

MINUTES

Nevada Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force

July 8, 2025

9:00am

1. Call to Order – Salli Kerr, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM.

Members Present:

Name	Organization
Britt Young	Nevada PEP
Denise Tyre	Washoe County
Isaac Rowe	Deputy Attorney General
Jamie Wong	Division of Child and Family Services
Jane Saint	American Access Institute
Janice Wolf	Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
Lauren Pow	Children's Cabinet
Margaret Pickard	8 th Judicial District
Michelle Rodriguez	Family Court Master
Nicholas Madsen	LVMPD-CAC
Rachell Ekroos	Nevada Healthright
Rebecca Lopez	TBD
Salli Kerr, Chair	Western Regional CAC
Wendy Maddox	Humboldt County

Members Absent:

Name	Organization
Cheryl Cooley	Clark County
Christine Sullivan	Division of Child and Family Services
Laurie Jackson	Division of Child and Family Services
Massey Mayo	Children's Attorney
Wonswayla Mackey	Division of Child and Family Services

Guests:

Name	Organization
Chris Goodman	TBD
Cindy Milligan	Nevada Institute of Forensic Nursing
Lisa Bryant	TBD
Rachael Berg	Great Basin Child Advocacy Center

Staff Support:

Name	Organization
Dylan Nall	Division of Child and Family Services

2. For Information: Roll Call – Dylan Nall, DCFS

Dylan Nall called the roll. There was a quorum.

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

There was no comment.

4. For Information: Review of the CJA Task Force Goals – Dylan Nall, DCFS

Dylan Nall went over the goals quickly:

1. Provide child protection workers and stakeholders “front end” specialty, discipline specific and advanced training. Training should be prioritized, but not limited to, child protection model assessments, Indian Child Welfare (ICWA), sexual abuse, interpersonal violence, forensic interviewing, mandatory reporting, trauma informed practices, substance use, and co-occurring mental health disorders in training identified in collaboration with the Court Improvement Program.
2. Support the implementation of the Commercially Sexually Exploited Child (CSEC) Model Coordinated Response Protocol and provide training and support for the formation of Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT) and Task Forces.
3. Support the establishment of new Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) or other multidisciplinary team approaches and improve the capacity of existing CACs to provide a multidisciplinary response for victims of child sexual abuse and exploitation, witness to interpersonal violence, physical abuse, and victims with disabilities.
4. Fund technology requests to improve the investigation, assessment, and prosecution of child abuse and neglect through the use of the latest technology and to support the use of new and existing training technologies.
5. This task force will monitor policy regulation and/or legislation regarding child abuse and neglect trends and when appropriate collaborate with other parties and entities to support new and/or revised policy, regulation, and legislation.

There were no comments.

5. For Possible Action: Consideration and Approval of April 8, 2025 meeting minutes – Salli Kerr, Chair

Rachell Ekroos asked that corrections to the spelling of her name be made. Jane Saint noted that she is no longer with Boys Town, but with the American Access Institute. Rachell moved the minutes be approved as amended. Judge Margaret Pickard seconded. Approved unanimously.

6. For Possible Action: Consideration, Discussion, Approval of Future Meeting Dates – Salli Kerr, Chair

Dylan Nall has proposed the dates of January 6, 2026; April 7, 2026; July 7, 2026; and October 6, 2026. Judge Margaret Pickard suggested avoiding summer dates; do one at the beginning of summer and one the end of summer but avoid mid-summer. Dylan said we have to do it every quarter – perhaps she could shift July to August. Salli Kerr said that would mean that everything would shift back a little bit, but that means then the later October would have to move into December and then January becomes March, and so forth. Judge Pickard said to forget it, it was just a suggestion.

Jane Saint moved that the dates proposed above by Dylan Nall be approved. Rachell Ekroos seconded. Approved unanimously.

7. For Possible Action: Consideration Discussion, and Approval of Changing the October 2025 meeting date - Salli Kerr, Chair

Dylan Nall said that unfortunately she will be out of town on October 7, 2025. She was hoping we could do October 14th or anytime in October, whatever works for everyone's schedule. It would be the same time 9:00 AM. Jane Saint moved that we accept the changing of our October meeting to the 14th. Rachell Ekroos seconded. Approved unanimously.

