



Child Forensic Interview Advisory Committee

August 20, 2020, 10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

Microsoft Teams

Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Members Present:	Staff Present:
Jay Howell - Chair	Erica Puckett, DOH
Alan Abramowitz – Co-Chair	Nicole Jordan, DOH
Erick Quevedo	Marceller Hines, DOH
Stacy Bromfield	
Candice Brower	
Judge Daniel P. Dawson	
Carol Lilly, M.D.	
Lorena M. Vollrath-Bueno	
Angela Griffin	
Jackie Sandefer-Gonsen	
Alison Cowell	
Theresa E. Simak	
Maureen Honan	
Kelly A. Swartz	
Francine Donnorummo	
Valerie Stanley	
Members Absent:	Guest(s) Present:
Maria Sanin	Sally Beckett
Valerie Stanley	Karen Ryan, TPD
Terrance Watts	Sgt. Sonya Bush, TPD
Bruce J. McIntosh, M.D.	Sgt. Martinez, PBSO
Jamny Coronado	

Welcome

- Chair, Jay Howell welcomed members and guests.

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes:

- Review of April 1, 2020 meeting minutes attached to meeting invite:

- Dr. Carol Lilly clarified medical exams were happening for COVID-positive or COVID-exposed youth, but had to occur with appropriate PPE or at the ER. No refusal of COVID-Positive or Exposed persons.
- Theresa Simak identified that she should be added as an attendee to the April 1, 2020 meeting.
- Dr. Lilly moved to approve minutes with revisions.
- Members voted to approve with revisions, April 1, 2020 meeting minutes.
- Review of July, 23, 2020 CFIAC Planning Meeting Minutes:
 - Erick Quevedo move to approve
 - Alan Abramowitz, second motion
 - All members vote in agreement to approve July 23, 2020 meeting minutes as is.
- Review of utilizing Microsoft teams
 - Members in favor of this format

Court Orders Impacting Child Forensic Interviewing Subcommittee Report:

- Judge Dawson - review of statute protocol in subcommittee for use of animals in court proceedings. Alan may be able to speak more to this, but there are some changes that likely need to be made. I have been dealing with this in the court room for 20 years and I don't think it has been looked at well.
 - We need to decide as a committee - do we want to tackle these changes? If that is too large or too broad for a DOH committee, I understand that as well. When this statute was created, I think it was as good as it could have been at the time. However, I think a lot of assumptions were made for process and protocols. I have been using dogs in court rooms for a long time and it has been good. But our presenters have opened my eyes to things I had not considered about how the handling of dogs in the court room should be considered.
- Alan - in recommendation 7 - there is a proposed model order - but right now we have pulled out every administrative order regarding therapy or facility dogs.
 - 5 circuits have administrative orders. A model order may encourage other areas to use or expand their administrative order. We know that it is happening without an order. 13 circuits use. 2, 5, 13, 20 have administrative orders.
 - Use of language: many are using facility and therapy dog interchangeably which is inaccurate. When we changed the law to add facility dogs, that was done because facility dogs were not in the statute. Seminole county has the training facility for the country for facility dogs. Those dogs you can do a jury trial without awareness of the dog's presence.
 - Service dog, was changed because disability advocates wanted that language changed to remove concerns that a judge could determine whether a person with disabilities could be accompanied by their service dog - they are not the same.
 - Facility dogs and therapy dogs are not the same. Trial, jury trial, etc, require different responses. One case in Florida, the dog was present for the judge seemed to be guarding the judge. Around the country, every state has different statutes. Ours is broad. Some have laws about when you can use them, others don't. Florida's is pretty broad and liberal with use of dogs in the court rooms. Dogs are being used all around the state.
 - Some circuits identify which dogs can be used. The administrative order sets the stage, but you still have to file a motion and the judge still has to allow the use of the dog.
 - Liability insurance for coverage - in Tallahassee the coverage is 3-5 million dollars. They will not be insured unless they have been trained and deemed safe.
 - We wanted to be clear that dependency court is mentioned in the order because that is primarily where the dogs are being used.
 - Need to provide guidance to those who want to allow a therapy or facility animal.

