

Idaho
Governor's Children at Risk
Task Force

2021
Three-Year Report

State Review and Summary



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Task Force Members

Facilitating the Work of the Children at Risk Task Force

Joshua Wickard – Public Defender (Chairman)
Susan Bradford, MD – Pediatrician
Doug Giddings – Law Enforcement
Galen Carlson – Prosecuting Attorney
Hon. Mark Rammell – Criminal Magistrate Judge
Hon. Steve Clark – Civil Magistrate Judge
Dina Brewer-Flores – Children with Disabilities
Jennifer Bergin- Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
Jill Robertson– Parent Advocate
James Curb – Homeless Education Liaison
Jennifer Tachell– Educator/Counselor (Vice-Chairman)
Lisa Nordstrom- Child Advocate Attorney
Melissa Osen– Foster Youth Representative
Michelle Weir – Child Protection Services
Molly Vaughn– Victim Services Coordinator
Nadine McDonald – Juvenile Justice Services
Sheila Sturgeon Freitas, PhD– Mental Health
Tahna Barton – CASA Representative

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Idaho Governor's Children at Risk Task Force (CARTF) is to promote activities that improve:

- The handling of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim; and
- The handling of cases of suspected child abuse or neglect related fatalities; and
- The investigation and prosecution of cases involving child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner that protects the rights of all parties involved in the case; and
- The handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems who are victims of abuse or neglect.

Introduction

The state of Idaho Governor's Children at Risk Task Force Three Year Assessment is a comprehensive evaluation of the state's handling of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation cases throughout various child protective, investigative, and judicial systems. The report reflects the work of the Task Force members and their efforts to identify problems in the current system's response, and further make recommendations to combat those inadequacies in the response to crimes involving children. Although the findings contained in this report satisfy a federal requirement, more importantly, they provide a systemic look at the array of services and procedures in place for the protection of children. This report was completed with full cooperation and input from Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force members. Other professionals, agencies, and organizations committed to improve the system were consulted when needed in order to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this report. The following sections summarize the issues and recommendations by providing a brief overview of critical matters the Task Force will be addressing over the next three years. The issues correspond with the Criminal Justice Act guidelines governed by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) regulations, which relate to the following:

- Investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases involving child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as cases involving suspected child maltreatment-related fatalities and cases involving a potential combination of jurisdictions, such as interstate, federal-state, and state-tribal, in a manner which reduces the additional trauma of the child victim and the victim's family and which also ensure procedural fairness to the accused.
- Experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and techniques, which may improve the prompt and successful resolution of civil and criminal court proceedings or enhance the effectiveness of judicial and administrative action in child abuse and neglect cases, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation cases, including the enhancement of performance of court-appointed attorneys and guardians ad litem for children, and which also ensure procedural fairness to the accused.
- Reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols, and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children from abuse, particularly sexual abuse, and exploitation, while ensuring procedural fairness to the affected persons.

The following report documents the Task Force's study for the period of May 2018 through April 2021. It outlines the review, the findings, and presents new recommendations for the period of 2021-2024. The recommendations will be written as goals the Task Force will pursue and monitor over the next three years in the form of a revised strategic plan.

History and Background of the Governor's Children at Risk Task Force

The Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk

The Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk, a nonpartisan, broadly representative organization with concerns related to children at risk in Idaho, is dedicated to providing informed recommendations to the Governor of the State of Idaho regarding the full scope of issues related to child abuse and neglect.

In 1988, by Executive Order, Governor Cecil Andrus established the Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk. The group's first assignment was to review research on sex crimes against children and develop recommendations to address the issue. This included reviewing testimony from public hearings, national research, and interviews with investigators, treatment providers, law enforcement personnel, perpetrators, citizen advocates, victims, and their families.

Findings and recommendations were published in "A Report on Idaho's System for Protecting and Serving Children at Risk of Sexual Abuse," containing 14 specific recommendations. Most of these have been followed to completion.

Since 1988, the Task Force has continued to make recommendations to the Governor on issues pertaining to Idaho's children. Some of their accomplishments include:

- State mandated county Multi-Disciplinary Teams.
- Continuing education of mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect including development and publication of Idaho's Care Enough to Call brochure.
- Sponsorship of new DVD/video related to mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect.
- Sex offender minimum evaluation standards.
- Support for Idaho's State Child Mortality Review Team.
- Victim's Right Act.
- Sponsor for Idaho's Educational Neglect report.
- Support for Idaho's Child Advocacy Centers.
- Provide annual multidisciplinary team training through the Keeping Children Safe Conference.
- Development of materials to reduce trauma of children participating in the court process.

Methods Used in Conducting Idaho's Three-Year Assessment

A comprehensive study was conducted using the following methods to review and evaluate the system:

1. The Children at Risk Task Force (CARTF) gathered and reviewed reports of other groups who are also mandated to review the system and make recommendations for improvement. Reports that were used in this comprehensive study include:
 - a. Annual recommendations of Idaho's Citizen Review Boards, the "Keeping Children Safe Panels."
 - b. Idaho's Five-Year Child and Family Service Plan (CFSP) and Annual Progress and Service Reports (APSRs).
 - c. Annual reports of the Supreme Court Child Protection Committee (Idaho's Court Improvement Project).
 - d. Annual Legislative Foster Care Report
 - e. Annual Child Sex Abuse Report by the Idaho Office of the Attorney General
 - f. 2021 Idaho Dept. of Health and Welfare Annual Service Progress Report
 - g. US Bureau of Labor Statistics- "Idaho Economy at a Glance"
 - h. Crime in Idaho Report 2019
 - i. Idaho Criminal Justice Needs Assessment 2019
 - j. Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) Population Data
2. Representatives involved in the reporting, investigation, and prosecution of child abuse and neglect were invited to meet with the Task Force to share their experience regarding the strengths and concerns of Idaho's child protection system. Professionals from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, the Idaho Department of Education, the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections, the Idaho Department of Corrections, the Idaho Attorney General's Office, the Idaho Supreme Court Child Protection Committee, the Idaho Office of Performance Evaluations, Idaho Council on Suicide Prevention, Boise State University, members of Idaho's Home Schooling Association, and representatives from the Idaho Network of Children's Advocacy Centers attended meetings during the past three years to share their perspectives regarding the handling, investigation, and prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases, including suspected child abuse related fatalities.
3. Finally, as a multidisciplinary team Task Force, each of the members of CARTF have discussed issues of child abuse and neglect and the criminal justice system with other professionals from their respective fields and contributed their input to the review and evaluation.

