# **NEVADA COALITION TO PREVENT THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN**

**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** December 15, 2020, 10:00 am

**LOCATION:** This meeting will be conducted via teleconference, in accordance with Governor Sisolak’s Declaration of Emergency Directive 006, Subsection 1; The requirement contained in NRS 241.023 (1) (b) that there be a physical location designated for meetings of public bodies where members of the public are permitted to attend and participate is suspended. Directive 006 was extended with Directive 29, Section 4.

**TELECONFERENCE ACCESS:** Join the meeting: <https://call.lifesizecloud.com/6822029>; Call in number: 1 (312) 584-2401; Meeting extension: 6822029#

1. **Call to Order, Roll Call, Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Ross Armstrong.

**Members present:** Ross Armstrong, Eileen Hough,Justice Nancy Saitta (phone), Brigid Duffy, Nicole Reilly, Janice Wolf, Melissa Holland, Brennan Paterson, Pauline Salla-Smith, Dan Musgrove, Amy Ayoub, Jessica Halling, Eboni Washington, Abbie Frierson, Cara Paoli

 **Liaison:** Electra Skrzydlewski (phone)

**Members absent:** Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno

**DCFS Staff members present:** Kathryn Roose, Dr. Megan Freeman, Esther Rodriguez-Brown, Hayley Jarolimek, Elvira Saldana

**Guests:** Shannon McCoy, Jason Mouannes, Jimmy Lau, Linda Anderson, Anthony MacKenzie, Katie Ryan

Roll call was taken, and it was determined a quorum of the Nevada Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children was present.

1. **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

1. **For Possible Action: Approval of the Minutes from the September 22, 2020 meeting of the CSEC Coalition**

Ross Armstrong asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. No recommendations were made.

**Action:** A motion was made by Brigid Duffy to approve the minutes, seconded by Eboni Washington and carried to approve the minutes of September 22, 2020.

1. **For Discussion: Structure of the Coalition**

Ross Armstrong stated at the last meeting the subcommittee structure was approved. At this time, the subcommittees need to be filled and individuals are needed who would be willing to lead them. The plan is to have the committees meet next month. The three subcommittees are Local Task Force Support, External Engagement, and Funding, Sustainability, and Data. The Local Task Force Support Subcommittee will support local Task Forces and help them with training. The External Engagement Subcommittee will engage partners in terms of public awareness and action from different systems. Ross asked Hayley Jarolimek or Esther Rodriguez-Brown how the subcommittees would be populated.

Kathryn Roose replied she sent an email with a link to a Microsoft form for members to sign up for one of the subcommittees. The link can be forwarded to anyone else who may be interested in participating. The link will also be included in the minutes to be posted on the website. (<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=5kCj5J64aE6OqhVE0nA5gNZxGVB-REdOm7IADp2h8vpUMEoyWTBBNFpQS1ZPUFNGU1Q5QU9OVVU4Ni4u>)

Ross Armstrong stated it is his intention to get the subcommittees sorted out by the end of next week. Once there are interested members in the subcommittees, they will be asking for individuals to chair the subcommittees. Ross reminded members the subcommittee meetings must follow Open Meeting Law. The subcommittees will have members from the current Coalition, and they can also have stakeholders participate. The stakeholders are not voting members. Ross asked if there were any questions.

Nicole Reilly asked if there will be staff who will be drafting the agenda and completing minutes or if the Chairs and committee members are expected to be taking care of it.

Ross Armstrong replied DCFS staff will be assisting with agendas and minutes.

Kathryn Roose commented there are two documents attached to the meeting invitation to help decide what subcommittees members would like to join. The first document covers each of the subcommittees and their goals. The second document matches up the items in the Strategic Plan with what subcommittee it belongs to.

Ross Armstrong stated the strategic plan document maps out what each committee is likely to do and is helpful in determining where the members passions are. A priority in the first segment of the upcoming year will be to get local Task Forces set up in every community.