- Judge Dawson - I feel like this administrative order is as good as it is going to get for Florida right now. But my take away from the presentations in the subcommittee is that facility dogs are trained to be used in facilities. While a therapy dog has other training/skills.
 - Another type of dog training is Crisis Canine - it is the most widely trained to be used in multiple settings and scenarios.
 - I think that Crisis Canine is the best option but might not be available/appropriate for Florida right now.
- Candice Brower - I will forward this to the juvenile rules committee and see if there are any comments or suggestions.
- Jay - once the submissions are made we will have a product to eventually send to administrative judges.
- Judge Dawson - agreed that this is the path, but no need to rush it as the chief judges are very busy with other issues right now. We will also to work with them on the interview order. I would like to get feedback, once we agree this is the model order, do we want to put it in a report or give a presentation at their meeting to make the pitch for both administrative order models
- Kelly Swartz - Who is the court liaison referred to? Roman Numeral 2 in the order - should contact "insert court liaison." Could be criminal, family, or dependency court.
- Judge Dawson - I think it was worded that way to give the individual courts the opportunity to identify who can serve in that capacity. Here by is spelled wrong.
- Alan - updated spelling error.
- Alan - when the group meets, I think it would be good to create a letter to introduce why they are receiving the model orders at the same time. I like the idea of getting on the chief judge meetings.
- Judge Dawson - at some point we need to address the need for training because I have learned a lot and then they can make a more informed decision about what to support or allow. This committee should at least recommend or facilitate an educational component.

- Lorena Bueno included a draft order
- Judge Dawson provided overview of current order and need for new guidance.
 - I question why the use of 16-years-of-age is a consideration for some circuits for interview protocols. We'll make sure that everyone receives it and we will go over it at the next subcommittee meeting. If it is approved by the full committee, we can provide it to the chief judges.
 - I don't think that new chief judges are renewing all of their admin orders when they come in. I think this is one that they should.
- Lorena - I think this order is highly important to address.
- Discussion regarding why 16 versus 18 is identified.
- Admin order draft was electronically shared with committee members.

Child Forensic Interview Certification & Designation Subcommittee Report:

- Erick Quevedo - Task Force report referencing certification for law enforcement expanded to include all persons conducting FI.
- Identified a number of successful models:
 - Victim Services Practitioner/VOCA
 - 40-hour training
 - Valid for 3 years
 - 24 hours training to renew every 3 years
 - Designation is not certification
 - Modeled after national NOVA training
 - NACCFI
 - Current work experience (how many interviews completed)
 - Specialized evidence based FI training

- Evidence of good moral and ethical conduct
 - Continued learning & skill building
 - 4 distinct credentials: registered, certified, advanced, and diplomate
 - Each category requires specific training, exam, number of interviews, practicum
- Shared articles and documents regarding APSAC position paper 2010
 - NCAC in 2015 put out their position on credentialing - until the field identifies what constitutes FI best practices and how to, it is premature to support credentialing.
 - Review or article: Setting The Course - the case for credentialing of FI 2010
 - Question - Will credentialing hurt those interviewers who cannot meet the standards?
 - Answer - Florida is already meeting these standards with the basic FI training and ongoing training.
 - Dr. Lilly - when are they designated trainers?
 - Erick - they have a designated training process - they do not have a tier level for trainers.
 - Jackie - confirmed.
 - Erick - Certification and Licensure has much higher standards and is more involved. We want to start with a more generalized designation. Completion of DOH FI training, ongoing training needs, advanced training component, 8 hours of annual training for DOH CPTs - no stipulation of that training having a FI component. We would want this designation to be available to multiple professionals.
 - Reviewing applications twice annually to reduce the workload given to the workgroup.
 - Jackie stated the QA Workgroup did not meet last month, so this has not been addressed with them.
 - Backlog of training needs - due to COVID-19 response. Trying to find out the origins of VOCA designation.
 - Brandy Macalouso stated that their program is modeled after NOVA - very similar to VOCA designation.
 - We talked about creating a survey to hear from interviewers around the state. Topics include:
 - Certification
 - Interest
 - Benefit/drawbacks
 - Dr. Lilly - if we decrease application reviews, would we need to create a triage scheme based on need?
 - Erick - not sure if we know how the change will impact the review.
 - Jackie - we will need more time to assess the need.
 - Erick - potential next steps:
 - Survey distribution & analysis
 - Establish minimum standards for designation (training, examination, experience, peer review)
 - Identify structure of designation
 - Determine monitoring/oversight program
 - There are 3 certified “?” forensic interviewers in the state. Not sure what contributes to that low number.