8. For Information: Presentation and Discussion of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) – Dylan Nall, DCFS

Dylan Nall said every couple years our state has to submit a Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). It's a five-year plan that outlines the goals and objectives that the Division of Child and Family Services will carry out in administering programs to promote safety, permanency and well-being of children and families. It provides the DCFS with the opportunity to implement a system of coordinated, integrated, culturally relevant and family focused services, in keeping with the service principles reflected in federal law. A primary purpose of the of the plan is to facilitate DCFS integration of the federally funded programs that serve children and families along the child welfare continuum. We did submit this last August, 2024 The following programs are coordinated with our submission of our 2025 to 2029 CFSP:

The Stephanie Tubbs Jones, Child Welfare Services Program

Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program

Monthly Caseworker Visit Funds

Chafee Program and Training Voucher Program

Adoption Incentive Funds

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) as it relates to the activities funded by CAPTA in supporting achievement of the goals and objectives of the CFSP.

CFSP goals and their strategies:

Goal 1 is to enhance Nevada's capacity to address the needs of children, youth and families to prevent maltreatment. Strategy 1 is develop a Prevention Data Dashboard for planning primary and secondary prevention. Strategy 2 is to collaborate with the existing prevention program. Strategy 3 is to increase our Differential Response Services throughout Nevada. Strategy 4 is to enhance Nevada's Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) program.

Goal 2 is to enhance permanency services to address the needs of child youth and families. Strategy 1 is the implementation of our Extended Young Adult Support Services Program (EYASSP). Strategy 2 is to maximize the use of the Kinship Navigator program across Nevada and increase Nevada's access to and the use of KinGAP. Strategy 3 is to increase pre and post adoptive services throughout Nevada. Salli Kerr asked about EYASSP, if that is the program that increased the age to 24, extending services to a higher age for the children who have aged out? Dylan said she believed it is age 21, which was confirmed by Judge Pickard.

Goal 3 is to enhance relationships between child welfare agencies and court partners, resulting in improved court processes and increased timeliness to permanency. Strategy 1 is to collaborate with our Court Improvement Program (CIP).

Goal 4 is a Health Workforce. Strategy 1 is Nevada will develop a plan to improve the recruitment and retention of our child welfare workforce.

Goal 5 is Continuous Quality Improvement. Strategy 1 is to enhance existing CQI systems. Strategy 2 is to create a community of collaboration with agency, community, and system partners.

Salli Kerr asked who this document goes to. Dylan said we turn it into our federal partners. Salli then asked how often do they come back to these and say, what are your what are your objectives and needs and how often are they being reviewed? Dylan replied that every year we turn in our Annual Progress Services Review (APSR). We just turned ours in and in our APSR we outlined all of the strategies and goals and what we have done to complete them. She is more than happy to bring back what we have done in the next October meeting. In August our federal partner will come back and they will ask for clarifying questions. We do have then to answer their clarifying questions and then resubmit. Salli said it would be interesting for this group to see that and to follow that process a little bit and gain some understanding.

Jane Saint asked who our federal partner is. Dylan Nall said it is the Children's Bureau. Jane asked if, given recent cuts on the federal level, does she think in August you'll get questions back? Dylan replied that we submitted our CJA report in June and she received notification that they received it and maybe a week ago further word that they reviewed our application and there's no further questions. So, they were actually pretty fast this year. That is just the CJA report. We have the statewide assessment that is due in August. It is something like 186 pages, so they would have a lot of work.

9. For Information: Presentation and Discussion of the Citizen's Review Panel Recommendations Response from DCFS – Dylan Nall, DCFS

Dylan Nall said that our task force's 1st recommendation was that the Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services, continue to prioritize training for all child welfare staff and community partners 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 training recommendation includes, but is not limited to, further enhance family and interpersonal violence training to include screening and safety assessment; initial and advanced forensic interviewing training based on evidence-based protocols; continuous quality improvement of the child protection assessment and system of care models; mandatory reporting, awareness and responsibilities; evidence based and research informed medical forensic interventions; and integrating trauma- informed interventions and culturally awareness and responsiveness.

DCFSs accepts this recommendation. The division will take this information to the Nevada Child Welfare Training Academies and Workforce Initiative team (WIT). WIT is a statewide team that is comprised of training and continuous quality improvement (CQI) staff for further discussion regarding the family and interpersonal violence training to include screening and safety assessment, continuous quality improvement of child protection assessment and system of care models, as well as cultural awareness and responsiveness. The division encourages the Children's Justice Act Task Force to continue prioritizing funding for training aimed at improving the investigation, prosecution, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases in Nevada.

Recommendation #2 that DCFS support multidisciplinary team 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 to ensure child victims have access to the constellation of services offered within the Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs), and establish and maintain access to the CACs in conjunction with the Nevada CAC State Chapter as appropriate.

