

PUBLIC SAFETY COORDINATING COUNCIL

MINUTES

TUESDAY,
April 24, 2018

11:31

JUSTICE BUILDING -
JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM, 2ND FLOOR

MEETING CALLED BY	Bob Kleker
ATTENDEES	Lee Ayers, Dave Carter, Joe Charter, Marie Curren, Doug Engle, Amber Freitas, Bill Froehlich, Eric Guyer, Bob Kleker, Lee Tyler, Jennifer Lind, Lorenzo Mejia, Jennifer Mylenek, Lisa O'Connor, Tammy Pitzen, Diane Sandler, Nate Sickler, Randy Sparacino, Bob Strossers

- Bob Kleker opened the meeting at 11:31
- Opening Remarks: Bob Kleker welcomed everyone to the April PSCC meeting.

Agenda Topics

MINUTE ADOPTION – MARCH

BOB KLEKER, CHAIR

DISCUSSION	
No suggested revisions were identified for the March minutes, Randy Sparacino provided a motion to adopt, seconded by Eric Guyer. A vote was requested, all were in favor, and none were opposed. The March minutes were officially adopted.	

CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH- SYSTEM RESPONSES TO CHILD ABUSE

DISCUSSION	
<i>Diane Sandler – Medford Police Department (MPD)</i>	
<p>Diane has been working with the MPD for almost 20 years, with 15 of those years on child maltreatment cases which encompasses physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Diane stated, “The way that we have done business has changed over the years because the department has learned a lot about how to interview kids, how to talk to kids, and what best case practices are.” Diane stated that her presentation is going to be about how cases come into MPD, the investigation and what it looks like, and finish with Karly’s Law. Diane said, “There is still a lot of misunderstanding, even in law enforcement, about how these cases get handled and what the law states needs to be done.”</p> <p>Cases come into MPD in a wide variety of ways. Diane said, “Cell phones have helped increase people’s ability to contact us.” The calls are usually by a loved one who reports my child or niece/nephew has just disclosed something bad has happened to them and they are being abused by someone. An investigation starts based off the phone call. Calls typically come in at patrol level, they respond and get basic information, they are not supposed to interview kids. Diane stated, “We know, through best case practices, that the best way to talk to kids is different than the way most cops talk to people.” Cases also come in from community partners; DHS, hospital and schools. Diane explained that MPD has to cross-report all of their cases to DHS child welfare, and DHS child welfare has to cross-report all of their cases with law enforcement. Diane said she reads a couple of hundred “307” reports, in the course of her work week. She said, “It might seem a little redundant since child welfare looks at a case and then she will also look at it, but child welfare may close a case because it does not fit their particular criteria, however, it may fit law enforcement’s.” Diane gave the example of a 14 year old girl reporting she was raped by her boyfriend. She said it is not necessarily a family issue that child welfare will be able to help with, but it could potentially be a crime. She said if she feels a “307” needs to be further investigated she will take it to her boss and they will assign it to one of the detectives that are assigned full time for child abuse cases. With the enactment of Karly’s Law more cases are being reported from the hospital. Mandatory reporters in the state have to report one of two ways: law enforcement or child welfare. A lot of times it is easier for a mandatory reporter to call child welfare because it allows them the option to remain anonymous.</p> <p>The case of <i>Camreta v. Greene</i> (2011) changed the way that law enforcement spoke to kids. At the time, Jackson County required detectives get an order from a judge before talking to children, at school without their parent’s knowledge. Diane said, “This complicated the job because, in the last 15 years on the job, she has had only one case where a child disclosed in their home.” She explained a child is unlikely to report what has happened to them, if the perpetrator is in the next room. The child may be worried about what is going to happen once the officer leaves or if the officer is going to tell the parents what they disclosed. In a majority of cases the detectives talk to kids at school. Diane explained, if a child discloses that they have been abused at home, she does not want to have to call a parent and ask for permission to talk to their child.</p> <p>Best case practices also recommend that detectives do not wear side arms when interviewing children. The way MPD has done business has changed over the years, when a report is made the case will be assigned to a detective. If the case does not begin at the hospital it will typically begin at Children’s Advocacy Center, and this is where a detective will conduct a forensic interview. The forensic interview is a legally defensible interview. When a detective first sits down with a child they let them know they are being digitally recorded (audio and visual) and they go over some guidelines. These guidelines were taught to the detectives in training from the Oregon Child Interviewer Training. The goal of an interview is to get the child to conduct a running narrative; what this entails is getting the child to tell the detective as much they can from the beginning to the end, by using open-ended questions. This allows the child to speak freely and provide the information to the detective, instead of a detective trying to dig it</p>	

