Services Qualified Residential Treatment Provider Court Oversight Workgroup**

*Task Force Recommendation:* Develop recommendations related to QRTP placements, recommendations to address court hearings versus administrative review, recommendations for training courts, and definitions related to permanency hearing and cost.

The Task Force’s FFPSA QRTP Court Oversight workgroup compliments the work of Ohio’s FFPSA Leadership Council. The workgroup continued the efforts it began during the 2019-2020 period. In May of 2020, the workgroup met after individual members reviewed the updates in Ohio’s FFPSA implementation progress. The May meeting focused on a review of extensive research, including approved and pending FFPSA plans from other states and juvenile competency and bind over hearing procedure, both to help inform recommendations related to QRTP-required hearings. The group also engaged in discussions about the QRTP assessments and placements, as well as continued plans for the judicial toolkit.

During the July 2020 meeting, the workgroup continued development of the judicial toolkit and bench guide and continued discussion of QRTP hearing and assessment-related questions.
During the September 2020 meeting, the workgroup discussed administrative rule and SACWIS requirements with the development and implementation of the toolkit, as well as proposed components of the toolkit and updates on associated research.

In November of 2020’s meeting, the group reviewed the sample QRTP assessment and SACWIS entry; youth engagement in QRTP-related hearings; and other miscellaneous questions to finalize notes for production of a draft.

In February of 2021, drafting of the toolkit began. Feedback was garnered from the workgroup and stakeholders before final approval of the draft from the workgroup on February 25, 2021. The draft was sent to Task Force members for an electronic vote in early March of 2021. The toolkit is now undergoing the internal review process at the Supreme Court of Ohio and will subsequently be sent to the Public Information Office for design and production.

**Experimental, Model, and Demonstration Programs for Testing Innovative Approaches and Techniques**

**Intimate Partner Violence within a Differential Response Framework**

**Safe & Together™ in Ohio**

*Task Force Recommendation:* This activity seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation to promote and support Ohio’s PIP to address CFSR areas needing improvement and continue support to maintain Ohio’s system for responding to intimate partner violence.

*Note:* CFSR results indicated a need for ongoing Task Force Support of this activity. This activity will be funded for one additional state fiscal year with the possibility of a renewal.

In response to strong county interest in early 2010, the State of Ohio, supported by Casey Family Programs, the National Center for Adoption Law & Policy (NCALP)—now the Family and Youth Law Center, DMA, the HealthPath Foundation of Ohio, and the Ohio Domestic Violence Network initiated the development of the Ohio Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Collaborative. This multi-faceted initiative aimed at building IPV response competency within child protective services agencies and fostering enhanced partnerships among child welfare, courts, domestic violence service providers and other critical stakeholders. Several pilot counties requested training and technical assistance to enhance their response in these cases and identified the Safe and Together Model™ created by David Mandel & Associates, LLC (DMA)—now the Safe & Together Institute—as a model of interest.
The Safe & Together™ CORE training provides comprehensive introduction to domestic violence using a perpetrator pattern-based, child-centered, and survivor strengths approach. The Model is developed for child welfare systems, so it goes beyond a primer on domestic violence to teach practical skills and tools rooted in child welfare assessment, interviewing, documentation, and case planning. The Safe & Together Model also improves the ability of child welfare to work with complex cases that have substance abuse, mental health, and other intersecting problems, making the connections with domestic violence clearer and helping to ensure a more holistic approach to serving families.

Safe & Together™ has gone through multiple expansions in Ohio. After a successful pilot, Ohio became the first S&T training site to certify local trainers to meet growing training needs across the state. Approximately 335 PCSA staff members and community partners have participated in virtual Safe & Together™ trainings within the past year. Of those participants, over 140 have completed the post-test for completion of the entire four day Safe & Together CORE Model Training. There are two upcoming trainings scheduled for April and May at the Central Ohio RTC and Northeast Ohio RTC that will include another 70 participants taking part in the CORE Model Training.

With COVID-19 halting all in-person training, we were able to move forward virtually without major issues. There are some drawbacks, but also benefits to the virtual format. We completed 14 complete Core Day 1 – 4 Trainings, only one of them being in-person. Instead of having a full day in-person training for each CORE Day, the virtual CORE Day training is separated into Part 1, and Part 2; each training lasting three hours virtually. In essence, an in-person training would take four full days (including the breaks), while a virtual training is eight, 3-hour virtual sessions.

Five of the original 11 certified trainers are still under contract, which gives Ohio the unique benefit of trainers who are not only extensively experienced in child welfare and domestic violence, but who have also been training and practicing the Model for ten years. Two additional trainers who will join after the completion of their final certification after May 2021.