DCFS accepts this recommendation. The division encouraged CAC's and Nevada to apply for CJA funding. The notice of funding opportunity becomes available to the public to apply for funding in January of 2026. The division will continue to evaluate ways in which it can support efforts to translate best practices and support community specific needs to coordinate the multidisciplinary response to child maltreatment. Our administrator also wanted to add a thank you to the members of the task force and panels for your work on the initiatives that are so important to the well-being of children and families in Nevada.

Rachell Ekroos, Jane Saint, and Salli Kerr all expressed their thanks for the work done on these recommendations.

10. For Information: Updates to the Task Force on activities and spending of Children's Justice Act funds by current grantees – Salli Kerr, Chair

Dylan Nall reported on behalf of Clark County. Cheryl Cooley is currently taking our training that we sponsored, the Tri Tech child fatality training, it is in Clark County this week. It is a two day course, Monday and Tuesday for the first cohort, and then the second cohort is Wednesday and Thursday. Cheryl also reports that Child Abuse Month was a great success. In April, they hosted their first Community resource fair featuring approximately 10 organizations that set up booths to share information with children and families. This event also included a DJ, therapy dogs and a special visit from Miss Nevada, who happens to be the daughter of one of their forensic interviewers. They were proud to present the Angel award to their nonprofit partner, the Children's Advocacy Center Foundation in recognition of their great continued support. Looking ahead, their scheduled forensic interview and training will take place at the end of July. This marks their first in person training since COVID and they are excited to share that the class is already full.

There were no reports from the Nevada Institute of Forensic Nursing or Nye County.

Denise Tyre reported for Washoe County. They hosted their Child interview training at the end of May, utilizing the CJA funding to work with Corner House Forensic Interview Training Institute to create a kind of hybrid type training for our neglect investigators. A lot of forensic interviewing addresses only physical abuse and sexual abuse. But in Washoe County, those topics are addressed through the Child Advocacy Center. So, they were really looking for training to help their assessment caseworkers assess safety in domestic violence situations and substance abuse situations and other types of neglect circumstances and so throughout all of last year they worked with Corner House to develop a training that's more intensive than their mandated reporter training but less intensive than their five-day forensic interview training. So, they ended up with a 2 day training that all of the assessment staff, minus the people who are trained in forensic interviewing, attended that training. They had 45 participants and ended up getting really good feedback. So, when new workers are hired, they are having conversations about utilizing that same two day training every year through Corner House. They also added the training to their library so that it's accessible to anyone.

Jane Saint congratulated Denise Tyre on the report in the handouts that accompanied her account of Washoe's activities. She loved the graphs and charts. Denise said that was Oh, that was actually an interesting thing. After the training, they sent out just a three question survey to all the attendants and took them like less than a minute and was a really good way to kind of measure, was this a good use of funds in case they want to bring them back to do the same training. Jane Saint said that, as a member of the NOFO committee, it's nice to see the decisions they make are paying off. She then asked what barriers they encountered. Denise said there were two issues they uncovered that they were definitely considering when they ask for future funding. The first is they all of their assessment

staff at one training. If they want to train everyone who's completing investigations, then they have to request two separate sessions. They were very short staffed in having people actually respond to reports during the time of the training, and so that was one of the things that they learned. Then, there was a lot of interest expressed in the other programs in child welfare. They didn't have spare

room to include

investigators. They are having discussions to see if CJA can host one session and then have a matching contributor. That is being explored. They are not doing a lot of conferences because they want people to learn tangible skills that are going to be used in the field the next day after training is completed.

Denise Tyre added that for this year's funding for Washoe County, they are focusing on parenting. What

they learned through Child Welfare Academy, they are only training case workers how to use motivational interviewing, which is effective but not usually effective in the investigation stage for the initial questioning and trying to actually determine what happened and determining safety. So, they have asked for training around investigating to enhance the motivational interviewing that's already happening. They are in the process of getting bids from a couple of different companies. They found a company that essentially tailors to law enforcement but has agreed to create and adapt curriculum to child welfare individuals and also child welfare circumstances.

11. For Information: Task Force Member Announcements Regarding Their Agencies – Salli Kerr, Chair

Salli Kerr asked if we could get, particularly with new folks on the on the task force, but even some who have been here a while, could we get a makeup of the task force, with affiliations and when the terms and what the representative groups are. Dylan Nall said she will attach the bylaws in our next meeting attachments and then will put up all of our mandatory categories then do a presentation on that. Dylan added that we may have to vote for some people to leave because they have not been a participant in a while, and so that's part of our law. She will probably have that on our next agenda.

Jane Saint said the state CASA organization does have a new executive director, Rebecca Garcia, or a name like that. She will get that information to Dylan. Melanie McCormick has been representing all the CASA programs.

12. 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

There were no comments.

13. Adjournment – Salli Kerr, Chair

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 AM.