out of the child. Diane reported that these forensic interviews have worked well, and in the last 15 years, she has only had to go to trial four times. After the interview is conducted there are other steps detectives may have to take: interview siblings, write search warrants, and talk to the suspect.

Karly's Law (2001) reformed child abuse investigation standards and procedures in the state of Oregon. There are three major components to Karly's Law: you have to immediately photograph a child's injuries you think are suspicious in nature, the county has to provide a designated medical professional, and the child has to receive a medical exam within 48 hours.

Tammy Pitzen – Children's Advocacy Center of Jackson County (CAC)

The CAC started as a taskforce with the vision of communities where children are safe, families are strong, and child victims become children again. The mission statement is, "To meet the needs of children and families in our community by providing a community-based, child-focused center that facilitates a compassionate, multidisciplinary approach to the prevention, treatment, identification, investigation, and prosecution of child abuse." CAC facilitates a multidisciplinary approach to child abuse investigations and interventions. As part of that process, when law enforcement or DHS bring children to the center for services, the children's cases get reviewed once a week by the multidisciplinary team. The multidisciplinary team is made up of law enforcement, the district attorney office, mental health and medical providers, school district representatives, CASA, and a host of other agencies. The team is there to insure the child's best interests and needs are in the forefront of the case. Tammy stated, "At the CAC, we adhere to the "Child First" philosophy." Simply put, child's safety comes before all else. When CAC are making decisions about what needs to be done the child's safety is at the heart of those decisions. There are more than 850 centers across the country, and 22 in the state of Oregon. The Medford CAC is one of the first charter members that has been accredited through the National Children's Alliance. The accreditation standards that have been set forth by the Alliance are centered on evidence-based best practices that are accepted and nationally recognized. The CAC model minimizes the times a child needs to be interviewed about their abuse and trauma. The forensic interview guidelines/process minimize the contamination of the information and maximize the amount of information gathered.

Tammy stated, "Child Abuse is a community problem that deserves a community response." The CAC collaborate with MDT, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, DA's Office, DHS, Medford PD, Ashland PD, Central Point PD, Medford School District, CCO's, Jackson County Mental Health, CASA, Jackson County Community Corrections (Juvenile Probation), Jackson County Health Dept., Oregon State Police. They are community partners with Community Works, The Family Nurturing Center, Medford Radiology, Rogue Regional Medical Center, Phoenix PD, Talent PD, Eagle Point PD, and many community organizations that partner with the prevention program "Protect Our Children".

CAC provides forensic interviews, medical evaluation, treatment and diagnosis for child abuse, therapy assessments/services, family support and advocacy, prevention trainings, and outreach. Interventions used at the CAC are evidenced based, nationally defined as best practices and trauma informed. Some services are bi lingual and those that aren't are provided interpreters. Children are referred to forensic services through law enforcement or DHS Child Welfare. CAC does not have the authority to investigate child abuse on their own. Sometimes the services provided lead to forensic evidence and CAC does not have the authority to investigate, that requires those with the authority to conduct investigations.

The trends show numbers have steadily increased since 2014. The number of unduplicated children in 2014: 413, 2015: 575, 2016: 696, 2017: 742, and projected number for 2018: 862.