2020-2021 Milestones
The Safe & Together Institute (S&TI) has continued to work with Ohio-based trainers through regular communications and technical assistance, quarterly trainer meetings, and pre- and post-training discussions around practice needs. All trainers completed a recertification process in 2019 that will allow them to maintain certification through fiscal year 2020-2021. We have two new trainers that are working towards completing their certification. The Collaborative is currently working with the ODJFS to coordinate a new initiative with Ohio certified Safe & Together trainers designed to provide case-specific consultation pertaining to domestic violence for child protection services agency personnel in designated counties as part of Ohio’s CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP).
The Ohio IPV Collaborative Coordinator has continued to participate in the statewide, multi-agency Linking Systems of Care for Ohio’s Youth stakeholder group. In December, the Coordinator attended the North America Safe and Together Conference. She is working with the S&TI to collaborate on the Ohio Summit that is virtual on June 10 & 11, 2021 with the theme “Celebrating 10 Years of Progress”. This will be an Ohio focused summit and a way to celebrate the 10-year partnership. The focus of the summit is to look at the positive system changes and bring people together to work toward goals for the future. In addition to the upcoming Ohio Summit coordination and discussions, she coordinated the first day of Family and Youth Law Center’s (FYLaw) 15th Annual Wells Conference in Child Welfare & Adoption Law to focus on the S&TI on March 24, 2021. David Mandel was the keynote speaker and he along with Heidi Rankin, lead two breakout sessions each.

Below are the details of the presentations by S&TI:

Keynote: “Domestic Violence Perpetrators Patterns During a Pandemic”
Speaker: David Mandel, MA, LPC

Breakout Session 1A: “Multiple Pathways to Harm: Accessing the Impact on Child and Family Functioning Should Be Our First Step”, David Mandel, MA, LPC

Breakout Session 1B: “When Domestic Violence Perpetration, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health Meet”, Heidi Rankin, MPA

Breakout Session 2A: “Mapping Perpetrators Patterns: Essential Practice for Workers, Advocates, and Service Providers”, David Mandel, MA, LPC

Breakout Session 2B: “From Failure to Protect” to Parenting with Domestic Violence Survivors”, Heidi Rankin, MPA

The collaboration was well received and resulted in the following feedback:

“Very informative about the approach to how we view domestic violence and family. It has helped me to look at survivors based on the context approach. So important. Thank you for your work!”

“This is a common issue that comes up in child welfare cases for me. Well done. Thanks for the presentation.”

“Loved the Mapping Model Discussed. I wish this was more widely used/known!”

S&TI has initiated annual updates to its most frequently used curricula, including the CORE and Supervisor trainings. S&TI has also hosted multiple trainings in Ohio as part of their ongoing
technical assistance, including three webinars—on Domestic Violence Perpetrators Patterns, Domestic Violence during a Pandemic, and Unraveling the Gender Paradox at the Center of the Safe & Together Model.

Current efforts focus on reaching untrained counties, establishing regular trainings in regional training centers (The North Central Ohio RTC, Northeast Ohio RTC, Central Ohio RTC, and Northwest Ohio RTC) offer CORE trainings 2-3 times each year; Southwest Ohio RTC will offer CORE this fall for the first time. We are building supervisory capacity, reviewing implementation and evaluation strategies, and planning additional training support opportunities. With the new challenges presented by COVID-19 and mandatory social distancing, the Collaborative has been working with trainers and S&TI to get Ohio workers access to a virtual CORE training.

These activities reform state systems by implementing a significant shift in how communities address child maltreatment when intimate partner violence is a factor within the home. This approach moves from a short-term, segmented, and crisis-based reaction to a holistic, community approach that focuses on the long-term safety of the child, partnership with the adult survivor, and holding perpetrators accountable.

Evaluation
Feedback is received via training and trainer evaluations, trainer notes, emails to, and in-person conversations with the Coordinator, the Safe & Together Institute, and individual trainers.

Participants are also surveyed each year following CORE trainings. The results of the most recent survey are below:

In response to: “Have you added any of the following to your assessments?”
- 100% reported making at least one change to their assessment process;
- 40% incorporated both survivor strengths and protective behaviors and the influence of related issues like substance abuse and mental health; and
  - 17% included Multiple Pathways to Harm.
- 19% included high standards for fathers.

In response to: “Have you added any of the following to your interviews?”
- 100% reported making at least one change to their interviews
- 21% of respondents included safety precautions for families and child welfare staff
- 19% included efforts to partner with the survivor
- 16% incorporated a focus on perpetrator patterns and the impact on children

In response to: “Have you added any of the following to your documentation?”
- 88% reported making at least one change to their documentation
- 30% of respondents included specific examples of survivor strengths
15% included specific examples of the impact on child and family functioning
18% reported adding detailed interview notes with safety precautions.

In response to: “Have you added any of the following to your case planning?”

- 97% of respondents reported making at least one change to their case planning
- 26% included a focus on the needs of the children, whether or not they had witnessed the abuse
- 17% included partnership with the non-offending parent
- 18% included emphasis on perpetrator behavior change versus just service referrals.

**Action Plans:** The majority (80%) of respondents reported making progress on the Action Plans they created during the training. 5% reported following their plan very closely; 29% reported following the plan closely; and 48% reported following the plan somewhat closely.