The Status of Investigation and Judicial Handling of Child Maltreatment, Exploitation, and Neglect in Idaho

Population Density

Idaho occupies a total land and water area of 83,574 square miles and is ranked as the thirteenth largest state. Idaho has a diverse geology and biology, containing large areas of alpine mountainous regions, vast desert plains, farmland valleys, and deep canyons and gorges. Many areas of the state have few or no roads. Two-thirds of Idaho's landmass contains a combination of state and federal public lands.

The Federal Office of Management and Budget identifies three classifications for Statistical Areas in Idaho, which are defined as follows (February 28, 2013):

Metropolitan Statistical Areas have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties.

Micropolitan Statistical Areas have at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties.

Combined Statistical Areas comprise two or more Metropolitan Statistical Areas, a Metropolitan Statistical Area, and a Micropolitan Statistical Area, two or more Micropolitan Statistical Areas, or multiple Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas that have social and economic ties as measured by commuting, but at lower levels than are found among counties within Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas.

Idaho has six Metropolitan Statistical Areas. The principle cities of the four Metropolitan Statistical Areas that are entirely in Idaho are: Boise City-Nampa, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Falls, and Pocatello. The principle cities of the two Metropolitan Statistical Areas that are split between Idaho and neighboring states are: Logan, Utah and Lewiston, Idaho.

Idaho has eight Micropolitan Statistical Areas: Blackfoot, Burley, Moscow, Mountain Home, Rexburg, Twin Falls, and two areas (Teton County and Payette County) that are combined with neighboring states. Idaho has one Combined Statistical Area, which is the Idaho Falls-Blackfoot area.

The delivery of services in Micropolitan Statistical Areas, which are composed of rural and frontier areas, poses many challenges. Foremost among these are:

1. Low population densities spread across immense geographic distances.
2. Limited access to experienced/knowledgeable service providers.
3. Disproportionate levels of poverty.
4. Local units of government (cities and counties) typically lack sufficient resources to meet community needs. Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW) – Child and

Family Services provides most child welfare services using a combination of federal and state funds.

In low population density areas of the state, it is important to maintain resource flexibility and creativity while being as responsive as possible to individual, family, and community needs.

Population Growth

According to the US Census estimates for 2020, Idaho has a population of 1,787,065. Since the 2010 census, Idaho's population has been estimated to increase by 14 percent. Idaho was the fastest growing state in the U.S in 2020. Idaho is forty-fourth in the US for population density, with 20 people per square mile and the federal government owns 61 percent of Idaho's public land.

Ada County, the largest county in Idaho, also experienced the most rapid growth over the last decade, climbing over 19.48 percent. Other cities that have experienced rapid growth include Canyon County (18.03 percent), Kootenai County (16.31 percent), Teton County (14.67 percent), Valley County (12.80 percent), and Jefferson County (12.27 percent).

Idaho is one of the fastest-growing states in the nation comes as no surprise as Idahoans see the effects of growth, including one of the toughest housing markets in the country. In the last 20 years, Ada and Canyon counties have seen about 75 percent growth in their populations, according to data released recently by the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS).

Economy

Idaho has a diverse economy founded on the traditional resource-based industries of agriculture, forestry-products and mining, as well as technology, tourism, retail trade, and health care. Manufacturing has recently supplanted agriculture as the most important sector of Idaho's economy. Electronic and computer equipment, processed foods, lumber and chemicals are the major manufactured items. In 2008, the economic recession adversely impacted economic growth in Idaho as it did throughout the US. Idaho's unemployment rate hit 9.7 percent in December of 2010. Between January 2018 and January 2021 Idaho's unemployment rate changed from 3.0 percent to 3.5 percent. The unemployment rate decreased (2.7 percent) and remained steady until April 2020, where it peaked at 11.6 percent, because of COVID-19. In May 2020 it steadily rebound to current levels.

For 2019, the federal poverty level was \$25,750 for a family of four. Children living in families with incomes below the federal poverty level are referred to as poor. But research suggests that, on average, families need an income of about twice the federal poverty level to meet their basic needs. In Idaho, 12.7 percent of children live in poor families compared to 16.8 percent nationwide. Poor is defined as income below 100 percent of the federal poverty level. For Idaho, when age is a consideration, 23 percent of children under the age of five live in poor families. It was estimated during 2019 that 11 percent of all Idahoans are living below the poverty level.

Idaho's ESPI and changes in some reported metrics in SFY 2020

In 2015 Idaho elected to use new federal regulations governing Child Welfare automated systems to replace its aging legacy (SACWIS) automated system iCare with a more modern CCWIS; in Idaho that system has been named ESPI. The three-year Child Welfare Transformation initiative began building ESPI with phased deployments which began in earnest with funding from the federal government and the Idaho Legislature in January 2017 to fund the first of three years, beginning with SFY 2018. ESPI was fully implemented in November 2020 (SFY 2021). This report uses both iCARE and ESPI data. In general, ESPI data provides more detail and was available for some data categories for SFY 2020 for this report. Where new data categories have been created, a notation of (new) has been inserted; and an asterisk (*) has been placed in past years before ESPI data was available. New data categories, while different from past years will provide improved resolution and more detail in SFY 2020 and even more detail in reports of upcoming years.

Status of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Abandonment Referrals

The Child and Family Services program has a Centralized Intake Unit in Boise to which all reports of child abuse or neglect throughout the state are directed. Each report is assessed to determine whether the allegations fall under the statutory definitions of abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Once that determination is made, the report is prioritized for a response. Referrals involving a life-threatening and/or emergency require an immediate response. Other reports receive a priority which requires a response within either 24 or 72 hours. On all reports requiring an immediate response, CFS coordinates the response with local law enforcement. CFS staff take and respond to child abuse and neglect reports 24/7 across the state.