Tammy reported on the collaborative community effort to provide 24 hour medical response for child sexual abuse victims. She said, "This is a new exciting adventure with Rogue Regional Medical Center, the CAC, and some very motivated nurses." She also reported the Reinvention of CAC's prevention program, "Protect Our Children", to include a menu of prevention classes as part of their offerings, in addition to the Stewards of Children. She said they are also expanding their staff to include two more bi-lingual professionals.

Jennifer Mylenek – Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)

CASA of Jackson County is accredited by and a member of the National CASA Association and a member of the Oregon CASA Network. CASA is a state mandated by ORS 419B.112 which established that a CASA shall be appointed for every child subject of a petition filed under 419B. CASA was started by a juvenile dependency judge in Seattle in 1977. Jennifer said, "He conceptualized this program of bringing in volunteers who had no attachment to anyone else in the case, they were a party to the case, so they had access to all of the confidential information they would need in order to make an assessment, and whom would write a report to the judge about what was really going on." The report would be in narrative style, unlike the "307" which is just a series of boxes and you cannot quite get the whole story. There are now 950 programs throughout the United States and in every county in the state of Oregon. In 1990, it started as a pilot program under Jackson County HHS, in 2003 it became a non-profit, and in 2012 they became an umbrella to Josephine County CASA.

In order to become a CASA you have to be a minimum of 21 years old (there is no maximum), agree to a two year commitment, pass a comprehensive screening and interview process, complete 40 hours of training, and complete 12 hours a year of in-service training to remain appointed by the court. CASAs advocate for children from birth to 21 years of age if they are developmentally disabled. In 2017 CASAs in Jackson County gave 20,566 hours to 648 children, equaling \$496,463 worth of time. However, there were 463 children that remained on the wait list.

When a child is removed from their home, a court hearing, which is called a shelter, is held within 48 hours. The shelter hearing is held to determine whether the child will have a case opened. CASA staff and volunteers attend shelter hearings five days a week in Jackson County. Once CASA gets the information from the case, child welfare sends the petitions, and if a CASA is assigned to the case, the discovery will also be sent. The CASA will begin their journey of investigation by reading all of the

materials, talking to the children, possibly meeting with the parent(s), assessing the child needs, interviewing doctors, counselors, teachers, and relatives, etc., referring them to services if and when necessary, and finally prepare a court report with recommendation for the judge. The CASA attends all court hearings, citizen review board hearings, child welfare meetings, and in some cases school meetings. They will also continue to visit the child and develop trusting relationship.

Jennifer said, "The CAC and CASA have two concentric circles that overlap but yet we do have different clients." She also stated, "Child welfare removes a child, which is how we get appointed, if both care givers are not able to provide safety for that child." Jennifer reported some statistics, "2016 was our spike year with 518 new children in care (+20%) compared to 2015: 432 and 2017: 426, in 2018 CASA are trending upward again." She said, "Child welfare is trying not to open cases, they are bringing services in the home to keep children safely at home whenever possible, and they are trying to close cases as quickly as possible."

Approximately 850 children entered under the protection of Child Welfare in Jackson County in 2017. Child welfare and the court cannot intensively monitor each child and their needs. Due to the strain of high caseloads CASA has become very valuable. Jennifer reported, "Children with CASAs in Jackson County experienced 0% re-abuse over the last two years in Jackson County." When a child gets a CASA assigned they are a stable and permanent person in their life, who can speak for them, and who truly knows them.

How CASAs make a difference?

- Meet the child in their homes, face to face, one on one regularly—putting eyes on children's safety
- Write reports for the Judge and Citizen's Review Board
- Participate in court hearings and child welfare meetings
- Educational surrogates—improving educational outcomes
- Communicate between all parties and service providers—they are generally the only entity that has knowledge of full situation and efforts to ensure child's case is on track
- Monitor court ordered child/parent visitations
- Monitor court ordered case plans, keeping track of progress, and reporting findings to court
- Are the one, unpaid, and unchanging mentor and champion for the child's best interests

Jennifer said, "Based on national standards, every paid Case Supervisor is able to manage 30 CASAs, who oversees 90 to 120 child cases annually. In Jackson County there are 10 staff, 183 CASAs, 11 board members, 3-5 office volunteers who serve 650+ children. The cost to support one child for a year is \$950 (\$300 below state average). Funding is challenging with only 8% coming from the state, 3% federal, and 6% local government therefore most of our funding comes from grants, community donations, and events."

