



**The Timothy Montoya Task Force To Prevent Children From
Running Away From Out-Of-Home Placement | Meeting 13**

Meeting Minutes -- Full Group Discussion

January 3th, 2024, 8:00 am-11:00 am Virtual Meeting (Zoom)
Facilitators: Keystone Policy Center (Trace Faust & Doris Tolliver)
Members: See Appendix A

<p>Welcome & Approval of Minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stephanie Villafuerte welcomed the group. Addie Fischer took attendance. Stephanie asked for edits to the full group minutes. There were no edits. Dennis Desparrois motioned; Beth McNalley seconded. The minutes were approved. Stephanie moved to the intervention subcommittee minutes. There were no edits. Beth McNalley motioned, Elizabeth Montoya seconded. The minutes were approved. Stephanie moved to the intervention subcommittee recap. There were no edits. Elizabeth Montoya motioned; Dennis Desparrois seconded. The recap was approved. Stephanie moved to the prevention subcommittee minutes. There were no edits. Ashley Chase motioned; Jenna Coleman seconded. The minutes were approved. Stephanie moved to the prevention subcommittee recap. There were no edits. Ashley Chase motioned; Jenna Coleman seconded. The recap was approved. Trace welcomed the group. They explained the agenda for the day. The discussion will be about the conversations in the subcommittees. There will be a survey at the end to include more thoughts. They reminded the group of the road map for 2024. Trace mentioned that the group is not a vote consensus group, but all input and feedback will be included in the final report. There will be opportunities for members to say why they do not support a recommendation if they do not and these remarks will be included in the report. Trace moved to the group to time for reviewing the documents that were emailed. This is because this is the first meeting after the break; meetings moving forward will not have this time. Doris Tolliver commented that the summary documents are about 3 pages which is the goal; the documents include hyperlinks to refer back to. She also mentioned that the group will focus on the draft recommendation language. She finally mentioned that there is some language in the documents about recommendations having sufficient funding; this is so Task Force members do not need to get caught up in the specifics of funding the recommendations but rather how they should look in Colorado. Trace brought the group back and turned it over to Jordan. Jordan congratulated the group since they have made it this far already. She gave background to the documents created; she said that she and Bryan looked back at all of the materials to put together a cohesive recommendation about these two topics. She also mentioned that they renamed the absconder unit to the specialized investigation unit. She moved to talk about other states; DC, TN, TX. All these materials are available to members. DC had a differentiated approach for certain circumstances like how long a child was gone; Jordan and Bryan liked this approach and this will be discussed further
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	<p>in the standard response protocols conversation. TN had correlation with law enforcement and had involvement with social workers; they also have similar tools that the group was looking at like a screening tool. TX had a law enforcement focus to utilize investigatory skills. She said that there was a consensus that a unit to recover children would be useful in the state of CO. The group would be focused and thoughtful; it would include trauma informed practices and standardized response protocols. This group will be able to move faster than general missing persons cases. They will also be multidisciplinary and specialized with training for interacting with this specific population. There was a general sense that this unit should be different from law enforcement and it should feel different than law enforcement. She said that there was a discussion on funding which she acknowledges. She said that the recommendations are written for the CO General Assembly so the recommendations will be back with legislation and adequate funding. She also said that the Task Force should be involved in the implementation of the unit. She said that there are areas for the group to fill in the gaps in the draft recommendations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doris thanked Joran and said that she wants the group to move to the discussion portion; questions, concerns, likes, etc. There will also be a survey at the end of the meeting so all thoughts and voices will be incorporated.
Absconder Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brandon Miller asked the motive behind having the group different from law enforcement. Doris answered that there was a recognition that law enforcement have skills in this work but there was also a discussion about how law enforcement is oriented and how interactions would feel for a youth. So, to meet the needs of children and to ensure they do not feel in trouble, this group will be multidisciplinary. Jordan added that members of the unit might have repeated contact with youth so having it outside of law enforcement will help build trust. Brandon said that his concern is that there are environmental factors that can make situations dangerous. He said that he would appreciate the added security of having law enforcement; officers could be trained. Doris highlighted Jennele Goodrich's point in the chat that this approach might reinforce that law enforcement is scary or bad. Stephanie said that she is thinking about scalability; when it is just strictly law enforcement, trying to duplicate protocols across the state gets harder than with a regional team. She also said that since the group is multidisciplinary, this unit would be a group of professionals that would all have a role to play; it would not be just human services or just law enforcement. She said that is how she read it but she wanted to make sure she had that right. Doris said that there was broad agreement on the multidisciplinary approach; the question is who should get deployed for the investigatory response. This conversation is to decide who this team of folks is. She said it could be law enforcement. There are also options for different responses based on the size of the jurisdiction.• Brian Cotter said that the recommendation misses some key points. First, is response time; the recommendation does not address what the group discussed about a timely response. He said that the unit should be 24/7. So, the unit would need to be well staffed. He also wondered about the phrase 'no