**Challenges:** Respondents identified multiple challenges to including the Model’s approach in everyday practice; 22% identified limited time because of tight schedule and heavy caseload; 15% identified lack of community resources, such as shelters and batterer intervention programs; and 30% identified “other” challenges, including not being in a role that works with a family throughout the entire case and issues with supervisors and coworkers insisting on including ineffective services (such as anger management) in case plans.

**Follow-up:** Safe and Together™ trainings for community partners (24%), Additional Safe & Together staff trainings (19%), and webinars (19%), and Follow-up session with your Safe & Together trainer(s) for review and discussion of specific cases or challenges (14%) were identified as being the most helpful follow-ups to the CORE training.

**Recommendation:** Overall, 91% said “yes,” they would recommend Safe & Together trainings; 9% said they would “maybe” recommend the trainings; and 0% said “no,” they would not recommend the trainings.

**Recommendation:** Coordinating outreach to community partners to bring awareness and facilitate collaboration. Additional follow-up to those who have completed the training could be helpful to improve engagement.


**Child Welfare Quality Legal Representation**

*Task Force Recommendation:* Identify and promote best practices for attorneys who represent clients in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.

**Workgroup**

The Task Force’s Child Welfare Quality Legal Representation workgroup is the largest workgroup, with three subcommittees. The three subcommittees (Attorney Training & Standards, Pre-Petition Representation, and Multidisciplinary Representation) each work on individual, specific areas of improvement which will have a positive impact on the larger group’s goal of developing best practices for attorneys representing clients in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. Each of the subcommittees meets monthly prior to the reconvening of the larger workgroup.

The workgroup and subcommittees have done extensive research for each individual subcommittee’s toolkit and trainings. Other states with successful child welfare representation programs and models, like Washington and New Mexico, have informally partnered to share information and tips with Ohio’s subcommittees in their development, implementation, and evaluation of representation programs.

Beginning last fall, the groups began to identify research areas for their groups’ respective topics and explore output products which would help educate legal professionals on how to provide quality legal representation in child welfare hearings. Extensive hours were put into research assignments and by early 2021, group members were able to construct outlines for a toolkit and begin the process of drafting some of these products.

The group has developed a comprehensive timeline for the next two years for each individual committee to stay on track with output development and evaluation as products begin to be released.

**Multidisciplinary Pilot**

On January 1st, 2021, Summit County Juvenile court implemented a Multi-Disciplinary Legal Representation pilot project. The project, funded by Ohio CIP, includes a legal team consisting of three attorneys, a parent advocate, and a licensed social worker. Evaluation of this project will occur by following a robust data collection model used by ABA’s Family Justice Initiative which includes comparison with a control group.

**Training**

In summer and fall of 2020, CJA and CIP funds were blended to provide child welfare law and practice training and resources to over 500 attorneys, magistrates, prosecutors, CASA/GAL, court officers and children services staff. The training, Child Welfare Law and Practice “Red Book”, was developed and delivered virtually by the National Association of Council for Children (NACC). This seven-week course provided an overall review of core dependency competency areas and
prepares participants to complete the Child Welfare Law Specialist certification examination. Topics covered included Indian Child Welfare Act, investigative interviewing of the child, parent representation, federal due process, and etc.

The task force also worked with NACC to develop and deliver a supplemental Ohio specific Red Book 3-series training. The supplemental training was held after the fall NACC national training concluded on October 21, 2020. The Ohio specific supplemental session information is below:

**Session 1: Thursday, October 29, 2020, 5-6:30 PM ET**

- **Session Theme: Lifecycle of an Ohio Child Welfare Case: A Case Study**
  - **Description:** This session will use a hypothetical fact pattern to walk participants through an Ohio dependency case from removal to permanency and will cover abuse and neglect definitions, shelter care hearings, adjudication, disposition, review hearings, permanency planning hearings, and termination of parental rights.

**Session 2: Thursday, November 5, 2020, 5-6:30 PM ET**

- **Session Theme: Advocating for Particular Populations and Topic Areas in Child Welfare**
  - **Description:** This session will focus on four areas of Ohio child welfare law and will cover legal authority and practice tips in each area. It will address tips and best practices for working with youth and parents, including culturally humble representation, awareness of implicit bias, and building rapport with, interviewing (and limitations on such interviews), and counseling children and youth.

**Session 3: Thursday, November 12, 2020, 5-6:30 PM ET**

- **Session Theme: Trial Advocacy for Ohio Child Welfare Attorneys**
  - **Description:** This session will focus on trial and litigation advocacy in Ohio dependency cases. It will cover selected topics in Ohio evidentiary law, as well as state-specific legal authority regarding children testifying.
Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Evaluation

Task Force Recommendation: Identify and promote best practices for attorneys who represent clients in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.

The Ohio CASA/GAL Association (Ohio CASA) is currently developing an implementation plan to conduct a study to demonstrate the impact of CASA volunteers on outcomes for children who are in custody of children services as a result of abuse, neglect, or dependency. The study will be approximately 18 months in length to accommodate scheduling and collecting meaningful data. In addition to data maintained by local CASA programs, the study will use ODJFS’ SACWIS data and Ohio Medicaid data as permissible. Ohio CASA will disseminate the results of the study to interested partners to document the impact of court appointed advocate programs and to help establish best practices for CASA volunteers. For the first phase of the project, CASA developed the evaluation design to assess the relationship between CASA participation, children services outcomes, and service utilization. The design shall account for demographic and clinical characteristics as well as family history. CASA is currently working to establish necessary legal agreements with data owners to receive administrative data.

