



**The Timothy Montoya Task Force To Prevent Children From Running Away From Out-Of-Home Placement | Meeting 14**

***Meeting Minutes -- Prevention Subcommittee Discussion***

February 14th, 2024, 8:00 am-10:00 am Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Facilitators: Keystone Policy Center (Trace Faust)

Members: See Appendix A

Prevention Subcommittee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Trace Faust started the group on the research part of the conversation. They asked for parts in the research that stood out to them. They also directed people to include their thoughts in the notecatcher. They invited Bryan Kelley to share any thoughts.</li> <li>● Bryan said that he is curious about people’s reactions to the research. Trace also said that there were 4 survey responses so the facilitators are working with limited information. They asked Brandon Miller for his thoughts.</li> <li>● Brandon said that he only briefly reviewed the materials. He asked Bryan if he found the CO secure perimeters regulations. Bryan said that he was not able to find anything for their jurisdiction.</li> <li>● Stephanie Villafuerte said that she does not have this information either but she was struck by the lack of options. The facilities are individual contractors, not state owned facilities. If there is not a guaranteed contract, then she wonders if a facility will build an expensive fence. It’s about the money. This made her think about delayed doors. She supports delayed locks and she is interested in other people’s analysis.</li> <li>● Ashley Chase said that none of these really pertained to child welfare but rather juvenile justice or jail. She said that you cannot treat a child with a dependency or neglect case like a criminal when there are no criminal acts. She was excited about the delayed egress; she liked the solution of having a minute to intervene. She doesn’t think fencing is a problem but reading the materials, it started to feel like a detention facility.</li> <li>● Brandon said that he agrees that the further a facility is away from institutionalization, the better. He said there is a difference between facilities that are secure and facilities that feel like a prison. The children are coming to the treatment center for a safety reason, whatever that is, and he thinks that securing a facility should be a goal. He thinks they would be able to accomplish delayed egress and he already uses those tools. He also said that 30 seconds is not long enough and some children can just push the door right open. He also said that there is a difference between doors, buildings and perimeters. The perimeters are about keeping children in but also about keeping dangers out of the facility. Trace asked him to talk more about the difference between a secure facility and a jail-like facility. Brandon said that it is a balance between security and freedom. He is not advocating for a building to have cells or to have a building that looks like a jail. He is an advocate for a fence that locks and is secured. The fence should not have a warm wire. The facility should have a secure perimeter and it can have a feel different than walking into a jail. Trace thanked him and said that they appreciate his perspective. Stephanie asked follow up questions in the chat.</li> </ul>
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- David Lee said that he liked delayed egress doors and the semi secure facilities in WA. He'd want more information on that. He also asked what the group wanted, rhetorically speaking. He said that stopping runaways will happen with higher security. That is not what he wants; his focus is on staff development and an ability to create some time to work with a child in crisis and prevent a run. He said that unless a facility is completely secure, there will be runs. He is not in favor of fully secure facilities, not all youth are a danger to society and they do not belong in those settings. Trace thanked him.
- Trace invited Brandon to answer Stephanie's questions in the chat. He said that the difference between a secure perimeter and a detention center includes the type of fence, the distance, how high it is; these things can be accomplished without the building feeling like a jail. On the topic of delayed egress, he thinks that the facilities can balance better than what they do now to secure themselves without going overboard. He also included that delayed egress isn't going to fully stop runaways and they are allowed to do that now.
- Trace highlighted considerations in the chat about the availability of these security tools and how to address this with policy.
- Dr. Renee Marquardt said that there are a lot of good points like the continuum of locks and locking areas. She also brought up which children will have specific interventions since some tools should not be used in every treatment setting like a group home. She said that delayed egress is not preventing children from needing to go out of state or stopping the tragic events that have happened. She also asked if these tools will lead to less staff supervision and intervention; this should be addressed as well with regulations. She highlighted these details. Trace thanked her.
- Kevin Lash said that he agrees with Renee that it is not a one size fits all thing because of the variety of treatment settings. He also said that he was puzzled by the idea that fences are not good. He brought up many places that use fences like police departments and hospitals. To him, there is nothing offensive about a fence. He also brought up space; some facilities are in an urban environment so children are harder to locate during a run. He brought up a statistic he had heard; 70% of the children with mental health concerns are also in the juvenile justice system. Ashley brought up children with dependency and neglect cases and how most of these children do not have JV cases. Kevin said that perhaps there are 3 buckets of children in. He reiterated that fences are not offensive. Trace asked if these comments are because he thinks other members are against fences. He mentioned the Juvenile Justice Act and that he is unaware of the fine points in it. Trace said that they heard more concerns about cost rather than not seeing the value in fences. Kevin responded that his idea would be only a couple facilities having fences and routing the higher risk children to these places. Trace highlighted his point about looking into where children are going if there is a concern around resources.
- Jenna Coleman has questions about the juvenile act. She wonders if fences are legal and she has not heard a direct answer to this question. She mentioned Kevin's point about levels of security not having one size fits all.



