

Mandatory Reporting Task Force| Kick-Off Meeting

December 7, 2022, 8am-11am

Facilitators:

Doris Tolliver, Keystone Policy Center (Trace Faust, Cally King, Berrick Abramson)

Time	Agenda Topic	Facilitator
8:00am	<p>Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Stephanie Villafuerte opened the meeting with background on the Child Protection Ombudsman Office (CPO) whose purpose is to serve with objective and provide problem-solving about concerns with children and the child protection services as well as providing resources to help people with concerns related to children. The job is to give citizens immediate service with critical concerns about a child or their own family. The office has about a dozen staff members who provide neutral services and don't advocate for any certain arty. Services are free and confidential. CPO also does tracking and identify trends from cases to work towards recommendations and changes related to bigger system concerns, both of which are required by the law.● This Task Force will be working on questions related to mandatory reporting. There is a national conversation on the effectiveness of mandatory reporting laws – do they keep children safe as they are intended? Is there empirical evidence to support these laws? Do these laws put too many children into the system when assistance or help could be provided in other ways – food, housing, other security?● There are 34 task force members from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. The law provides 19 directives for this task force to tackle. The Task force will meet 13 times over two years. The final task is to	Stephanie Villafuerte, Jennifer Superka

	<p>produce a report for the general assembly due in January 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jennifer Superka, CPO Director of Policy, provided an overview of the process. This process is looking specifically at mandatory reporting which has not been looked at in a while. CPO is a neutral convener that will provide resources and curriculum throughout the process. They have partnered with Keystone Policy Center who are providing facilitation services for the task force. 	
8:15	<p>Overview of facilitation team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keystone Policy Center is a non-partisan organization founded in 1975 with the goal of getting people together to have respectful conversations, find common ground and solutions that serve the common good. Keystone works on a number of issues from fiscal policy to education and energy and youth and youth services. Want to ensure everyone is heard equitably, everyone has an environment to raise unique opinions, expertise and lived and professional experience. In addition to the Keystone team of Berrick Abramson, Trace Faust and Cally King Newman, they have also partnered with Doris Tolliver from Health Management Associates who brings a national perspective and expertise on child welfare. 	Facilitation Team (Doris Tolliver, Trace Faust, Cally King, Berrick Abramson)
8:20am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Force Member Introductions Task force members introduced themselves and talked about why they wanted to serve on the mandatory reporting task force. Task force members present included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adriana Hartley – Office of the Delta County Attorney Ashley Chase – Office of Child’s Representative Brynja Seagren - Boys & Girls Club of Metro Denver Colleen O’Neil – CO Dept Education Criston (Cris) Menz – Otero County; Licensed Contract Social Worker 	Doris Tolliver

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dawn Alexander – Early Childhood Education Assoc. of Colorado • Dr. Donna Wilson – WellPower • Ida Drury – The Kempe Center • Jade Woodward – Illuminate Colorado • Jennifer Eyl – Project Safeguard • Jessica Dotter – CO District Attorney’s Council • Jill Cohen – Office of the Respondent Parent’s Counsel • Dr. Kathryn (Kathi) Wells – Children’s Hospital Colorado • Kevin Bishop – Office of Alternate Defense Council • Leanna Gavin – Kalamaya Goscha • Lori Jenkins – Kindred Kids Child Advocacy Center • Margaret Ochoa – CO Dept of Public Safety • Maria Mendez – Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault • Michael Nicoletti – CO Dept of Regulatory Agencies • Michelle Murphy – Colorado Rural School Alliance • Michelle Dossey – Arapahoe County Dept of Human Services • Monica Rivera – Violence Free Colorado • Nate Hailpern – Parent Advocate • Nicci Surad – Mesa County Dept of Human Services • Samantha (Sam) Carwyn – Families Minister • Sara Pielsticker – Disability Law Colorado • Shayna Koran – Parent Advocate • Stephanie Villafuerte – Task Force Chair; Office of Colorado’s Child Protection Ombudsman • Tara Doxtater – Recovery Coach/Parent Advocate • Tess McShane – Family Resource Center Assoc. • Yolanda Arredondo – CO Dept of Human Services • Zane Grant – CASA of Pueblo 	
9:20am	Stretch Break	