Human Trafficking Prevention, Intervention, and Training Services Initiative

Task Force Recommendation: Provide support to ensure that child victims of human trafficking or children at risk have access to skilled and competent services regardless of geography.

Of the seven Human Trafficking Initiative subgrantees, six hosted or sent staff to 30 Human Trafficking trainings resulting in 3,057 staff trained. Specific details for each subgrantee are below:

- **Community Action Agency of Columbiana County (CAA of CC):**
  - Between April 2020 and April 2021, CAA of CC has hosted professional development trainings related to human trafficking among five different agencies within Columbiana county. In total, CAA of CC has trained 31 professionals during this duration of their project. Professionals who were trained included: Community Action Agency of Columbiana County internal partners, Ohio Means Jobs, One Stop Ohio, The Columbiana County Mental Health Agency, MCTA, and Columbiana County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

- **Crime Victim Services:**
  - Between April 2020 and April 2021, Crime Victim Services provided 9 trainings related to human trafficking with a total of 404 professionals. Professionals who were trained included: CASA Guardian Ad Litems; United States Sexual Assault Community Response team; 3 multidisciplinary trainings that included a variety of
professionals from the medical, mental health, law enforcement, and education fields; Putnam County Mental Health Board; Joint Township Memorial Hospital; and Hardin County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Surveys showed most participants increased knowledge of human trafficking and that the information was relevant to their work.

• **Dayton Children’s Hospital:**
  - The human trafficking training developed by Dayton Children’s Hospital was developed to be implemented either as three 1-hour training modules or a one 3-hour training. Between April 2020 and April 2021, Dayton Children’s Hospital completed three training series trainings and one 3-hour training. During the November 2020, series 35 professionals attended the Module 1 training, 27 attended the Module 2 training, and 20 attended the Module 3 training. During the January 2021 series, 12 professionals attended Module 1 training, 9 attended module 2 training and 9 attended module 3 training. During the February 2021, series 52 professionals attended the module 1 training, 25 professionals attended the module 2 training and 40 attended the module 3 training. Within the month of February 2021, a 3-hour training was held and 23 professionals attended. 100% of the professional attendees agreed/strongly agreed the training was effective, clear, organized, and relevant.

• **Cleveland Rape Crisis Center (CRCC):**
  - CRCC staff undertook planning and development of its professional development presentations related to human trafficking in SFY 2020. CRCC trained nine individuals at a 90-minute training on February 9, 2021 and 17 individuals at a 90-minute training on March 9, 2021. Both trainings were held online and were attended by both the community and professionals from multiple disciplines. Eight more trainings are planned for the remainder of calendar year 2021.

• **RAHAB Ministries:**
  - The training curriculum has been approved by the OCTF. The pandemic has continued to have an impact on RAHAB holding training sessions. At this time, they are still working to explore options for holding the trainings online.

• **Gracehaven:**
  - Gracehaven has completed 13 professional human trafficking intervention trainings to 2,470 professionals in the fields of education, social work, medicine, law and government. The organizations include: Mt Carmel College of Nursing, the Ohio State University, Centennial High School (Staff), Gallia Coalition for Prevention & Recovery, Rio Grande College, Eastside Learning Extension Center,
Chat House, Capital Law School, Attorney General Subcommittee Meeting, Ohio Nurses Association and Healthy New Albany. They’ve also participated in the following events: Divine Health HT Panel w/Marlene Carson, HT Summit Panel (3x).

- Gracehaven has been a regular participant in Attorney General Yost’s Human Trafficking Subcommittee meetings as well as part of various new community coalitions. They are hopeful that audiences of higher learning will also apply this knowledge in their current and future spheres of influence.

- **Family Resource Center of Northwest Ohio:**

  - Family Resource Center of Northwest Ohio utilized funds to send four employees to the University of Toledo’s Human Trafficking and Social Justice Conference in Fall 2020. The conference was beneficial to increase staff’s education, knowledge, service practices, and connection with resources in Northwest Ohio.

**Evaluation**

Pre and post-test surveys administered before and after the trainings regarding knowledge, beliefs and comfort indicate the trainings were effective and had an overall positive impact on participants. Based on results, there was an increase in knowledge for all areas surveyed. The two surveyed areas that revealed the largest increase in knowledge gained are below:
Only minor change is noted in participant beliefs about human trafficking after completing the training. Participant belief with the largest change is below:

Participants were also asked to rate their level of comfort in areas such as having conversations with at-risk youth, educating peers or youth, linking at-risk youth to services, and reporting trafficking information to authorities. Following the training, level of comfort increased in all areas surveyed. The most notable increases are below:
Reform of State Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, Protocols, and Procedures to Provide Comprehensive Protection for Children

**Children Services Transformation Advisory Council**

*Task Force Recommendation:* Support the evaluation and recommendation of needed foster care reforms; strengthening of children services practices; and prioritization of the safety, permanency, and well-being of Ohio's children and families.