In State Fiscal Year 2020, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Child and Family Services received 22,128 referrals with concerns of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Of these referrals, 10,180 were assigned for a safety assessment, and are labeled as referrals "screened in." If a referral does not meet the statutory guidelines for abuse, neglect, or abandonment a safety assessment will not be scheduled; in these cases, a secondary referral may be made to other entities or agencies based on the unique circumstances of each situation. These referrals are labeled as "Screened out" and 11,948 referrals were "screened out" (almost 54 percent of all referrals) in SFY 2020. As a result of the "screened in" referrals, and the subsequent safety assessment, 1,273 children were placed in Foster Care in SFY 2020. Although in Idaho, every citizen is a mandatory reporter, more than half of all child protection referrals come from educators, medical professionals, childcare providers, social service providers, and other professionals.

Table 1: Referrals by Type							
Referral Type	Number of Referrals by Referral Type by State Fiscal Year					SFY 2020 Percentages	
	SFY 2016	SFY 2017	SFY 2018	SFY 2019	SFY 2020	Screened In	All Referrals
1. Neglect	6,256	6,452	7,265	8,234	7,132	70.06%	32.231%
2. Physical Abuse	2,080	2,001	2,231	2,230	2,220	21.81%	10.033%
3. Sexual Abuse	545	539	660	775	694	6.82%	3.136%
4. Other	3	2	3	1	107	1.05%	0.484%
5. Human Trafficking (new)	*	*	*	*	26	0.26%	0.117%
6. Abandonment (new)	*	*	*	*	1	0.01%	0.005%
“Screened in” Referral Total	8,884	8,994	10,159	11,240	10,180	100.00%	46.01%
“Screened out” Referrals	13,462	13,131	13,440	12,316	11,948		53.99%
Total all Referrals	22,346	22,125	23,599	23,556	22,128		100.00%
Children Placed in Foster Care	1,321	1,337	1,374	1,407	1,173		

In general, the number of referrals, assessments, and foster care placements have demonstrated an upward trend from SFY 2016 through SFY 2019. However, SFY 2020 differed from past years in that the number of referrals, safety assessments, and children placed in foster care all decreased.

Distribution of Age of Children in Foster Care

The Child and Family Services program has identified children age birth to five-years old as being the population at greatest risk for maltreatment. The identification of this population as being at greatest risk was made in consideration of Idaho child welfare data. Children birth to five years old make up just over 26 percent of Idaho’s general child population. However, they accounted for more than 48.6 percent of the substantiated child abuse and neglect cases received during FFY 2019 and account for 43 percent of children in foster care during FFY 2019. This population has been consistently identified at greatest risk of maltreatment in Idaho for several years.

0-5 Population Percentage of Total Foster Care Population				
	FFY 2016	FFY 2017	FFY 2018	FFY 2019
Number of Children in Foster Care	1525	1604	1815	1785
Number of Children Age 0-5 in Foster Care	671	738	835	750
	44%	46%	46%	42%
Number of Children Age 6-17 in Foster Care	854	866	980	1035
	56%	54%	54%	58%

Race/Ethnicity in Idaho and in Foster Care

During FFY 2019, Idaho saw a slight decrease in the number of American Indian children placed in foster care with no change in the number of American Indian homes. There was a decrease in the number of Hispanic children placed in foster care with a corresponding decrease in the number of Hispanic foster homes. The number of Black or African American children placed in foster care decreased with a corresponding decrease in the number of Black or African American foster parents. This data may indicate success in locating relative and fictive kinship placements specific to the American Indian, Hispanic, and Black population. However, the data also reflects the ongoing need to recruit non-relative families specific to these populations. Children and Family Services needs to highlight these strategies and continue efforts to recruit families of similar race and ethnicity to the children placed in foster care.

Race	# Children in Foster Care				# Licensed Foster Parents			
	FFY 2019				FFY 2019			
	Total	Ethnicity			Total	Ethnicity		
	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Unknown		Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Unknown	
Alaskan Native	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	
American Indian	103	26	75	2	41	1	37	
Black/African-American	85	9	72	4	23	1	18	
Filipino	3	1	2	0	2	0	2	
Hawaiian	10	4	6	0	2	0	2	
Japanese	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	
Multiple	0	0	0	0	22	3	13	
Other Asian	11	0	11	0	13	0	9	
Other Pacific Islander	21	5	15	1	3	1	1	
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Unable to Determine	154	13	21	120	115	15	16	
White	2,833	399	2,385	49	2,927	252	2,110	
TOTAL	3,225	457	2,592	176	3,149	273	2,209	

Licensed Foster Homes

During FFY 2019, there was an increase in the number of licensed non-relative and relative/fictive-kin resource family homes. The need to find and prepare families to foster and adopt children is ongoing. In FFY 2019, there were 3,152 children served in Idaho's foster care system, and 1,545 licensed resource families. Of those, 714 or 46 percent were non-relative (general) families, while approximately 805 or 52 percent were relative/fictive kin caregivers. The chart below highlights the increase in the number of children served in foster care, compared to licensed foster homes categorized by type.

	FFY 2016	FFY 2017	FFY 2018	FFY 2019
# of Children in Foster Care	2,688	2,781	3,012	3,152
Total Licensed Foster Homes	1,338	1,383	1,476	1,545
Non-relative Family Home	594	595	656	714
Relative/Fictive-Kin	686	741	783	805

The number of children placed in foster care has gradually increased over the past few years. At any given time, there are approximately 1,700 children in foster care. Despite the increased use of relative/fictive kin placements, Children and Family Services is in continual need of more non-relative licensed resource families.

A foster care licensing re-design team met in the summer of 2019 to begin the re-engineering Children and Family Services' foster care processes. Re-design will include consideration of each process involved in the recruitment, training, licensing, and retention of resource families. Implementation started in FFY 2020 and is continuing through FFY2021.

Independent Living

Idaho's Independent Living Program assists foster youth in their transition to adult responsibilities. Independent Living funding accesses supports and services for employment, education, housing, daily living skills, and personal needs.