Break for lunch - 30 minutes

Law Enforcement Subcommittee Report:

- Francine Donnorummo - Much of our work is overlapping with the certification & designation committee. As we learn more about the effects of trauma and stress on the brain. When people experience the criminal justice system, we have to take this into account. Multiple interviews can be re-traumatizing and can adversely affect their memory. Limiting the number of interviews is helpful.
- Must consider law enforcement officer’s experience. They are frequently the first to come into contact with children. Often abusers are present as well, so safety and building a trusting relationship can start with that first encounter.
- What is the best approach for our first responders (specifically first responding officers/ road officers)?
 - The situation can be dangerous and chaotic.
- There are some protocols in place, but the subcommittee could come up with the protocol for the minimal facts interview, provide them guidance to get the minimal facts.

- Always take the victim out of ear/eye shot of others to give them feeling of safety.
- For more experienced detectives: should we be recommending that at least some should be fully trained in forensic interviewing? There are times that a detective will have to conduct an interview of a child or child witness. Maybe a designated detective or more within the unit. What training would we recommend for those detectives?
- DOH has a 40-hour top notch certification program for training FI. Would we recommend that for experienced detectives?
- Allison Cowell - would we recommend that law enforcement complete an FI as a last resort or only when a neutral party is not available?
- Francine - it would be recommended when a child cannot be seen by a CPT or another neutral FI. We would not want them to replace the CPT or CAC.
- Dr. Lilly - what are the circumstances when a child cannot be seen?
- Francine - it is not frequent, they are limited, but when they happen, we need to have qualified people available. There are times when a detective is directed to interview a child. I have been a prosecutor for 17-18 years. Some of the law enforcement interviews are very well done. Sometimes a child or family have refused to go to the CAC. It isn't often, but it does happen.

Minimal Facts Interview Training for Professionals

- Sally Beckett - Child safety is the first priority.
 - Gathering minimal facts to help determine a child's current safety risk.
 - Ensuring that communication with a child victim is not blaming, traumatizing, suggestive or otherwise negatively impacting the child or the integrity of a FI.
- Law Enforcement would be a good candidate for this training.
- Learning objectives:
 - Specifics - training can be modified to the audience
 - Research based training
 - 2-hour training
 - Facilitated by experienced Forensic Interviewers
- Training includes:
 - Dynamics and reactions
 - Linguistics and development (appropriate developmentally for the child)
 - Setting expectations, responsibilities
 - Rapport, information gathering, closure
 - Practicum
- Minimal Facts service to also inform other professionals (LEO) of why and how CPT and Forensic Interviewers do what they do.
- Jay - what do you think about creating a model or outline of this training to be made available to CPT teams?
- Sally - Yes, I can provide that outline
- Dr. Lilly - anyone using the I-TOLD cards?
- Sally - not yet.
- Dr. Lilly - I have some concerns that some kids are screened out that should actually be interviewed. They are a set of standardized questions asked to children. Not sure how developmentally appropriate they are. All CPIs are trained to use these. Not aware of any literature or other support for I TOLD.
- Jackie - we know that many times children do not disclose the first time they are asked. It takes a lot to help a child get comfortable. Varying degrees of first responders regarding their comfort in talking about abuse. Providing training on this specifically could help tremendously.
- Erick Quevedo - suggests providing this training as a webinar training for consistency and increased access.
- Sally - I like engaging with people in person or virtually at a minimum.
- Francine Donnorumo suggests that school resource officers could benefit.
- Sally - agreed.