use of force'. If the recommendation is not authorizing physical force, then it needs to be really clear what it is recommending. State statute allows for temporary custody of children. He also wonders about a child running away from the unit; he asked if law enforcement would take over in a traditional fashion. The recommendation needs to be clear on that. He commented that he wants law enforcement to be involved in this process since there are already so many tools that they use to help find people so the recommendation should not be to reinvent the wheel but to piggyback off what is already in effect. He supports a multidisciplinary team (MDT). To further this point, he mentioned that the STAR teams for mental health responses have been very successful and are based out of law enforcement. He asked about metrics for the other states' models, like TN and DC who chose not to center units around law enforcement. He also talked about calling; when he calls another law enforcement office, he gets a better response. When outside agencies call law enforcement, there are standard response protocols so the response time is slower than if he calls. Doris highlighted chats about modeling the unit off the STAR unit.

- David Lee said that he is excited about these conversations. He is wondering about implementation of these tools in rural areas. He mentioned funding for local municipalities. He wondered about scaling this out to the whole state instead of just larger areas like Denver and Colorado Springs. Trace said that they do not disagree but reminded him to focus on the conceptualization rather than the implementation. However, these thoughts will be included in the final report.
- Trace asked Doris if the group should take the recommendation part by part. Doris agreed and opened up comments for the first part; this part is about having the lead agency of the unit being CDHS.
- Brian said that he likes the notion of regions; but he doesn't think that it should be a unit under CDHS. He advocates for an MDT where CDHS organizes the unit and then a legislative expectation of participation, supported by funding. The support would come from mental health professionals and law enforcement agencies at the county level within the region. Staffing would be an expectation. It would be organized and managed by CHDS.
- Brandon said that the unit could model a School Resource Officer system, with oversight from CDHS and partnerships with out of home placements. Doris asked in this approach, who would be the state lead agency. He said that it would make sense that CDHS would oversee it but it is implemented by local areas. Doris relayed his point to make sure she understood it. Brandon continued that facilities partnering with law enforcement helps from a practicality standpoint. Doris asked if he is comfortable with having CDHS being the lead agency. Brandon said yes. Doris asked for any more thoughts. Stephanie asked for Dennis's thoughts since he is from that agency.
- Dennis said that based on the way that the recommendations are written, it would probably be housed in CDHS since the training is so extensive and it involves access to Trails. He said that law enforcement would probably struggle with this. Stephanie mentioned that the children in focus are under CDHS purview; she feels comfortable with the first recommendation.



- Doris highlighted that for the most part there is good agreement on the first bullet. She highlighted Brian's chat about local mental health centers being a part of the MDTs. She thinks that this can be added since it was a part of the subcommittee conversation about having mental health workers included. She also said that she thinks that there is an opportunity to flesh out what other support networks are needed in order to support the work.
- Dennis said that he has other reservations but he thinks the unit should be in CDHS.
- Doris moved to the next part about development and implementation of protocols of the unit which overlaps with the prevention subcommittee. This helps ensure that part of the intervention is to prevent future runaways. She asked for comments. Stephanie said that this is already in state and federal law so this recommendation would require consistency. Doris said that the conversations about this part included trauma informed practices so it might make sense to name that specifically. Beth agreed.
- Doris moved to the next part about the unit's authority to locate children and not authorizing physical force. She mentioned Brian's comments, so she imagines discussions here. Elizabeth said that the unit should have the authority to bring the child back otherwise it defeats the purpose, even with a mental health worker there to help bring the child back willingly. Doris thanked her and said that this couples with the multidisciplinary approach and training.
- Ashley said that she sees Elizabeth's point but there is a possibility for a child to incur charges if they resist or assault someone. She also said that there is a benefit to knowing where the child is and who they are with even if the group is unable to recover them. She also thinks that youth will not call the unit themselves if the unit is pseudo arresting children. She wonders how other states handle this. Doris thanked her for her comments.
- Brian said that this is a community issue and that they can work with prosecutors' offices to avoid over charging/ prosecuting children. He thinks that this concern should be provided for in some fashion even if every scenario cannot have an exception. Doris mentioned disparate treatment for youth of color who are more likely to be harmed by force.
- Stephanie asked for Beth's input on this since she is running a similar unit. Beth said that youth do call them when they need help or are missing. There is a confidentiality policy that prevents the unit from calling law enforcement about these children if they are missing or have a warrant. This is to build trust. She said that people can be understaffed and overworked, so she sees people resorting to physical force. She believes in the long game when recovering children; the unit cannot cause additional trauma so resorting to physical force will prevent success. Stephanie asks that the group include some caveat such as 'the discussion shall consider circumstances that require a certain type of force' since the unit has no authority. This is to hold the thought of the group for the time being.
- Doris moved to the next part about adopting certain tactics as a response unit. This conversation has already been started and it sounds like people's thoughts are captured. She asked for comments and there were none.