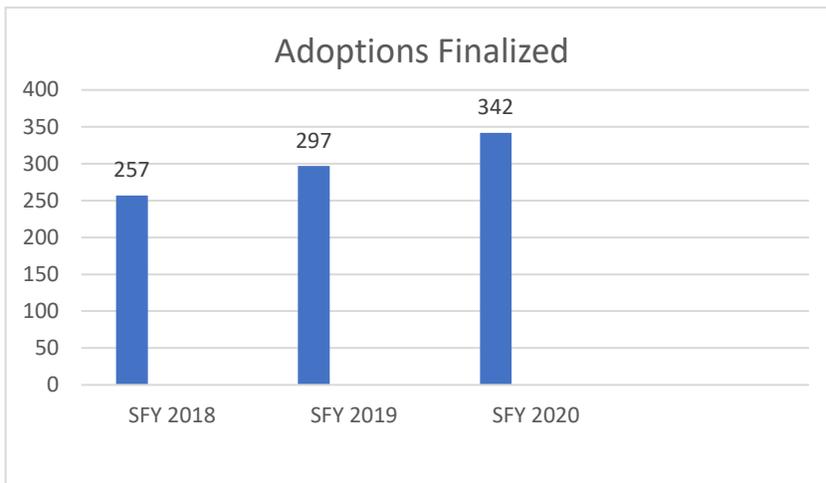
In SFY2020, 488 youth between the ages of 14 to 21 were served by the Independent Living program.

To help foster youth transition to adulthood and provide educational opportunities, the federal Education and Training Voucher program provides up to \$5,000 per year. The voucher is available to youth who have been in foster care after the age of 14 and have received a high school diploma or GED.

Adoption

Child and Family Services provides adoption services for children in foster care whose parents' rights have been terminated by the court. In almost all cases, children adopted through Idaho's foster care system have special needs. These children may be part of a sibling group that must stay together, or are children who have physical, mental, emotional, or medical disabilities. Some children may be older but still need a permanent home through adoption. The department's goal is to find a family who can best meet an individual child's needs within 24 months of the child entering foster care. Individualized adoption recruitment involves a variety of strategies and collaboration with community partners. To help meet this goal, the Department of Health and Welfare has revised the process to approve families for adoption, making it easier for current foster families to adopt.

Families who adopt special needs children are eligible to apply for either federal or state adoption assistance benefits. These benefits help adoptive families meet the expenses associated with finalizing an adoption and the cost of parenting a child who has special needs.



The number of children adopted in Federal Fiscal Year 2020 was 342. At the state and local level, the Department of Health and Welfare and the judicial system work closely to improve the monitoring and system processes to reduce delays and help children join safe, caring, and stable families.

Interstate Compact

According to Idaho’s Statewide Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Administrator, an estimated 900-950 ICPC cases are open in Idaho at any given time. This number includes both incoming (request to place children in Idaho) and outgoing (requests to place children in another state) cases for foster care and adoptions, private adoptions, and residential treatment. However, the majority of the cases are foster care and adoptive placements. During the past six years, Idaho has received almost double the incoming requests as compared to outgoing requests, but in the past year, the number of outgoing requests has significantly increased and is nearly the same number as incoming.

With the passage of the Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006, Idaho developed a practice standard to guide social workers in completing and reporting the results of a home study within sixty calendar days from the time Idaho’s ICPC Administrator receives the request.

Idaho’s Child and Family Services Plan

Idaho submitted their most recent 5-year Child and Family Service Plan in June 2019. This plan was developed in collaboration with multiple stakeholder groups, including the Task Force. The Task Force will continue to provide feedback on and support of CFSP efforts and will make attempts to align CJA and CFSP work efforts. Following are the goals and objectives included in the state’s CFSP plan which have also been updated on an annual basis through Idaho Annual Progress and Service Report.

Goal 1: Implementation of effective case consultation and resource family licensing processes that align with best practice standards, ensures safety assessment, informs permanency decisions, and supports resource parents.

Data analysis revealed the following key concerns:

- There are unclear policies and practice standards regarding expectations for assessing all members of a family/household.
- Supervision has focused primarily on initial safety assessments rather than ongoing assessments of risk and safety.
- Social workers either do not consistently use the case consultation element of the safety model to define safety threats or conditions for “return home”; or when they do, the safety threats and conditions for “return home” are not clearly articulated within court reports, court testimony, or case plans. This leaves court partners without a clear understanding of the underlying safety issues and the linkage of how case plan goals support mitigation of these issues.
- Parents (both mothers and fathers) who were not immediately engaged at the onset of a case due to issues like incarcerations, active mental health or substance abuse issues, or an inability to locate them, were less likely to be engaged throughout the life of the case. Lack of engagement was not due to adaptive challenges, but rather was influenced by workload demands and social workers not appropriately prioritizing engagement in these cases.
- Concurrent planning occurs effectively in parts of the state where staffing processes are utilized properly.
- Resource parents, legislators, court partners, youth, and fields staff have raised concerns regarding the adequacy of ongoing supports for resource parents.
- During SFY 2018, 41 percent of the 1,481 placement changes that occurred for children in care were the result of a resource parent’s request. Of those, 35 percent were due to challenges experienced by the resource parent in managing the child’s behaviors. For cases rated as an area needing improvement (ANI) in identifying and meeting foster parent needs, it was found resource families were not prepared to care for the children placed in their homes, needing training in caring for children with special needs which was consistent with feedback received through post-permanency and annual resource parent surveys.
- Resource parent focus groups conducted statewide indicated a need for additional structure for ongoing training requirements as well as additional training.
- Studies revealed Idaho’s workforce is licensed, knowledgeable, and skilled, yet social workers’ performance is challenged by significant competing demands on their time. CFS social workers overwhelmingly expressed a desire to complete high quality casework; however, due to unmanageable workloads, they are unable to consistently meet practice requirements and engage families which negatively impacts safety and permanency outcomes.