In 2019, Governor Mike DeWine created the Children’s Services Transformation (CST) Advisory Council to assess and develop clear recommendations and guidelines for the state of Ohio to improve the children services system. Council members, which included the task force co-chair, were chosen to use their firsthand experiences, system knowledge and collective advocacy to lead change for children, families, caregivers and the children services workforce. State staff traveled across the state to hear testimony from nearly five hundred Ohioans at ten community forums about their experiences with Ohio’s foster care system.

After fourteen Council meetings, the Advisory Council issued its final report in November 2020, with thirty-seven recommendations including a recommendation that Ohio commit to formally addressing the racial injustices and implicit biases that lead to inequities and disproportionality for children and families of color. The 37 recommendations address: Prevention, Workforce, Practice, Kinship, Foster Care, Adoption, and Juvenile Justice. Of the thirty-seven recommendations, six recommendations were specific to the juvenile justice system. The Juvenile Justice recommendations are as follows:

- Collaborate with the Supreme Court of Ohio’s Advisory Committee on Children and Families to identify strategies to achieve greater accountability and increased communication with guardian ad litem programs to ensure better outcomes for children and families with children services court cases.
- Review and evaluate court-appointed special advocate and guardian ad litem programs to identify opportunities for recruitment and expansion.
- Support continued strategic collaborative efforts between the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Supreme Court of Ohio’s Advisory Committee on Children and Families to create an implementation plan for multidisciplinary legal representation for parents.
- Strengthen guidance for all involved systems and parties in children services court cases to reinforce the established 12-month requirement for reunification and permanency, with possible six-month extensions when justified by family-specific needs.
- Review Public Children Services Agency legal representation structures throughout the state.
- Support the Supreme Court of Ohio Advisory Committee on Children and Families’ recommendation to implement a Child in Need of Protective Services (CHIPS) court framework to replace Ohio’s current abuse, neglect, and dependency court system.

**Child in Need of Protective Services**

*Task Force Recommendation:  Re-examine the proposed Child in Need of Protective Services legislative language.*

The Child in Need of Protective Services (CHIPS) workgroup continues to adapt and progress its efforts to replace the current abuse, neglect, and dependency court framework. The workgroup, which first met in May of 2019, began by reviewing Ohio’s long history with CHIPS. The group also assessed readiness and alignment with current national and local efforts to transform the child protection system. Past obstacles and methods to overcome them were discussed and further information and research needed has been identified.

Some of the topics identified and reviewed by the workgroup included CHIPS potential impact on mandated reporting and child abuse/neglect registry searches, creation of resources to share with stakeholders, a comprehensive review of the last introduced CHIPS legislation, and a review of other areas of Ohio law that a CHIPS model may impact.

The work of this group is further supported by the Governor’s Children’s Services Transformation Advisory Council recommendation to continue partnering with the Supreme Court of Ohio to implement a CHIPS model that provides a child-centered, family-focused alternative to the abuse, neglect, and dependency model currently utilized.

This approach will continue progress toward the long-standing goals of CHIPS, including increasing parental engagement, creating statewide consistency, and decreasing time to permanency for Ohio’s children.

The group is finalizing the CHIPS framework and working to secure support from stakeholders and legislators.

**Website**

The Subcommittee on Responding to Child Abuse, Neglect and Dependency (CAND) website, [http://www.ohiochildlaw.org](http://www.ohiochildlaw.org), continues to function as a very effective tool for the Subcommittee. The website was been redesigned and upgraded to include mobile-friendly usage via the Task Force’s contracted staffing with the Family and Youth Law Center. FYLaw continues to provide regular updates to the website, including Task Force and workgroup meeting information, workgroup updates, and related documents.
III. Prior Year Line Item Budget Expenditures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
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<tr>
<td>Intimate Partner Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training for First Responders</td>
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<td>FYLAW Research &amp; Support</td>
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<td>Human Trafficking</td>
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<td>Quality Legal Representation</td>
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IV. Application for Proposed Activities

*Description of proposed activities for the upcoming year:* Ohio will use Federal Fiscal Year 2021-2024 Children’s Justice Act monies to focus on the Task Force’s recommendations to:

1. Continue support for statewide expansion of the Safe & Together model to increase positive outcomes for domestic violence survivors and their families.
2. Support development and implementation of legislative framework for handling child welfare cases that replaces the current abuse, neglect, dependency model.
3. Identify and promote strategies and best practices for stakeholders to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases and achieve greater accountability.
4. Provide support to ensure that child victims of human trafficking or children at risk have access to skilled and competent services regardless of geography.
5. Support experimental, model, and demonstration programming that addresses a multidisciplinary legal representation approach for families.
6. Support experimental, model, and demonstration programming that promotes a multidisciplinary approach to improving outcomes for dual status youth.
7. Provide continued research, communication and support services to the Task Force and its workgroups.
8. Maintain compliance with eligibility criteria and ensure adequate administration of Children’s Justice Act programming.