Esther Rodriguez-Brown commented Elynne Greene was unable to attend the meeting however she would like to volunteer to be in a subcommittee.

Ross Armstrong stated if members do not sign up for a committee, the members will be contacted to be placed on a committee where there may be a need.

1. **For Possible Action: Appoint Subcommittee Chairs**

Agenda item was tabled until the subcommittees are established.

Ross Armstrong stated if anyone is interested in chairing a subcommittee, to please send him an email.

1. **For Discussion: Provider Spotlight**

**Awaken- Melissa Holland**

Melissa Holland stated she asked Jen Robinson to come and present as she oversees all their youth services.

Jen Robinson stated Awaken provides youth and adult services. They have had the CSEC specific programming for almost four years. The ages range from 11 to 18 years old. A lot of the youth have missed out on normal childhood experiences therefore Awaken builds up the holidays throughout the year to recreate new memories for the youth. Different activities are held each week such as indoor rock climbing and yoga. An Education Center was created this year where the youth’s online education is hosted. Mentors and tutors come in every week, multiple times a week. The case managers are onsite. Group therapy is conducted once a week as well as individual therapy throughout the week. A Youth Advisory Board has been created and the first meeting was held this month. The youth’s ideas and experiences are heard.

Melissa Holland added the trainings the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFJC) has established for judges are reviewed. The youth are empowered to share about their personal experiences with the court and judicial system. The shifts made in education has given more access to trafficked youth than before. Awaken is seeing a lot of positive outcomes.

Ross Armstrong asked Melissa Holland to explain what NCJFJC is.

Melissa Holland replied it is a national organization. They train family court judges. Awaken is a subgrantee of their grant to have the Youth Advisory Council.

Ross Armstrong asked if there were any questions for Awaken.

Brigid Duffy asked how many children they are serving and what their capacity is.

Jen Robinson replied they have approximately 55-60 youth.

Melissa Holland added there are 6 in the Education Center.

Ross Armstrong asked if geographically, the children are from the Reno/Sparks area.

Melissa Holland replied there are a couple from Gardnerville and Carson City. They also have an active youth who lives past Yerington.

Ross Armstrong asked if they serve both youth and adults.

Melissa Holland replied yes. For the adults they have a drop-in center and a 1-2-year transitional house in case management.

Ross Armstrong asked if there is anything they need to keep in mind regarding the trends they see or approach that works.

Melissa Holland replied what she has witnessed is the law seems to be more merciful if the kid is 17 and once they turn 18 they can be bought with much less penalty. The damage gets worse the longer they are in it and it contradicts the data of harm being incurred.

**St. Jude’s Ranch- Jessica Halling**

Jessica Halling informed she is the Program Director at St. Jude’s Ranch for children in Boulder City. Their current campus is designated for therapeutic foster care. They take children whom are a higher level of care and it includes the CSEC population. They currently do not have a specific CSEC program. When a child is identified as CSEC and referred to St. Jude’s Ranch, they partner with the Clark County Department of Family Services and The Embracing Project to ensure they are receiving CSEC behavioral health services. St. Jude’s Ranch is currently working on building The Healing Center for child victims of sex trafficking. The facility will house up to 60 children, have an intake center, onsite school and behavioral health services. Additional information and the layout is available on the website at [stjudesranch.org](https://stjudesranch.org/) by clicking on Healing Center. In Las Vegas, there is a homeless youth program for ages 18-24 and a grant was received recently to work with The Rape Crisis Center to provide housing for adult victims of human trafficking. The Rape Crisis Center will provide the behavioral health services and counseling, and St. Jude’s Ranch will provide housing. Jessica Halling asked if there were any questions.

Ross Armstrong asked what behavioral or physical health services both programs see the most need for or standardized services for the individuals they serve.

Jessica Halling replied at therapy they do Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) or Basic Skills Training (BST). All the children qualify since they are in paid foster care through Medicaid. However, the issue is the longer the children are in therapeutic foster care, the less services they receive. When the children are weaned off the services, they see a decline in their behavior.