Measure of Progress:

Increase performance for Risk Assessment and Safety Management

Goal:80.4% Target Date: FFY 2024

Idaho Baseline Performance:73.4% FFY 2018 (CRR)

Increase performance for Stability in Foster Care Placement
Goal:86.0% Target Date: FFY 2024
Idaho Baseline Performance:75.0% FFY 2018 (CRR)

Increase performance for Permanency Goal for Child
Goal:81.5% Target Date: FFY 2024
Idaho Baseline Performance:80.9% FFY 2018 (CRR)

Increase performance for Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents
Goal:74.9% Target Date: FFY 2024
Idaho Baseline Performance:68.8% FFY 2018 (CRR)

Increased performance on Educational Needs of the Child
Goal:95% Target Date: FFY 2024
Idaho Baseline Performance:88.2% FFY 2018 (CRR)

Increased performance on Physical Health of the Child
Goal:90% Target Date: FFY 2024
Idaho Baseline Performance:86.7% FFY 2018 (CRR)

Increased performance on Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child
Goal:90% Target Date: FFY 2024
Idaho Baseline Performance:78.9% FFY 2018(CRR)

Goal 2: Implement Services to Prevent the Placement of Children in Foster Care

Statewide provision of prevention services is a critical component in maintaining children safely at home whenever possible. Idaho is a rural state and experiences challenges ensuring the availability of these types of services. For this reason, it is critical for the Child and Family Services program to collaborate with internal and external partners and stakeholder to implement prevention services.

Measure of Progress:

Evidenced-based prevention services in the areas of substance abuse, mental health, and parenting will be implemented.

Goal 3: Formalize ongoing and meaningful engagement and collaboration with internal and external partners and stakeholders in the development and implementation of the Children and Family Services Plan.

Idaho's engagement of internal and external partners and stakeholders in the development and implementation of the Child and Family Services Plan has often been inconsistent and informal. In April 2019, the Child and Family Services program Deputy Division Administrator and a child welfare policy program specialist met with other members of the Idaho State Team, including representatives from the Administrative Office of the Courts, a child welfare judge, and a representative from the Idaho Children's Trust Fund. The Idaho State Team identified the need to convene a meeting of key child welfare partners and stakeholders to

identify cross-cutting issues which present barriers to system-wide child welfare improvements in Idaho. The meeting will improve understanding of larger systems issues impacting areas of concern. A multi-system plan to address identified issues will be developed.

Measure of Progress:

Key child welfare partners and stakeholders including representatives from multiple child welfare system partners and stakeholders is utilized to inform the Annual Service Progress Report to the 2020-2024 CFSP.

Law Enforcement

Based on the 2019 Crime in Idaho report, Idaho law enforcement continues to experience some of the same issues as counterparts in other states. Even though there has been an overall decrease in violent and property crimes nationwide, trends show an increase in some crimes against society, such as a slight increase to prostitution, a significant increase in pornography (possession/concealing, distribution, and exploitation of children), an increase in prescription drug abuse, and an increase in larceny and theft. From 2018 to 2019, Idaho experienced an overall 4 percent decrease in crimes against society. Of those crimes, nearly half were categorized as drug or narcotic violations. From 2018 to 2019, there was a decrease in relational crimes against person to include a decrease in intimate partner violence, violence against children, family violence, and other relational violence. There was an increase in non-consensual sex offences with the top relations of victim to offender being an acquaintance or child. Forty-eight percent of the victims were juveniles with 82 percent of juvenile victims being female.

The Idaho Criminal Justice Needs Assessment 2019 shows that while indicators of violent crime have been trending lower, indicators of drug crime have been headed in the opposite direction. Between 2008 and 2017, there was a 91 percent increase in the number of drug arrests in Idaho, with heroin (up 1,703 percent), meth/amphetamines (up 249 percent), and marijuana (up 82 percent) driving the growth. The number of arrestees who were physically arrested, meaning they spent a period of time in police custody and/or in jail, increased by 72 percent during that time.

Suspected drug and alcohol use are also increasingly associated with violent crime. In 2017, the offender was suspected of being under the influence of alcohol in 79 percent of violent incidents. Since 2008, the number of sexual assaults in which the offender was suspected of being under the influence of drugs increased by 109 and the number of aggravated assaults in which the offender was suspected of being under the influence of drugs increased by 87 percent.

The surge in drug arrests is putting a burden on not only law enforcement, but on state and local corrections systems as well. At the end of 2017, Idaho had the second-highest state prisoner rate in the western United States. Five of every 1,000 Idaho residents was incarcerated in a state prison (Arizona was the highest at six per 1,000 residents), despite Idaho having one of the lowest property and violent crime rates among the 11 western states.

It is becoming increasingly necessary for law enforcement to partner with other local organizations to stay ahead of the war against drug abuse and drug trafficking. Furthermore, collaboration within a multi-agency and multidisciplinary setting is a key component in finding affective approaches to the challenges facing law enforcement, as budgets dwindle, and funding becomes more and more limited. Many law enforcement agencies across Idaho have embraced this working model and the Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk support and applaud these agencies in their efforts.

Across all sectors of Idaho's criminal justice system, mental health and substance abuse consistently ranked as one of the highest needs both in the justice system and in the community at large. There was a high level of agreement among respondents that mental health and substance abuse are contributing to criminal activity, and that early interventions in these areas could potentially work to reduce crime rates. Additionally, effective interventions to lower recidivism rates ranked as a high need.

There is some crime data to back up these opinions. Since 2008, drug-related arrests have been increasing rapidly. The Idaho Department of Correction (IDOC) is supervising more offenders per capita than almost every other Western state, and more offenders are under IDOC supervision for drug crimes than any other crime type. There is also data to suggest that there are more offenders under the influence of drugs committing violent crimes than there was 10 years ago. Youth who had grown up in homes with justice-involved adults or experienced traumatic events were common among those committed to Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections (IDJC) facilities. Justice-involved youth who had both substance abuse and mental health treatment needs were also more likely to continue their criminal behavior into adulthood, most often violating drug or alcohol laws.

Multidisciplinary Teams

Idaho's Child Protective Act requires multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) be formed in all counties, headed by the county prosecuting attorney. These multidisciplinary teams review child protection cases and coordinate investigations and case preparation for prosecution. In smaller counties, MDTs are not formed due to a lack of child protection activity. In the fall of 2013, the Task Force commissioned a survey on the existence and structure of MDTs in each of Idaho's counties. The survey result indicated 37 of the 44 counties in Idaho have established MDTs; 29 of the existing MDTs meet once a month, with a few meeting more often and a few meeting less often. The majority of MDTs include the Department of Health and Welfare, representatives from law enforcement, and the prosecutor. Some of the MDTs included other entities such as schools, victim/witness coordinators, and private mental health providers. Several counties expressed difficulty getting some of the entities to attend, including law enforcement and schools.