- Doris moved to the next part about training for the group in trauma informed practices and standard mandatory training. She asked for comments and there were none.
- Doris moved to the next part about collaborative work with licensed out of home placements. She asked for comments. Brian reiterated that the MDT is the best response; the county departments of human services are going to be the best partners with out of home placements. This is because the counties already have relationships with out of home placements so this would delegate responsibilities to them; the state would help the counties have the plans in place. Doris said that sounds like an addition to the recommendation; 'the unit will work through or collaboratively with counties and their respective licensed out of home placements'. Brian said that the county already works with facilities on many things like facility management so, it might not make sense to have the state oversee it. Dennis said that he believes that the counties have a role but he clarified that CDHS oversees the facilities. CDHS will have to approve a facility's plan but county cooperation should be added as a consideration. Doris thanked him and suggested a recommendation on relationships with the county. Brandon said that there should still be a central approach for expectations rather than counties each having a different approach. Doris thanked him.
- Doris moved to the next part about development and implementation of tools to ensure that the unit has access to pertinent data. She asked for questions and comments. Brian said that this recommendation is really broad. For example, the unit is allowed to search public social media records but cannot be granted access to social media records. He was unclear on whose social media records the unit would be granted access to, either the child or people who might be harboring the child. He continued that by housing the unit in CDHS, the group can recommend opening up specific restricted documents in CDHS systems. Beth brought up a multidisciplinary approach and said that it could be a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) about information sharing to assist in recovering children.
- Doris moved to the next part about standardized information sharing between law enforcement and human services to allow the unit to have comprehensive access. She asked for comments. There were none.
- Doris moved to the next part about a system in Trails for data specifically related to the unit. She asked for comments. There were none. She asked Dennis specifically and he said no.
- Doris moved to the next part about an incorporation of multidisciplinary teams. She moved on to the next point since this was already heavily discussed.
- Doris moved to the next part about the development of an information sharing system. She asked how this one is different than the previous information sharing recommendation. Jordan said that this would be a separate database for the unit to put its information into. There were no other comments.
- Doris moved to the next part about standardized protocols relating to response time and a mandated MOU between facilities. She asked for comments. There were none.