Melissa Holland replied at Awaken they do not use Medicaid. Everything is provided by the organization, donation or grant. At Awaken they create safe environments like the Education Center where they can have someone with the youth. They see benefits from the individualized education program. Fun is incredibly important to the youth and they try to be a program that is unique and different for the youth to want to come back. The activities they have for the youth, they have found to be important.

Shannon McCoy from Washoe County Human Services Agency stated they are grateful for Awaken for the service they provide to their youth. It has helped their youth stay stable and have success stories with youth they had been struggling with for years.

Eileen Hough requested to hear more from Jessica Halling regarding the Medicaid billing challenges and asked if she referenced women needing to leave the program before they are fully ready.

Jessica Halling replied she was talking and referring to the CSEC or just their therapeutic children in general. The problem they experience is the longer children have been in foster care, their Medicaid services begin to cut, and they do not receive as many hours per PAR period (every 90 days). Therefore, there is less therapy, Psychosocial Rehabilitation and BST hours the facility can bill for which causes a fiscal impact.

Eileen Hough asked if there is a solution or something the Coalition can work on or do.

 Jessica Halling replied the foster care agencies worked together with Medicaid, Clark County

Department of Family Services and DCFS on passing the state plan amendment for therapeutic foster care. However, it has not been fully implemented and they are unsure how it will impact CSEC youth specifically if they are not in therapeutic foster care.

 Ross Armstrong suggested having someone from Medicaid at the next meeting to explain the

 basics of Medicaid.

Jessica Halling asked if it would be possible to create something specifically for CSEC like the state plan amendment for therapeutic foster care.

Ross Armstrong stated it is a great point. There are opportunities going forward to expand the eligibility or change the services. However, the question is state funding and what the budget will look like.

Janice Wolf asked if there has been an analysis of the two programs, if they are both equally effective or if one is more effective than the other.

Melissa Holland replied she did not think an analysis has been completed. The commonality between St. Jude’s Ranch and Awaken is participants feel cared for.

Jessica Halling commented there is not a one size fits all solution for caring for victims of sex trafficking, adult or child.

Ross Armstrong stated the key commonality is it is a lifelong journey of healing. It will be important to keep it in mind as the Coalition engages with others. This agenda item will hopefully be recurring with different touchpoints to gain an understanding of what is available to help this population.

Amy Ayoub encouraged everyone to go online to the St. Jude’s Ranch website to view The Healing Center information.

1. **For Discussion: Saving Innocence Training**

Esther Rodriguez-Brown stated the online training they found is done in collaboration with CASA and the organization, Saving Innocence. Saving Innocence was founded by a survivor. The training is a great refresher, very well done, and interactive. The information provided is accurate. It provides a real picture and touches upon trauma bonding as well. It is very important to understand the trauma bonding piece. Kathryn Roose has purchased some licenses for anyone on the Coalition interested in taking it. Esther Rodriguez-Brown stated she recommends the training for anyone who may need a refresher or is not familiar with this population.

Kathryn Roose stated a pack of 10 licenses was purchased. If anyone on the Coalition is interested in taking the training, an email can be sent to her.

Ross Armstrong asked if the training is self-paced.

Esther Rodriguez-Brown replied it is self-paced and very interactive.

Ross Armstrong asked Kathryn Roose to provide her email.

Kathryn Roose stated her email is kroose@dcfs.nv.gov.

Amy Ayoub asked if the training is good to refer to an individual who wants to be an advocate.

Esther Rodriguez-Brown stated it is training for people who are not very familiar and would like to understand the dynamics.

1. **For Discussion: Legislative Update**

**Senate Bill 293 (2019 Legislative Session)**

Ross Armstrong informed the Legislative Session starts on February 1st. There was a presentation at the last meeting which included several recommendations. Senator Ratti intends to take those recommendations and create a bill draft request. The recommendations from the Interim Committee included establishing licensing, receiving centers, a process where law enforcement and child welfare could place a child at a receiving center with some legal due process, and DCFS being able to enact regulations to certify programs.