1. **Intimate Partner Violence**

*Proposed Activities*  
- Continue implementation of the Safe & Together™ Model as an intimate partner violence intervention
• Maintain Ohio Intimate Partner Violence Collaborative

Goals
• Safe and Together™ is more fully integrated into existing Ohio child welfare practice and systems.
• Policies and materials are established that clearly identify the ways in which Safe and Together™ programming supports PCSAs in addressing current and pressing child welfare issues.
• A consistent, statewide understanding of The Safe and Together™ model is achieved.

Extent to which this project/activity contributes to the reform of State systems’ handling of cases of child abuse and neglect
Ohio’s Intimate Partner Collaborative is implementing a significant shift in how communities address child maltreatment when intimate partner violence is a factor within the home. This approach moves from a short-term, segmented, and crisis-based reaction to a holistic, community partnership approach which focuses on the long-term safety of the child while holding caregivers accountable.

CJA Required Category
Investigative, Administrative and Judicial Handling of Child Abuse and Neglect

Task Force Recommendation/Goal
This activity seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation to continue support for statewide expansion of the Safe & Together model to increase positive outcomes for domestic violence survivors and their families.

Evaluation Methods
• Core training is provided regularly at each of Ohio’s eight regional training centers and other specific counties in Ohio. This is important in order to train the high volume of new employees and turnover in the public children services agencies in each county.
• Safe and Together becomes the single training option which meets domestic violence training requirements through the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program in 100% of the counties in Ohio.
• Data collection through training evaluations, post-training surveys, and focus groups indicates an increased understanding of Ohio’s Safe and Together model.

Note: This activity will be funded for one state fiscal year with the possibility of a renewal.
2. **Child In Need of Protective Services (CHIPS) Workgroup**  
   **Proposed Activity**  
The Task Force plans to continue with a comprehensive Child in Need of Protective Services legislative proposal within the specific CHIPS workgroup. The workgroup will consider how judicial and PCSA process refinement can help progression toward the workgroup’s goals. The workgroup will continue to consider the Governor’s statewide child welfare priorities in when and how to introduce this proposal and will continue working toward securing support from stakeholders and legislators. The Family and Youth Law Center will partner on the continuing work of this workgroup.

**Goals**
- Develop a recommendation for a Child in Need of Protective Services (CHIPS) framework to replace the current abuse, neglect, dependency adjudicatory model.
- Use feedback to focus on the needs of Ohio’s children to create a proposal likely to garner support and eventual implementation.

*Extent to which this project/activity contributes to the reform of State systems’ handling of cases of child abuse and neglect*
This activity seeks to create clear and consistent framework for handling children services court cases that replaces the current abuse, neglect, dependency model.

*CJA Required Category*
Reform of State Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, Protocols, and Procedures to Provide Comprehensive Protection for Children

*Task Force Recommendations/Goals*
This activity seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation to support development and implementation of legislative framework for handling child welfare cases that replaces the current abuse, neglect, dependency model.

*Evaluation Methods*
- Once in the implementation stage, data collection through training evaluations, post-training surveys, and focus groups indicates an increased understanding of CHIPS-related changes required.

3. **CFSR/Quality Hearing Workgroup**  
   **Proposed Activity**  
The Task Force plans to continue with the work of the CFSR/Quality Hearing workgroup. Described in further detail above, the next steps for this workgroup will be to work with all relevant stakeholders to finalize the Court Report and Bench Guides. Once complete, the workgroup will establish detailed plans to implement usage of these work products
and training for judicial officers. The Family and Youth Law Center will partner on the continuing work of this workgroup.

Goals

- Finalize a Court Report and accompanying Bench Guide to promote quality hearings.
- Create an implementation plan and associated training for judicial officers.

Extent to which this project/activity contributes to the reform of State systems’ handling of cases of child abuse and neglect

This activity seeks to improve the quality of hearings across the state by ensuring that judicial officers have the information needed to make all required findings and to engage parents.

CJA Required Category

Investigative, Administrative and Judicial Handling of Child Abuse and Neglect

Task Force Recommendations/Goals

This activity seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation identify and promote strategies and best practices for stakeholders to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases and achieve greater accountability.

Evaluation Methods

- Dr. Alicia Summers will conduct a follow-up study to assess use of tools and impact on hearing quality.

4. FFPSA QRTP Court Oversight Workgroup

Proposed Activity

The Task Force plans to continue to support the Family First Prevention Services Qualified Residential Treatment Provider (QRTP) Court Oversight Workgroup. Once the judicial toolkit is approved, live training sessions will be conducted via webinar in July and recorded for court personnel, attorneys, and children services staff.

Goals

- Complete the final toolkit review process.
- Distribute the toolkit to courts, children services, legal community and various stakeholders.
- Conduct court oversight training sessions and record for future access.