Mentoring Youth To Independence Mentoring (MYTI) is a program that provides additional mentorship to older youth 12 and up in foster care. These youth probably aren't going to be adopted. These children do not have as many court hearings but they have many other needs. They are mentored one-on-one instead of being put into a group. This allows individual learning instead of learning the same thing. They are mentored by their CASA to determine goals and achieve them. CASAs also mentor youth about college, workforce planning, housing, banking, and much more. Jennifer said, "Family Finding and Connections (FCC) program is possible through contracts with child welfare." She said, "There are four people, between both counties, stationed inside child welfare. The FCC staff research and mine data and files to locate family members for children, residing in out of home care."

CASAs community partners include: child welfare, courts, foster parents, Citizen's Review Board, Children's Advocacy Center, United Way, Family Nurturing Center, Jackson County Mental Health, schools, hospitals, Mattress Firm, Addictions Recovery, Kairos, Family Solutions, Maslow Project, Hearts with a Mission, Kids Unlimited, and Rogue Retreat.

Joe Charter asked for more information about the Citizen's Review Board, how it functions, and if there is a typical background characteristic for a CASA volunteer.

Jennifer replied, "The Citizen's Review Board is also a board of volunteers and they are reviewing the ASFA timeline that the court and child welfare need to be in compliance with, by how a case is progressing along a timeline, and if it is going to be wrapped up in a timely matter; which is a total of 14 months. In regards to a CASA volunteer, they have to have an interest in children, care about their advocacy, and bringing their voice to the courtroom." She further stated, "You also have to be able to make a serious two year commitment because the last thing we want to do is appoint a CASA to a child who has suffered loss after loss." Jennifer said, "Most of our CASAs stay an average of four years, one has been there for 28 years and CASAs are retired social workers, teachers, housewives, and self-employed types."

Lisa O'Connor – Family Nurturing Center (FNC)

Family Nurturing Center (FNC) is part of a statewide initiative called the Relief Nursery which started in Eugene. In 1976, child abuse and neglect was a problem in Lane County. Children and families didn't have many services available to them until after a child had been victimized. The primary response to abuse and neglect was removing children and placing them in foster care. In response to this, a group of local community leaders took a stand and created the Relief Nursery. The model was able to be scalable and replicable and there are 30 Relief Nurseries across the state.

Lisa reported, "We are located in Jackson and Josephine County and serve children 0-5 and their parents or care givers who have multiple risk factors linked to child abuse and neglect." She said, "We also serve more than 3,000 children per year and their families in RN services." Families have an average of 16 "risk factors" based on 47 item, but only need 5 risk factors to

enter the FNC. Lisa said, "Currently, the families that we are serving, at least 33% have a parent that is incarcerated or under supervision with the criminal justice system, 65% self-report that they suffer from food insecurity, 36% of the caregivers are homeless/no permanent home, 49% are unable to provide adequate family supplies /child supplies (clothing, diapers, and material goods) and we gave out 12,000 diapers last year." She went on to report, "8% have no telephone or no access to a reliable telephone, 31% do not have access to reliable transportation, 81% are under and/or unemployed, at least 57% self-report having a mental illness in the household, 60% are suffering from some form of substance abuse disorder whether they are in treatment or not in treatment, and 30% do not have any other support system other than the Relief Nursery."