Esther Rodriguez-Brown added there was also specific recommendations for trainings in different tiers for different professionals who work in the community.

Ross Armstrong stated there are budgetary concerns from the child welfare agencies. The key legislative item for the Coalition to be aware of and prepared for is the CSEC bill.

Eboni Washington asked if it will be the role of the Coalition or the funding subcommittee to figure out the funding gap.

Ross Armstrong stated a meeting may be needed to talk about what the priority is and where the most funding can be obtained. The Coalition members may be consulted through the process as individuals, as the bill moves forward.

Brigid Duffy stated it will be difficult without funding. A lot of the cases she sees are children from other states.

Ross Armstrong stated there are elements of SB 293 which will be no cost items.

Jessica Halling commented for it to be maintained, solutions outside of the box will need to be found.

Esther Rodriguez-Brown stated there were long conversations with SB 293. There was discussion about the receiving centers partnering with agencies like St. Jude’s, Awaken and Embracing Project and have them run the centers. Domestic violence has the marriage licensing fee, maybe something similar can be created for CSEC. There was also discussion about the John School and bringing it back.

Nicole Reilly provided an update on the John School. She has been working with the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) to get it established. Hopefully after the session it will all be defined; the John School will be in place and penalties will be increased for the Johns to get a funding mechanism going to support these programs.

Ross Armstrong asked if there were any other questions about the upcoming Legislative Session.

Melissa Holland asked if it was possible for an optional donation to be added to a Raiders ticket purchase to go towards AB 311 and it be allocated throughout the state. Melissa Holland also mentioned two years ago, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) talked about doing a specific driver’s license to fund trafficking.

Nicole Reilly replied regarding the Raiders ticket donation, it is on their pending list to continue to try to make it happen. An email will be sent to the Deputy Attorney General at DMV to see if they would like to pursue a special license.

**Bill Draft Requests (2021 Legislative Session)**

Melissa Holland asked if there is any legislation coming up to help protect trafficking victims when they go to court to testify against their traffickers, especially now that it is online.

Nicole Reilly replied she is in conversation with the Legislation Liaison to see if there is any way around the Constitutional requirement.

Melissa Holland asked if the Sexual Assault Bill of Rights was expanded to also cover sex trafficking victims, if it would protect the victims.

Nicole Reilly replied they are trying to figure it out, if it is constitutionally required.

Ross Armstrong stated you cannot get around the confrontation clause, however the public nature of the hearing, there could be some wiggle room.

Brigid Duffy stated she agrees with Ross Armstrong, the confrontation clause is not going anywhere. Brigid Duffy thinks there could be a way, the right of an attorney to petition the court to have a closed hearing and not open to the public.

Nicole Reilly requested Brigid Duffy to send her an email with the information she stated.

Melissa Holland stated the concern she has doing it at that level is that it is a game of keep up with each prosecutor instead of a system wide change.

Brigid Duffy thinks there should be something within the statutes.

Nicole Reilly asked if DCFS would be able to bring that legislation forward or if it would need to be someone else.

Ross Armstrong replied the window for proposing is closed. It would need to be a legislator or a committee.

Melissa Holland commented she needs to know what is going to work.

Ross Armstrong stated the statute which would empower a judge to shut down the courtroom to the public is much more likely to go forward than something that would be a violation of the confrontation clause where you do not have the victim in front of the perpetrator.

Brigid Duffy stated it is a real issue.

Ross Armstrong stated the DCFS team will provide an email communication to the Coalition every 30 days during the session, if needed, to alert of any hearings and progress on the CSEC bills. If individuals wish to act, they can certainly do so. If there is a need for an emergency meeting during the legislative session, it can be assembled.

1. **Set next meeting date**

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

1. **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.