9:25am	<p>Task force members provided input virtually via jamboard on their biggest concerns about the current child welfare system. The emerging themes are outlined below and will be refined by the facilitators. Members then shared their greatest hope for the work of the task force which are included below.</p> <p>Emerging themes around biggest concerns include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disproportionality and implicit bias impacting decision making • Greater clarity around what to report – where, when and how • How it looks like to support families and understand underlying needs in addition to/separate from reporting • Complicated role of a reporter when they want to help families • Clear guidance and understanding on what gets reported • Child welfare seen as surveillance and not a helper • Rural communities and limited resources available, as well as anonymity/confidentiality in small communities • Inflating poverty with neglect • Trying to provide services and support for families even if the issue is not neglect or abusive parenting • Lack of follow-up and feedback to the mandatory reporters. What does feedback loop like once reports are made? • Underestimate how scary it is to be investigated and the trauma it creates for parents and children, as well as organizations that are investigated. <p>Member hopes for the outcome of this work include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates to statute that encompasses concerns and shines a spotlight for the nation on how we do child welfare in Colorado. • There will be clarity moving forward for folks who are mandatory reporters and for families, agencies, child welfare workers, and everyone involved • Clarity around statute and support for those who are reporters. 	Full group
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Spark real change and bringing innovation in this space, looking at what other states are doing and build on those efforts. Right sizing child welfare and protection for what it was always envisioned to be and the inherent conflict between providing both prevention and protection. ● Ensure we are seeing parents and supporting them. There is a lot of unclear questions on what expectations are. ● Empowering families, individuals, each other, and the state of Colorado towards system change. ● Reduce disproportionate impacts for black and brown people and provide better implicit bias training for reporters. ● Consistent training that incorporates reporting and other resources available before reporting. ● Keeping interests of families and kids in mind and how they will be impacted. ● Able to center communities most impacted and create actionable change in response. ● Clarity and alignment for folks on the ground without ambiguity. There are different people involved with different skillsets and responsibilities. ● Clarity on what is abuse and neglect as defined by law in statute. ● Better alignment of state government agencies that are involved with or have regulation/oversight on mandatory reporting. ● Trust and confidence for both survivors and advocates. Trust victims can come to advocates and feel confident they will be provided support and can trust the system. For advocates to have trust and confidence in process. Support not report. ● Confidence in systems and building confidence in trainers that it is consistent across the state. Confidence for mandatory reporters that they know when, where and how to report. Confidence for families that they believe systems are equitable and are treated fairly. Confidence in child welfare in the work they do and resources they offer, it isn't punitive and designed to trick people. Confidence that law enforcement and child welfare will respond in a trauma informed way to support families. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarity on how we can work as a multi-disciplinary team and trust all agencies involved provide trauma-informed care. Advocates are not always provided with all the information they need from reporting parties to provide better informed care or take the action necessary. Also need standardized training to ensure everyone is getting the same information. ● Increase clarity around laws and practices, and reduce harm to both youth and adults through unintended consequences of the law. ● Bold and impactful innovation. Adaptive innovation that can be flexible to meet different needs or adjust for unintended impacts. ● Create recommendations for a strong, workable bill for the legislature to institute statutory changes around clarifying elements of failure to report. Mandatory reporters are rarely ever nefariously failing to report and unfortunately the consequences can be devastating. Want the law to be clear for reporters so we don't see failures in reporting and better training on complex issues around sexual crimes and teen dating scenarios. ● Right sizing child welfare, ensure mandatory reporting is focused on the right things and the right kids. ● Address public perception and awareness around child welfare. ● Understanding and reconsidering the underpinning philosophy behind mandatory reporting which is encompassed by fear for all involved. ● Opportunity to rewrite cultural legacy for children and families in Colorado. Dismantle current system that creates more harm than help. Need to intentionally incorporate equity into everything we do from research, policy and practice. ● Need to understand that with various systems a report can trigger secondary actions in another system that can have lasting implications for years to come. Clarity is critical because it is the door that opens all these other systemic consequences. ● Destigmatize what a mandatory reporter is. They really want to provide support based on concerns. Address fear of deportation for migrant families and 	
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	<p>cultural competency working with first generation and new Americans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing in empathy, equity and trauma-informed practices. • Make it simple so lay people can understand. Supportive, clear, actionable and consistent. • Simplified and targeted. • Statute that decreases fear and increases transparency 	
10:25	<p>Terminology Overview (time permitting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members were provided a packet with terminology related to child welfare. The task force did not review during the meeting due to time. 	Doris Tolliver
10:40am	<p>Public Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kristin Jones, journalist: More of a question than comment. I'm a journalist writing about mandatory reporting for a book project. My understanding is that this task force was created because of a need for people who represent mandatory reporters vs. people who have experience in the system. My understanding is there are supposed to be 5 people on task force who are representing learned experience and want to confirm if there are 5 people representing that perspective? • David Hansell, Casey Family Programs: As a non-Coloradan want to thank you all for your commitment to this important topic. From a national perspective, the work you do can have national implications. The dramatic racial disproportionality begins at the front door and most of this is due to mandatory reporting which continues through the system. Mandatory reporting is going to be critical to address racial disproportionality. Want to suggest you focus on mandated reporters are not homogeneous with different cultures and backgrounds and will be important to look at all different categories or reporters and they have alternate resources. Second is to look at penalties attached to failure to report and often penalties that are associated can chill exercise of judgement. Third is neglect definitions – the bulk of reports are for 	

	<p>neglect and conflation of neglect with poverty. Casey Family Programs are ready to assist in your work however they can.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Noelle, adoptive and special needs parent: The system is underrepresenting and failing adoptive and special needs families in a similar way to people of color and poor families. There are a lot of kids in the system who are not learning to attach with people and they system is not addressing reactive attachment disorder. The school sent the police and CPS to our home, and it was very scary for our family. The police officer said the words of the adoptive child was enough to charge adoptive parent without any evidence. The system does not provide enough information for working with special needs kids, especially ones with reactive attachment disorder. ● Lonnie Gautreau, Olivia Gants' grandfather: I am not sure if you know who Olivia is or are familiar with her cause, but I hope you are able to get this system fixed because it failed my granddaughter. 	
11:00am	Closing	Stephanie Villafuerte