Extent to which this project/activity contributes to the reform of State systems’ handling of cases of child abuse and neglect
This activity seeks to address the task force recommendation to create clear and consistent guidance for judicial officers as they begin to implement requirements related to approval of QRTP placements.

**CJA Required Category**
Investigative, Administrative and Judicial Handling of Child Abuse and Neglect

**Task Force Recommendations/Goals**
This activity seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation identify and promote strategies and best practices for stakeholders to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases and achieve greater accountability.

**Evaluation Methods**
- Data collection through training evaluations, post-training surveys, and focus groups indicates an increased understanding of the court oversight requirements related to FFPSA QTRPs.

5. **Child Welfare Quality Legal Representation**

*Proposed Activity*
The Task Force has created a workgroup with three subcommittees devoted to Attorney Training and Standards, Pre-Petition Representation, and Multidisciplinary Legal Representation. All three subcommittees will work together under the larger workgroup to achieve individual goals related to the overall goal of improving best practices and training for attorneys serving clients in child welfare cases in order to improve outcomes for children and families, as well as other stakeholders.

**Goals**
- Develop implementation toolkits and related trainings for attorney best practices, pre-petition representation, and multidisciplinary representation.
- Create and evaluate pilot programs for pre-petition representation and multidisciplinary representation.
- Develop a comprehensive lawyer to lawyer mentoring program to help guide attorneys who are new to the practice of child welfare.
- Create funding guides and plans of action in order to propose programs to be long-lasting.

*Extent to which this project/activity contributes to the reform of State systems’ handling of cases of child abuse and neglect*
This activity seeks to improve and increase access to quality parental representation statewide to help properly serve children and families in need of children services intervention.

**CJA Required Category**
Investigative, Administrative and Judicial Handling of Child Abuse and Neglect; Reform of State Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, Protocols, and Procedures to Provide Comprehensive Protection for Children; Experimental, Model, and Demonstration Programs for Testing Innovative Approaches and Techniques

**Task Force Recommendations/Goals**
This activity seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation to identify and promote strategies and best practices for stakeholders to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases and achieve greater accountability. This activity also seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation to support experimental, model, and demonstration programming that addresses a multidisciplinary legal representation approach for families.

**Evaluation Methods**
- Data collection through training evaluations, post-training surveys, and focus groups indicates an increase in positive perception and experience with representation and increased outcomes, as measured by specific factors.

6. **CASA/GAL Programs**

**Proposed Activity**
The task force will support the completion of the CASA evaluation and identification of strategies to achieve greater accountability and increased communication with guardian ad litem programs to ensure better outcomes for children and families with children services court cases.

**Goals**
- Document the impact of CASA programs on children and families.
- Identify strategies and best practices.
- Implement new amendments for Rule 48.
- Identify opportunities for recruitment and expansion.

The CASA evaluation will:
- Collect and compare data from 4—5 counties representing a range of geographic and economic diversity
- Refine and expand analytic strategies to:
Account for counties’ differing approaches to assignment
- Account for disproportionate complexity of CASA-assigned cases
- Estimate the association between CASA appointment and case outcome
- Examine the impact of adopting a new CASA program
- Examine how a CASA Program operates in a larger metropolitan area and whether the CASA Program model can reduce racial disparities in access to care and permanency
- Conduct qualitative data collection to gather feedback about critical components for effective CASA volunteers

Extent to which this project/activity contributes to the reform of State systems’ handling of cases of child abuse and neglect
This activity seeks to improve and increase access to quality legal representation statewide to help properly serve children and families in need of children services intervention.

CJA Required Category
Investigative, Administrative and Judicial Handling of Child Abuse and Neglect; Reform of State Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, Protocols, and Procedures to Provide Comprehensive Protection for Children; Experimental, Model, and Demonstration Programs for Testing Innovative Approaches and Techniques

Task Force Recommendations/Goals
This activity seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation to identify and promote strategies and best practices for stakeholders to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases and achieve greater accountability.

Evaluation Methods
Results gathered and analyzed through impact evaluation, strategy utilization and impact, survey, focus groups, and training evaluations.

7. Human Trafficking Prevention, Intervention, and Training Services Initiative

Proposed activities
Continued collaboration with the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force and the Children’s Trust Fund to provide funding to support human trafficking prevention, intervention and training services throughout Ohio aimed at eliminating the crime of human trafficking and child exploitation.  (Note: CJA dollars are only being used to fund the training and professional development goal described in the second bullet below.)

Goals
- Victim support services for minor human trafficking victims or those at risk of victimization. Services may include the following:
  - Medical screenings, forensic interviews, case management services, service and placement recommendations, referrals and follow-up for trauma focused mental
health services; and/or collaboration on multidisciplinary team investigations when appropriate;
  - Rehabilitation and educational services, housing or other concrete support services

- Training and Professional Development for those implementing Human Trafficking Victim Support Services for Minors. Innovative approaches may include:
  - Education tailored to the needs of the professional audience receiving human trafficking training;
  - Training content and materials found on http://humantrafficking.ohio.gov;
  - Provide basic human trafficking information, signs and indicators, relevant laws, etc.;
  - Training to target audiences that include child welfare staff, law enforcement, juvenile justice and court staff, educations, and where appropriate, other service providers working with minor victims of human trafficking.

