

MINUTES

Nevada Children’s Justice Act (CJA) Task Force
Meeting of the Subcommittee for CRP Recommendations

December 6, 2022

12:00 PM

1. Call to Order – Salli Kerr, Chair

Salli called the meeting to order at 12:06 PM.

Attendees:

Name	Organization
Beverly Brown	Nevada DCFS
Desiree Mattice	Sergeant – Dept. of Public Safety
Dylan Nall	Nevada DCFS
Michelle Rodriguez	Family Court Master
Rachell Ekroos	Medical Provider
Salli Kerr, Chair	Western Regional CAC
Bruce Cole (recorder)	Nevada DCFS

Absent:

Name	Organization
Jane Saint	Director, Nevada CASA
Laurie Jackson	Nevada DCFS

2. For Information: Roll Call – Salli Kerr, Chair & Dylan Nall, DCFS

Dylan Nall called the roll.

3. Initial Public Comment (Discussion only: Action may not be taken on any matter brought up under this agenda item until scheduled for action at a later meeting) – Salli Kerr, Chair

No comments.

4. For Possible Action: To appoint a spokesperson – Dylan Nall, DCFS

Dylan Nall noted that this subcommittee will meet just once a year, and the spokesperson will then present to the next CJA Task Force meeting. The next Task Force meeting is January 10, 2023. Rachell Ekroos volunteered to be the spokesperson. Desiree Mattice moved Rachell be approved. Michelle Rodriguez seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.

5. For Possible Action: Draft and/or Approve 2023 CJA’s Recommendations – Salli Kerr, Chair

Salli Kerr said the next segment of our agenda is to look at the draft and approve the recommendations that we're going to send forward to the larger board. Dylan Nall showed a slide with last year's recommendations. We have agreed that, moving forward, DCFS should not be writing these and then presenting them, that the task force should be writing them. The reason why it's important for DCFS not to write to them is they also respond back to them. So DCFS would be responding back to their own recommendation.

Dylan then put up a screen with our CJA task force goals so we can see what our goals are in order to write the recommendations. 1: provide child protection workers and stakeholders with front-end specialty, discipline-specific, and advanced training. 2: support the implementation of the Sexually Commercially Exploited Child (CSEC) Model Coordinated Response Protocol and provide training and support for the formation of the multi-disciplinary teams (MDT) and task forces. 3: support and establish new child advocacy centers (CACs) and improve the capacity of existing CACS to provide a multi-disciplinary response for victims of child abuse and sexual exploitation. 4: fund technology requests so as to improve investigation, assessment, and prosecution of child abuse and neglect through the use of the latest technology and to support use of new and existing training technologies. 5: to identify new and needed changes to policy regulation and legislation to meet the requirements of federal program improvement plans and other federal and state initiatives and then support training and policy needs related to new or revised policy regulations and legislation.

These goals get updated every three years when CJA does its self-assessment and so they will be updated in 2024. Beverly Brown and Dylan redid them in 2021 for our elf-assessment.

Salli Kerr said she would like to focus on Goal 3, moving into the arena of training for multidisciplinary teams. It really does have that kind of statewide perspective as we think about how our multi-disciplinary teams work well together. Where can we bring them some support and then where do we need to build up some additional teams? There are some places in Nevada that are trying to either bring a CAC or at least develop their MDT to the point where they are responding fully with all of the resources that a CAC would typically bring.

Rachell Ekroos asked if this all fell under the “umbrella” of training. Salli Kerr said not necessarily, this can include infrastructure needs, for instance.

Desiree Mattice said she was thinking about how we are lacking on the mental health side of thing, With the increase in suicides and related problems with youth, we are missing that key component of having that specific resource available as well. So maybe having an inclusion with those multidisciplinary teams to have more of the mental health component would be advisable.

Salli Kerr said there's no question that the mental health component is a significant piece of the multidisciplinary response. We also have moved into looking at some versions of tele-medicine for mental health, especially with our rural and frontier places here in Nevada. She likes Rachel Ekroos's idea: maybe it's the infrastructure we look at.

Desiree Mattice said you have caseworkers who are able to respond to those rural areas to conduct a forensic interview, that's fantastic. However, where is that mental health component? They have to travel very far to get their children the assistance that they need because it is not available readily.