She mentioned levels of security like door alarms without locks, door alarms with egress doors, and finally doors alarms with egress doors and a fence. She also mentioned children running in urban environments; she brought up signs that can light up when a child is out on the run to prevent children from getting hit by cars. She also mentioned a residential facility in TN that is on a large lot so when a child runs, staff is able to recover them. Trace thanked her for her comments.

- Trace said that they want to make sure that they are capturing everyone’s thoughts so they invited members to put their comments in the notecatcher.
- Trace brought the group back and presented ideas, specifically about hardware, back to the subcommittee. They highlighted Jenna’s point about 4 buckets (youth room, building level, perimeter level, community level). They wanted to go through each category as a subcommittee.
- For the youth room, Jenna suggested overnight door alarms that would alert at the staff level. Jenna also mentioned silent alarms and sticky door alarms. She also said that nighttime is a common time for children to try to leave. Brandon mentioned the variety of facilities so Trace also highlighted his point in this conversation. Brandon elaborated that in the last 6 months they installed lasers from a doorway that divides a room. They turn it on at night; the lasers are invisible and if they get triggered, it notifies a computer and turns a light on in the room. Staff can see this and document what is going on. Usually, it is just a child that needs to use the bathroom but it is an added tool that can be used for windows too. It’s not super expensive either; they are about \$100 each. Their system was about \$2,500 to set up. Trace brought up putting these systems in strategic places. David said that he likes it and it’s not too invasive.
- For the building, the main thing that Trace saw was egress doors. They asked for clarity on this definition. David said that it looks like an emergency exit and when someone pushes it, it sounds an alarm and won’t open for a specific amount of time. Trace asked Brandon for anything to add. He said no and that one door in his facility is delayed egress and one is not. Trace asked if 30 seconds is too short of a delay; Brandon said yes. Trace asked if everyone is interested in delayed egress doors as a concept, even if the subcommittee needs to look into best practices like Jenna’s question about if the door can open immediately in the instance of a fire. David said that his opinion changes based on the facility like a foster home or a residential facility. Trace said that they are thinking of residential facilities. The subcommittee did not oppose the idea of delayed egress doors. Trace asked for any other mechanisms. Brandon mentioned internal and external cameras; there are cameras everywhere but bathrooms and bedrooms. Brandon and Kevin had a conversation about pursuing children on the run.
- For perimeter, Trace noticed that there was large consensus around fencing. There were considerations about routing higher risk children to these facilities or exploring facilities with a large lot of land. Trace put this topic as a strong interest, noting the strong barriers. Bryan can help with this research part. Jenna asked about lasers out in the field that sends the signal to staff that children are approaching the edge. Trace included the comment. Stephanie said that she wants to resurrect ankle monitoring for children that are at



	<p>higher risk. Bryan could not find a jurisdiction that does this but it is a part of the conversation about technology. Trace asked if anyone is opposed to this idea; Kevin said that he is for it as an idea but the problem is that they can always be cut off. Brandon said that ankle monitors can help but there are considerations around enforcing them; when monitors are used in probation they are cut off less than in residential facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On the community side, Jenna mentioned community care. Safety measures include crosswalks. It seems like the subcommittee was all in support of community safety measures.</li><li>• Trace asked for a volunteer to work with Bryan to bring this back to the whole group to share. Jenna was happy to help. Trace thanked the subcommittee.</li></ul>
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**Appendix A:**

- Chelsea Hill
- David Lee
- Kevin Lash
- Jenna Coleman
- Ashley Chase
- Dr. Renee Marquardt
- Brandon Miller