Prosecution of Child Sexual Abuse

Each year, the Attorney General and Governor prepare a report on prosecution of child sexual abuse. This report is submitted to the legislature pursuant to Idaho Code § 67-1405. The report covers cases of child sexual abuse in which criminal charges were filed in Idaho

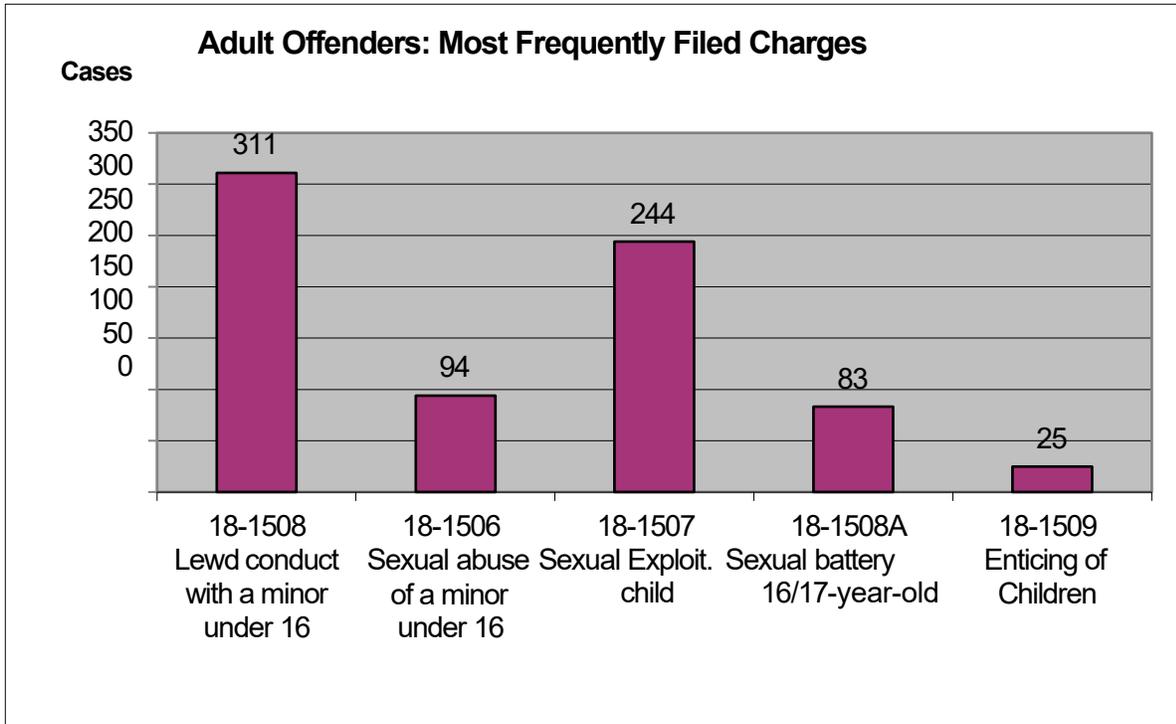
courts. It includes statistical data on victims and offenders, disposition of cases, and sentencing practices. During FY 2020, the total number of reported incidents of child sexual abuse in Idaho increased by 17 percent, with an additional 115 incidents reported compared to FY2019. This increase is slightly less than the 22 percent increase we reported for FY2019. Additionally, the total number of child sexual abuse cases filed in Idaho in FY2020 was 973, an increase of 277 cases compared to FY2019. That was the highest number of cases filed since this report was first completed in FY1990.

We do not know whether these high numbers can be attributed to Idaho’s growing population, whether societal factors are somehow contributing to more sexual abuse of children, or whether there are other factors of which we are not aware.

For fiscal years 2007 to 2020, the total number of child sexual abuse cases filed each year was as follows:

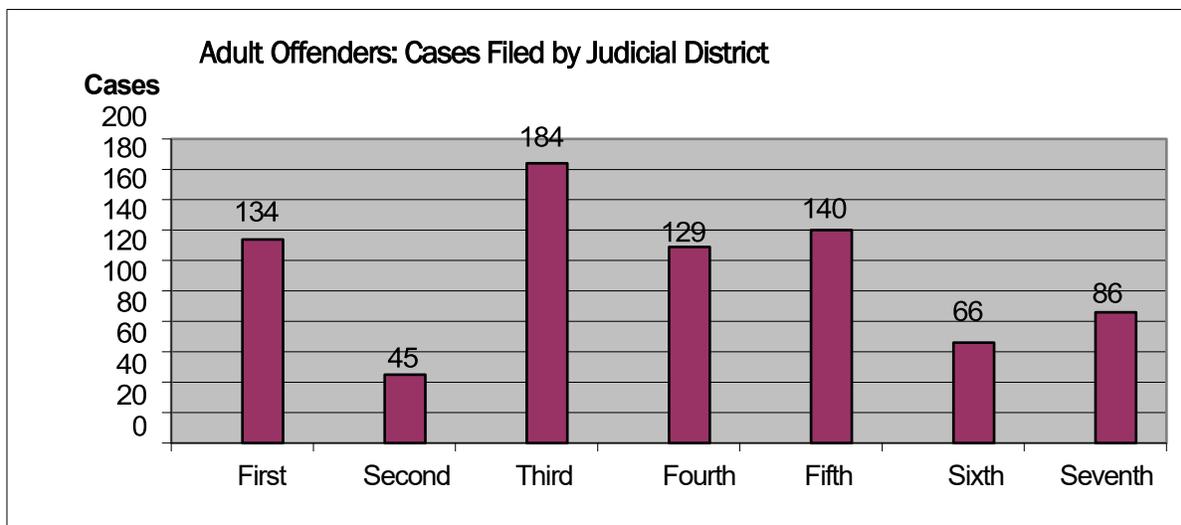
FISCAL YEAR	INCIDENTS
FY20	775
FY19	660
FY18	539
FY17	545
FY16	431
FY15	518
FY14	611
FY13	443
FY12	427
FY11	343
FY10	385
FY09	385
FY08	415
FY07	452

The following chart shows the breakdown, by Idaho Code, of the most frequent charges filed against adult offenders from among the 784 child sexual abuse cases reported.