Salli Kerr said it has been shown that tele-mental health specifically is as effective in the trauma treatment as is in-person. Another way to bring that to the forefront would be to really look at spending some time thinking about what is our infrastructure, what do we need to build on a statewide level, whom do we have that would be available to provide some of the tele-mental health services for those frontier

communities? Now it's common practice for forensic interviewers to be from any discipline, they don't have to be a CAC staff, we see them all the time in law enforcement and DCFS workers.

Desiree Mattice asked, what if we were receiving information or requests for people to have a tablet to provide to a family where their child is going through this process?

Salli Kerr said right now there are pilots running in Montana and Washington for statewide mental health networks that include exactly that kind of support. They include the technology piece. They include providing tablets that are locked except for the functions that we want that client to have. The family literally just checks them in and checks them out. A network of providers in those states are connected. She added that North Dakota also has had success with this.

Michelle Rodriguez said a problem with having our families have a specific computer is that it can be frighteningly easy for sex traffickers to zone in on families who are using Wi-Fi (an issue that came up during training in combating sexual exploitation). People did not have Wi-Fi access, themselves, but through the schools. We need to look at this side-effect, which was an issue during COVID.

Salli Kerr said that you're not required to give the family technology and let them just take it home. There are lots of ways to share those things where maybe they're at the CAC and the victim advocate is helping with setting up the room and they do a lot of work where you have a person connected to that client. So, it isn't a matter of handed a tablet off to a family and go on your way. It comes with a select framework for safety. We can certainly put in there to explore this, maybe have one or two of those states come talk to us about their lessons learned and what our infrastructure would be to for adaptation.

Desiree Mattice said there could be a link as well with the school districts. Every district has a school that is available, and all of those schools either have a counselor's office, a nurse's office, or something similar to that where it could be where the technology is available for that location because of the ruralness of those schools. There are ways of us getting around it the exploitation problem.

Rachell Ekroos submitted amended language to the CJA Goals. Salli Kerr said she liked these recommendations, because we certainly do want to continue to train and prioritize training for child welfare staff and stakeholders, and that doesn't limit it to child welfare staff. It could be anyone.

Rachell Ekroos said that perhaps on Goal #2, instead of including establishing CACs, tweak that a little bit to language about introducing and establishing CACs as appropriate, because some communities still aren't going to even know what it is and may not have the infrastructure. The reason she highlighted the CAC was that, listening to what you both Salli and Desiree were saying, that does bring in the mental health and the forensic components, it brings in all these different components that we're trying to highlight because when we start specifying them, we also risk missing, other things, as has happened in the past.

Dylan Nall said she thought this looked great. She paused to go over the DCFS response to our last year's CJA recommendations. We know what we already recommended last year and then this is the response how basically DCFS accepts this recommendation on how we continue prioritizing funding for various trainings. The CJA recently provided training for child welfare staff and stakeholders to attend the following trainings. And then we talk about how we've contracted with Health Management Associates (HMA). HMA provides Nevada's child welfare frontline caseworkers with training that specifically addresses our work and intimate partner violence and domestic violence. For this year: the Children's Justice Act Task Force recommends that the Division of Child and Family Services continues to prioritize training for all child welfare staff and stakeholders in the state of Nevada to improve the investigation and handling of child abuse, neglect or cases involving both, particularly child abuse and exploitation. This recommendation includes, but it's not limited to child protection, model assessments, family and interpersonal violence, mandatory reporting, medical, forensic interventions, and trauma informed practices.

Dylan said she was going to pause on the mandatory reporting. Beverly Brown and Dylan are working on a statewide mandatory reporting training for everyone who is a mandatory reporter. She wanted to give everyone a heads up. It is almost ready. She and Beverly have worked on it for the past two years. They will bring that to the CJA Task Force. The subcommittee was very supportive of this.

The other recommendation now reads: The CJA task force recommends the DCFS supports efforts to translate best practices and support community-specific needs to coordinate the multidisciplinary response to child abuse, neglect, or cases involving both, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation. This MDT support recommendation includes introducing and establishing CACs, as appropriate.

Desiree Mattice moved the recommendations be approved. Rachell Ekroos seconded. Approved unanimously.

6. For Information: Announcements – Salli Kerr, Chair

None

7. Final Public Comment (Discussion only: Action may not be taken on any matter brought up under this agenda item until scheduled for action at a later meeting) – Salli Kerr, Chair

No comment.

8. Adjournment – Salli Kerr, Chair

Meeting adjourned at 12:38 PM.