- Doris moved to the next part about communication requirements. Stephanie said that she wants to clarify if there would be different response times for different groups. Jordan said yes and this is the precursor to the next topic of the standard response protocol. Doris said that this would be to prioritize high risk children, the unit deploys the prioritization once they are notified, as well as to communicate updates in the search.
- Doris moved to the next part about a regionalized model to address urban and rural considerations. She asked for comments. There were none.
- Doris moved to the next part about trauma informed information gathering forms and protocol, similar to TN. She asked for comments. There were none.
- Doris moved to the next part about other related entities recommended by the Task Force. She asked Jordan to explain it. Jordan said that if the unit is in CDHS, then this unit could act as a hub for other programs that the Task Force recommends. Doris said that she might want to change the word location in the recommendation to something else. Brian thinks that whatever recommendations go to the state, that they should be unified rather than separated by intervention or prevention. Doris thanked him.
- Doris moved to the last part about the development of procedures if the recovered youth was victimized in some way. Stephanie said that she wants to clarify that this is to expand existing state law and regulation; the recommendation is doing what we do better rather than for the first time. Dennis said he was going to say the same thing.
- Trace asked for any outward dissent for purposes of the report. They also mentioned that the survey will be broken down by individual recommendations, so there will be an opportunity to offer specific feedback. Brandon wants it on the record that he agrees with Brian and that the group cannot overlook the tools of law enforcement offers; there should be a longer conversation about this. He also mentioned that it would be problematic to never use force especially when a situation is dangerous for a child. He also said that he can see issues like trafficking continuing if law enforcement is not involved. Doris thanked him and Stephanie asked if there will be an opportunity to talk about use of force. Jordan said that the Task Force has to keep moving so these recommendations will not be looked at again until July. She and Bryan will adjust the language in the recommendation. Doris said that the absolute last time for input is the survey and emphasized responding to it. Stephanie said that all thoughts will be included in the report and that there will be more discussion about all these topics in subsequent subcommittees after the recommendations are submitted. Jordan confirmed and said that dissension in the final report will be attributed to individuals rather than the group.
- Jordan asked if there is disagreement with the unit as a whole, separate from the details of the recommendation. Dennis said that he cannot say that he disagrees but he knows it will be very expensive; he thinks that the group needs to look at the cost of all the recommendations and then prioritize them. Jordan said that they will in July, since one of the directives is to determine how much this will cost and resource allocation. Dennis said that he had no other concerns.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian said that the multidisciplinary approach is going to be the best approach rather than a team of employees that belong to CHDS. Jordan said that the recommendation is pretty clear about it being multidisciplinary. She asked what he was dissenting to. Brian said that the recommendation is a little confusing so he is recommending a unit of independent professionals to come together to form a multidisciplinary approach; they should be hired by their own organizations. Jordan asked if he would be opposed to a new specialized unit that coordinates this. Brian clarified on 'coordinates it' to 'conducts it'; he acknowledges that CHDS will have people that coordinate this but the response will be by an MDT rather than a management group by CDHS. Trace said that they heard what he was saying and asked if the recommendation was too broad. Brian said that he wants to be very explicit as he is opposed to the TX model where the members are employed by the state. Trace suggested that he responds to the language that he thinks needs to be more specific. • Elizabeth said that the ideas that the group will talk about later are going to help deter any need for use of force. Doris thanked her. • Jenelle said that she almost 100% agrees with Brian specially about not wanting to reinvent the wheel. She wants to pull individuals from agencies into the space and then collaboratively work together. Doris thanked her. • Jordan requested for the survey to include a question about people's preference about the model since she is hearing 2 very different models being presented by the group. • Doris asked one last time for any dissent. Brandon said that he agrees with Dennis and Brian; it depends on how it is structured if he is going to support it or not. He would not support a system like TX; it needs to be more localized and it needs to use the current infrastructure. Stephanie said that she thought that the question is, 'is the Task Force in support of a group of humans coming together to find runaway children?' The question she heard is, 'how the group will come together?' She is trying to understand the question. Jordan said the question for the survey is, 'do we want a unit to be a specific set of employees to solely go out and respond to runaway children?'. This is the TX model; the group coordinates with other entities but is separate from them. Or, 'do we want employees from multidisciplinary entities to coordinate a standard response when a youth runs?' Doris said that the question for right now is about the general concept about a unit of response. Jordan asked Brandon this question and he said that he supports something to help find kids. • Trace moved the group to a break and reminded the group again of the upcoming survey.
Screening Tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trace welcomed the group back. They said that there are no members of the public so far. There are about 50 minutes to roll through the prevention subcommittee. • Bryan gave the recommendation presentation. GA, NV, WI all have post run intervention screening tools to help implement preventative methods. IL has a runaway risk assessment user guide to use at the point of admission. The subcommittee supported both pre-admission and post-run tools. The



recommendations include a pilot program, contracting with a third party such as a university or non-profit company to build the tool, evaluation components, data considerations like utilizing Trails, standardized training for the tool, monitoring compliance, trauma informed practices, using information from the tool to adjust care, and finally a joint technology committee as a partner. He welcomed questions and asked Jordan to add more; he opened the floor to talk about their thoughts. Trace gave the group 5 minutes to look over the recommendations.

- Trace welcomed the group back. They mentioned that there was a lot of consensus in the group and they thanked Ahsley for helping put together the recommendations. The plan will be running through each recommendation and at the end asking the group if they agree with the concept of screening tools.
- Trace highlighted the first part about the expertise of the folks that will make the tools. They asked for comments. Stephanie asked about a pre-admission process being different or complementary to the screening tool. Brandon said that the tool would be an enhancement; it would be to determine the context of the running rather than if the child will run or not which is usually pretty obvious. Dennis said that it would be an enhancement since the provider could get valuable information to help treatment and the information from the tools could be used by the unit that will help locate runaways. Trace moved the group on.
- Trace moved to the next part about a pilot program. They asked for comments. Dennis said that he is not understanding the use of a pilot program. Ashley said that the consideration is to determine if the tool is high quality. It would ensure that it is useful before rolling it out across the whole state. Trace said that this would also be an opportunity to include youth voices and to help work out potential efficiency issues at the county level. Stephanie echoed everything that was said, especially Ashley. She added that facilities wanted a partnership with the state and since this would probably fall under regulation or rule which would fall under licensing; this would be to provide clear expectations regarding the tool. David said that we can probably combine recommendation one and two together. Trace thanked him for this and invited more opportunities to collapse recommendations together.
- Trace moved to the next part about rolling out the pilot. They asked for comments. There were none.
- Trace moved to the next part about information access statewide. Dennis said that there needs to be a recommendation that providers have access to this in Trails. Becky supported this. David said he is concerned about Trails being able to communicate with other databases that other providers use. Trace said that recommendations can be grouped. Doris named that there will be themes across multiple recommendations.
- Trace moved to the next part about electronic storage of data which could be a sub recommendation. Trace asked about adding specific language regarding 'in support of the child' or leave it as 'for future placements'. Ashley said that she foresees having to expand access to this data. Trace suggested