Lewd conduct with a minor child under sixteen continues to be the charge most frequently filed, representing 41 percent of the charges filed in the 784 adult cases.

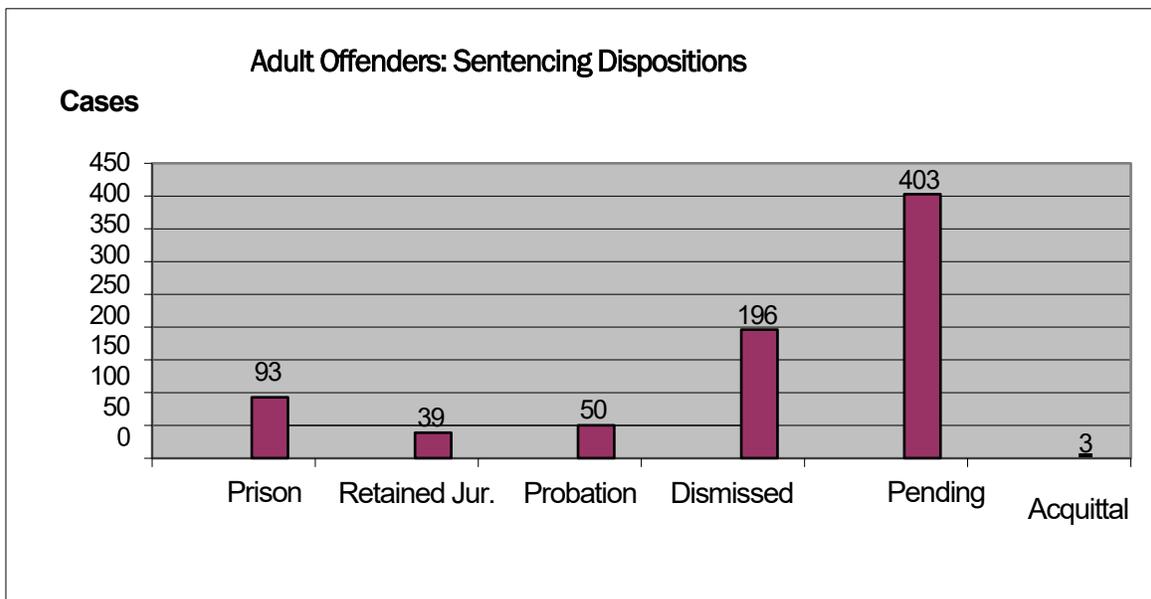
Below are the number of child sexual abuse cases filed against adult offenders in each of the State's seven judicial districts during FY2020.



The Third and Fourth Judicial Districts of Idaho reported filing the highest number of cases, representing 40 percent of the total child sexual abuse adult offender cases filed in FY 2020.

In FY2020, convictions were obtained in 182 child sexual abuse cases where the offender was an adult; dismissals were entered in 196 cases and 403 cases remain pending.

The following chart describes sentencing for adult offenders.



This chart also shows that of those convicted in FY2020, 93 adults (51 percent) were sentenced to prison; 39 adults (21 percent) were given retained jurisdiction; and 50 adults (28 percent) were placed on probation.

The Commission of Pardons and Parole reported that during the FY2020, it granted parole to 256 inmates and discharged an additional 293 inmates who had completed their sentences. These inmates were offenders serving sentences for committing child sexual abuse crimes.

Victim Services/Coordinators

To reduce a victim’s trauma associated with participating in the legal process, prosecuting attorneys have appointed someone in each county to fulfill the role of Victim Witness Coordinator. These individuals assist children in becoming familiar with the courtroom and the judicial process.

Social and support services for those who have been victimized tend to be centered in Idaho’s urban areas. A 2019 Idaho Statistical Analysis Center (ISAC) report found that while 42 of Idaho’s 44 counties have at least one victim service agency within their boundaries,

the majority (59 percent) of available grant funding was going to agencies in six urban counties, and 20 counties did not have a single victim service agency that was receiving grant funding. Services for child victims of crime, specifically physical and/or sexual abuse, are spread especially thin. A recent ISAC survey of Idaho-based forensic interviewers found that children in rural areas could sometimes be required to travel more than 100 miles to receive services. Furthermore, 17 percent of respondents reported that they had difficulty scheduling a forensic interview during the previous year, usually because the distance victims need to travel is too great or because the nearest agency with a forensic interviewer on staff has a backlog of children waiting for services. The study also found that although the rate of victimizations reported to law enforcement has declined, some indicators of demand for victim services have been increasing. In 2018, victim service agencies that received grant funding reported serving about 11 percent more victims than in 2016, and the number of claims approved by Idaho's Crime Victims Compensation Program increased by nearly 30 percent in that same time.

Regarding victim services, ISAC data shows there is a need for more resources, but the need is highest in rural areas. Crime victims who do not live in urban centers often need to travel long distances to receive services. For some, this obstacle can be too large to overcome. This makes victims of sexual and domestic violence especially vulnerable to victimization, as key resources (such as emergency or transitional housing) may not be available.

Idaho's Courts

The Idaho Supreme Court Child Protection Committee (CP Committee or Committee), the steering committee for Idaho's Court Improvement Project (CIP), works with other key stakeholders to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of Idaho's children.

During the last three years, the accomplishments of the Child Protection Committee include:

- The Child Protection Committee continues to strengthen its existing continuous quality improvement process by supporting a process for systematically engaging local courts in court improvement efforts and uprooting local court improvement efforts.
- The Committee completed a quality of hearings report after an extensive review of child protection hearings and data to help guide the courts on new endeavors to improve the quality of child protection hearings and strengthen legal representation in Idaho.
- In collaboration with the Department of Health and Welfare, the Committee created a Data Review Group to identify data to inform continuous quality improvement efforts in Idaho's child welfare system.
- The CP Committee updated resources for Idaho's magistrate judges who hear child protection cases. The updated judicial resources included the Judicial Bench Cards and the Statute and Rules Reference Guide for judge and stakeholders.
- The Committee assisted the Juvenile Justice Committee in drafting amendments to Idaho Juvenile Rule 16 which provides for increased collaboration between youth, families, the court, agencies, and community juvenile justice stakeholders in an effort

to prevent a juvenile justice case from being expanded into a child protection proceeding.