- Human Trafficking Prevention Initiatives for Minors. Innovative approaches may include:
  - Utilization of the OCTF’s 10-session Human Trafficking Youth Prevention Curriculum for at-risk youth;
  - Receipt of training to administer this curriculum; and
  - Working with partners to identify and provide this curriculum to at-risk youth.

*Extent to which this project/activity contributes to the reform of State systems handling of cases of child abuse and neglect*

These activities contribute to the development of a statewide infrastructure that serves human trafficking and exploitation child victims and children at risk of becoming victims through skilled professionals with specialized expertise regardless of geography.

*CJA Required Category*
Experimental, Model, and Demonstration Programs for Testing Innovative Approaches and Techniques.

*Task Force Recommendations/Goals*
This activity seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation to provide support to ensure that child victims of human trafficking or children at risk have access to skilled and competent services regardless of geography.

*Evaluation Methods*
Data collection through training evaluations, service recipient data, strategy utilization and impact.
8. **Dual Status Youth Project**

*Proposed activities*

Support the expansion and evaluation of Ohio’s Dual Status Youth Program.

*Goals*

- Increase utilization of a dual status framework across Ohio with a four-phase technical assistance approach that addresses:
  1. Readiness and Leadership, Collaborative Governance & Mobilization

2. Analytical Examination, including:
   - Data Collection, Management and Performance Measurement
   - Screening, Assessment & Structured Decision Making
   - Fiscal & Workforce Resource Inventory
   - Legal and Policy Analysis (Information Sharing, Confidentiality Provisions)

3. Practice & Policy Findings & Recommendations - Development of Action Strategy
   - Protocols
   - Policies
   - Procedures

4. Implementation & Evaluation
   - Principles of implementation science (endorsement, prioritization, infrastructure, sequencing, timelines, and responsibilities)
   - System performance measures and youth outcomes with accompanying measures

*Extent to which this project/activity contributes to the reform of State systems handling of cases of child abuse and neglect*

These activities seek to provide a cross system approach to serving and improving outcomes of youth dually involved in the juvenile justice and children services systems.

*CJA Required Category*

Experimental, Model, and Demonstration Programs for Testing Innovative Approaches and Techniques.

*Task Force Recommendations/Goals*

This activity seeks to address the Task Force’s recommendation to support experimental, model, and demonstration programming that promotes a multidisciplinary approach to improving outcomes for dual status youth.

*Evaluation Methods*

Data collection through service recipient data, strategy utilization and impact.
9. **Task Force Research, Communication, and Support**

*Proposed activities*

This activity is to secure administrative and task-oriented support at the direction of the Task Force, to include:

- Staffing and administrative support of the Task Force and its workgroups.
- Development and implementation of research as approved by the Task Force and its workgroups.
- Development of reports and documents as requested by the Task Force and its workgroups.
- Arrangement, participation in, and preparation for public and professional education activities as requested by CAND.
- Maintenance of Task Force communications.
- Development of public information documents at the direction of CAND.

*Extent to which this project/activity contributes to the reform of State systems’ handling of cases of child abuse and neglect.*

The research and support activities of the Task Force document and provide the foundational basis for the Task Force’s work to implement systemic change.

10. **Children’s Justice Act Administration**

*Proposed Activities*

Funds will be used to support the expenses associated with participation in at least one federally initiated Children’s Justice Act meeting. This activity is a required eligibility criterion for states’ receipt of Children’s Justice Act funding.

V. **Proposed Line Item Budget**

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<thead>
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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Intimate Partner Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>CASA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality Legal Representation</td>
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<td>Human Trafficking</td>
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<td>Dual Status</td>
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<td>CJA Administration</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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May 28, 2021

Amanda Barlow, Acting Commissioner
Administration for Children and Families
Department of Health and Human Services
Mary E. Switzer Building
330 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Acting Commissioner Barlow:

This letter is to certify that Ohio has received the Federal Fiscal Year 2020 child abuse and neglect Basic State Grant and continues to comply with the requirements stipulated in Section 106(b) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (Act). Ohio has maintained and will continue the state multidisciplinary task force on children's justice. Additionally, Ohio continues to progress in adopting recommendations of the task force or a comparable alternative to such recommendations.

Ohio will make such reports to the Secretary as may reasonably be required, including an annual report on the manner in which assistance received under this program was expended throughout the state, with particular attention focused on the areas described in paragraphs (1) through (3) of Section 107(a) of the Act. Ohio will maintain and provide access to records relating to activities under the Children's Justice Act.

It is understood that Ohio is required to participate in at least one Federally initiated Children’s Justice Act meeting each year, and that Ohio is authorized to use federal Children’s Justice Act funds to cover travel and per diem expenses for two Children’s Justice Act representatives to attend the meeting.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Sincerely,

Matt Damschroder
Interim Director
CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.
Signature

Title
Interim Director

Organization
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services