- Alan Abramowitz - thank you for providing this training to GAL. I'd like to have it available on the "I am for the Child Academy" website.
- Jay - how widespread is the use of this training by the teams?
- Jackie - Ft Myers & WPB provides this training to new CPIs but other places are not utilizing it as much. There is a need for consistency across the state.
- Jay - I feel like this is something we need to make more available and made a priority.
- Francine - this information is made available at the academy - specialized training to all new law enforcement officers.
- Jackie - many people ask me about the availability of this training. I have tried providing an outline for this training to CPTs. I think it would be well received.
- Sally - it would be best to be more consistent.
- Judge Dawson - many judges talk to children ahead of criminal trials and in other scenarios and they could benefit from this as well. They don't seem to have other training specific to this issue.
- Some judges feedback on the trauma informed training has been very mixed.
- Sally - need a greater understanding of the impact of trauma
- Alan - statute - effective July 1st. Standards shared
 - No time frame indicated to be implemented.
- Valerie Stanely - CPT in Jax provides community trainings
- Sally - they are doing a great job. The more we can do this, the better it will be.
- Jay - we need to keep working on this training development through the subcommittee, make materials available.

Law Enforcement Perspective on Training: Sgt Bush & Karen Ryan, Tallahassee Police Department

- Sgt. Bush – In 2007 I started SVU we investigated child abuse, child sex abuse. We have a wonderful CPT in Tallahassee, but we ran into needs to interview adults (developmental delay) We started looking for our own training opportunities. Huntsville training was expensive and inaccessible. We did get three investigators trained in FI and immediately saw the value, not just for child abuse cases. One incident, 8-year-old child witness to murder. Not a CPT/DCF case. We were able to do the interview. Jackie began reserving a spot for 2 investigators in training in Tallahassee. This has been a huge benefit.
- We only conduct the interview in special circumstances, we rely on CPT primarily. We have guidance for when/why an officer will conduct an interview. Right now, officers can only interview children over 12 years of age.
- CAC put together a document regarding minimal facts interviews, when and how to conduct if needed.
- Sometimes in child-on-child incidents - our officers know that the child suspect is likely also a victim and should be treated that way.
- We require all SVU investigators to be forensically trained. We utilize them for interviewing child witnesses, last resort with child victims, and with adults with disabilities.
- Lorena Bueno - utilizing this training with adults with disabilities has been very helpful. You have well intended officers who think they can talk to children and don't realize that they may be further traumatizing the child or contaminating the interview. I think if you can get your foot in the door at FDLE and academy classes (because they are standardized) that would be beneficial.
- Jay - other training for LEO?
- Sonya - Jackie & I did a training a few years ago, 3-days. Not cost prohibitive and more accessible is required.
- Jackie's training - invaluable for TPD.
- Jay - how was the training marketed?
- Sonya - FDLE's email blast
- Sgt. Martinez with Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office. I agree that this training is needed and am on board for anything offered that my officers can take. We have a very strong CPT, there are circumstances where we cannot get the kids to the CPT.
- Jay - what do you think about the 2 or 4 hour minimal facts training?
- Martinez - I think that is very realistic and valuable. Any kind of training on this would be good.
- Erick Q - have law enforcement been questioned about their training on the stand in court?

- Karen - I have not had that experience, but CPT is present in the court to help with interview questions.
- Jackie - training for West Palm Beach is based on their community, I was revising the curriculum to fit their community.
- Jackie - DOH is working on a virtual based FI training.
 - Pilot starting September 28th with a select number of individuals
 - 35 hours in virtual classroom, 5 hours off site practicum
 - This is still in development and pilot phase
 - Planning to record the training
- Francine - what is the cost?
- Jackie - no cost
- Jay - we would like to develop a resource center to share the good resources and information shared during these meetings to make them available to teams and providers to make this lasting. We are on our way to improving our state's ability to respond to child maltreatment.

Next steps:

- Keeping with this time frame for next meeting or changing?
 - Vote to keep time frame the same, with ½ hour lunch.
- May need to do more work on planning moving forward because we are getting a lot of good information from the presentation
- Doodle poll will go out regarding date of next meeting
- Subcommittees will continue to meet and work on objectives
- Anyone can attend subcommittee meetings

Meeting Adjourned