a recommendation that grants future access without exactly spelling out who that is yet. Ashley asked that if Trails is done in a way that is shareable; do we need a creation of a separate data system? Doris said that it could be housed in Trails but that is a question for implementation.

- Trace moved to the next part about an MOU for data storage and could also be a sub recommendation. Dennis said that he thinks that it needs to be stronger than an MOU; he'd rather have it be in the legislation so people cannot change their mind down the road.
- Trace moved to the next part about the feedback loop. Ashley said that it would be helpful to have data to determine patterns. This could inform how to deal with issues at a facility level. Trace said that the recommendation can call for noticing the trends and getting ahead. Stephanie said that, since there will be many resources poured into this, there could be an annual report. She recommends a reporting requirement on issues that would be helpful for policymakers and the public to know.
- Trace moved on to the next part about standard training for those using the tool. Jenelle said that she would never assume that trauma informed practices are already in these areas. Trace thanked her for her comments. Doris said that it is important to administer the tool in a trauma informed way as well as having the tool itself be trauma informed. Trace asked if the person administering the tool should be the one with the training rather than just one person at the facility. Doris agreed. David said that in his opinion we don't need to be too in-depth on specific training; the important part is using the information to create quality plans. Trace agreed. Dennis said that he agrees with David and that we need to think about who is creating the training. He suggested working with the same institution that builds the tool to also build the training.
- Trace moved to the next part about compliance. Dennis said that there cannot only be one person at the facility to review the assessments. He said that it is written fine and it can be further determined in rules but he stressed that enough folks are trained. Doris said that if the intake person is the only one with training, then that would be a mess; all folks who are direct care staff in a facility should be trained. Jenna said that the institution who makes the tool could also help with ongoing consultation.
- Trace moved to the next part about trauma informed principles. They are wondering if trauma informed itself is included as a recommendation across the board. Jenelle agrees that the use of trauma informed principles determines the success of all of this work. Trace thanked her. Brandon said that trauma informed principles are a very broad topic so he thinks that there should be a statewide conversation about what it means to be trauma informed. Trace said that there is an opportunity to find a clear definition of being trauma informed in pulling it out as a whole recommendation.
- Trace moved to the next part about what to do with the information. They asked for comments. Brandon asked about the ability to stop children from running in this recommendation. Jordan said that this will be a big conversation for this group in the restraints conversation; they are working on building up resources for the group to consider in April and May.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traced move to the last part about the joint technology committee. There were none. Trace asked Jordan to explain this. Jordan asked Bryan to explain it. Bryan said that this is about how the data systems talk to each other; this would be an entity to engage as a partner. Ashley said that this came up in her experience so this would be a good opportunity. • Trace said, again, that the survey will be available for folks to include their thoughts to each recommendation. They asked for any dissent on the record to include in the report against a screening tool. There was none.
Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No public comment.
Next Steps and Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trace said that these topics will be put to rest until July. They thanked the group for their work thus far and for fleshing these topics out. They went back to the road map; February will be subcommittee meetings about statewide policies and hardware. They stressed being prepared for the conversations by reviewing the materials. Doris had nothing to add. Trace added the exit survey in the chat. There is also a place to comment on the general functioning of the Task Force. • Stephanie closed out the group by thanking them. Even with the challenges, there is a ton of progress here. She thanked Elizabeth for being here and for her insight. She is committed to making changes. Elizabeth thanked her and everyone.

Appendix A:

- Stephanie Villafuerte
- Jordan Steffen
- Beth McNalley
- Bryan Kelley
- Dennis Desparrois
- Chelsea Hill
- David Lee
- Brian Cotter
- Ashley Chase
- Elizabeth Montoya
- Beck Updike Miller
- Jenna Coleman
- Kelly Abbott
- Anna Cole
- Jenelle Goodrich
- Brandon Miller