Lisa said, "The goal of the Relief Nursery is to prevent children from entering foster care or reduce the amount of time they are spending in foster care." FNC also tries to get children ready for school by focusing on their social and emotional development. They often take the children that no one else will take. The Relief Nursery is a community-based organization that seek to prevent the cycle of child abuse and neglect through early intervention programs that focus on developing successful and resilient children, strengthening family skills of parents/care givers, and preserving families. Services are offered within a comprehensive and integrated early childhood and family support system designed to appropriately meet the needs of the individual families with children who have been abused or are at risk of child abuse and neglect. They include therapeutic early childhood education programs, home visitation, and parent education and support. The Relief Nursery services are voluntary, strength-based, culturally appropriate, and designed to achieve appropriate early-childhood benchmarks and healthy family functioning. The services that are offered are:

- "Outreach" – first contact with families includes intake & assessment. Families who stay in this program receive home visits, respite child care, "basic needs" support and crisis intervention. Home visiting schedule varies (weekly, monthly or on-demand). Other names used – Home-Based services and Safety Net services
- "Therapeutic Early Childhood Program" (TECP) 300 contact hours annually. EC classes twice weekly for 3 hours with high staffing ratio and small group size. Monthly home visiting focused on whole family and parenting classes and positive family socialization. Support services – transportation, material support and referrals for resources.
- Additional Services – varies by Relief Nursery. The Family Nurturing Center also provides: mental health (children and/or parents), parent education & support groups, LIFE, ISRS, SPRF, Farm and Food, Preschool Promise.

Lisa reported, "There is a huge disparity in early childhood vocabulary so that is where early learning comes in." She explained, "Children who live in poverty hear 30 million words on average less than a middle class or upper income child and because of this FNC works a lot on literacy and trying to help families to develop the habit of reading." Lisa said, "The child abuse epidemic has continued to rise and has gone up 10% since 2011 and 46% of child abuse cases are for children under the age of six." She explained that the state asked FNC if they would be willing to start a Parent Mentor program because Jackson County has more children entering into foster care and aging out of foster care than anywhere else in the state. She reported, "As a result of our Parent Mentor program we have reunified 100 children with their families and saving the state 2.9 million dollars."

The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) study was the foundation of Relief Nursery. Lisa said, "This is the largest public health crisis of our time." She also provided some self-reported statistics on the historical aspect of the families at FNC; 7% do not have a HS diploma or GED, 3% are results of a teen parent, 14% reported at least one of the adults that were raising them was an alcoholic or drug addict, and 10% had open child welfare cases for themselves. Lisa said, "It really is a cyclical problem that needs to be addressed."

Lisa said, "FNC works really hard to address all of the social determinants of health (economic stability, neighborhood and physical environment, education, food, community and social context, and health care system) these are the things that we are working on trying to do goal setting with our families." FNC meets with the families, asks them what their goals are, and tries to encourage some other goals. She said, "FNC believes in a holistic approach because they are interfacing with the court system, the child welfare system, and the health system." She stated, "The holistic approach is the only way to go for us because care managers are able to understand the whole person." We are trying to help build resilience in both children and families. FNC tries to work with families for 18 months that are dealing with addiction, since it is known that there is a chemical brain change at six months and another change at 18 months. The FNC mission statement is strengthen families so that children can develop fully in their parents care. Lisa said, "For us that means that we do not want our children to be removed and/or to have a CASA."

The services offered at the FNC include: therapeutic early childhood classes, home visitation, mental health, parent mentor LIFE, family stabilization, farm and food, parenting education, navigator housing support programs, therapeutic respite care, kindergarten readiness programs, monthly family fun events, and referrals to other agencies. FNC is in Jackson County and Josephine County and just opened a new center in Phoenix. About 50% of FNC's income comes from the state and the other half is mostly contributed income.

Lisa said, "We strengthen families by increasing five protective factors: parental resilience, social connections, knowledge or parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and social and emotional competence of children. We want to look at families through a different lens and focus on what is strong and not what is wrong. FNC's goal is that goal that families will be successful and be able to be self-reliant and we work to get them off of entitlements."

ANNOUNCEMENTS/OTHER BUSINESS

BOB KLEKER, CHAIR

DISCUSSION

There were no announcements.

Next Scheduled PSCC Meeting: May 22, 2018

Meeting Adjourned: 1:01pm