- The CP Committee and the Department of Health and Welfare completed a districtwide multidisciplinary training for judges, attorneys, social workers, and guardians ad litem on using safety and concurrent planning to safely return a child home at the earliest opportunity in the case.
- In collaboration with the Department of Health and Welfare and the Department of Juvenile Corrections, the CP Committee assisted in the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding to provide for a more efficient exchange of information between the agencies.
- The CP Committee helped to support the Guardian ad Litem programs across the state by reimbursing the programs for COVID and fingerprint-related expenses with excess funds from the CIP grants.

The goals for the Idaho Supreme Court Child Protection Committee for the next three years include:

- Collaborate with the Court Management Division to provide training for clerks on data entry in Odyssey for child protection cases.
- Collaborate with the Data and Evaluation Department to develop and validate reports for child protection collection data.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to create a pilot program for an interdisciplinary approach to the legal representation of parents in child welfare cases.
- Support the Child Protection Section of the Idaho State Bar Association in its efforts to increase the quality of legal representation in Idaho.
- In collaboration with the National Association of Counsel for Children, the CP Committee will be offering scholarships for child welfare specialization training for attorneys providing legal representation in an Idaho child protection case.
- Reflect changes in state and federal law, ongoing updates of Idaho Child Protection Manual, Forms, and Bench Cards.

Child Fatality Review Team

In May 2012, Idaho's Governor signed Executive Order No. 2012-03, which allows for CARTF to establish and support a statewide child fatality review team to allow comprehensive and multidisciplinary review of deaths of children younger than 18 years-old, in order to identify what information and education may improve the health and safety of Idaho's children.

In September 2012, CARTF worked with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics to hire a research analyst utilizing CJA funds. This research analyst has been tasked with gathering case records and preparing case information for Child Fatality Review Team meetings. In September 2012, Teri Convington, with the National Center for Child Death Review, came to Idaho to train CARTF members on the basics of setting up a Child Fatality Review Team.

In February 2013, Ms. Convington returned to Idaho to train the newly formed Child Fatality Review Team. The review team consists of twelve (12) representatives from: law

enforcement, child protective services, prosecuting attorney's offices, coroner's offices, public health, the pediatric medical field, emergency medical services, and child advocacy groups.

In 2020-2021, the CFR team met to review 2018 cases in:

2020

January – Motor vehicle accidents

March – Accidents (non-motor vehicle)

May – Subcommittee meeting to screen/first review of 2018 perinatal conditions and other natural manner and non-ranking cause deaths

June – Sudden Unexplained Infant Deaths

August - Perinatal conditions and other natural manner and non-ranking cause deaths

November – Suicides

2021

January 2021: to review 2018 homicides and to conduct second reviews of four cases that originally had missing information.

The Child Fatality Review Team publishes an annual report on the child fatalities reviewed during the month of May each calendar year. The recent annual report will reflect the findings of 2018 case reviews.

Findings of the Three-Year Assessment

The findings, recommendations, and strategic plan emphasize the need for continued efforts to integrate the child protection response systems in each community in Idaho, through the development and enhancement of multidisciplinary teams. Many of the goals outlined in this new plan are designed to support the development, training, and technical assistance for local multidisciplinary teams. These recommendations, in the form of goals and strategies, reflect the on-going mission of the Governor's Children at Risk Task Force which is to make the system more sensitive and responsive to child victims.

As a result of this review process, the Task Force found progress has been made to improve the investigation, administration, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect as well as cases involving suspected child maltreatment related fatalities. The prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases and the responsiveness and sensitivity of the system to the victim's issues improves each year. However, these areas continue to be the state's top priorities for improvement in the system that handles child abuse and neglect.

Findings of the three-year assessment includes the following strengths

- There continue to be improvements in the court system, largely due to a well-functioning court improvement project, the Supreme Court Child Protection Committee.
- Existing multidisciplinary teams are working together in a coordinated effort to investigate referrals of child abuse, neglect, and child exploitation for civil and criminal judicial proceedings.

- There is additional coordination of multidisciplinary training as a result of increased grant opportunities available through Children Justice Act funds.
- There are victim witness coordinators in most counties.
- Idaho citizens have increased awareness about their responsibility of being a mandated reporter.
- The Governor’s Children at Risk Task Force is making active efforts to build relationships and strengthen awareness about its role and functions.
- The child protection system stakeholders, including prosecutors, public defenders, guardian’s ad litem, CASA, etc., continue to be recognized for the work done in handling cases of child abuse and neglect.
- Existing Child Advocacy Centers are growing stronger and new Child Advocacy Centers are developing and being sustained throughout the State.
- Idaho has an established Statewide Child Fatality Review Team.
- Idaho’s Child and Family Services program continues to meet or exceed the national standards for maltreatment in care and recurrence of maltreatment for the past several years.

Findings of the three-year assessment includes the following concerns

- The prosecuting attorney in each county should organize, join, and/or lead a multidisciplinary team pursuant to Title 16 Juvenile Proceedings, Chapter 16, Idaho Child Protective Act. Not every county has a multidisciplinary team as mandated by statute.
- Idaho does not have full time prosecutors in every county.
- There continues to be a need for additional training and collaboration of services between MDT members.
- Idaho continues to need additional foster homes, especially for older youth and large sibling groups. Therapeutic foster care placements are also needed to meet the needs of children and youth in care with complex trauma needs. Additional recruitment needs to occur for Native American homes to ensure compliance with placement preferences under the Indian Child Welfare Act.
- Idaho continues to have gap in mental health services in rural communities.
- Idaho was found not in substantial conformity with achieving permanency for children in care to ensure children are reunified with their parents within 12 months, achieve guardianship in 18 months, and/or achieve adoption within 24 months. There were many areas identified as barriers in the system and a program improvement plan is in development.
- Idaho continues to struggle in achieving placement stability for children placed in foster care. This means children in the foster care system experience too many placement changes. Federal measures state that children should have two or fewer placement settings while in foster care. Placement moves also are shown to create additional trauma for children in care.

These findings, as well as others to enhance the handling, investigation, and prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, and suspected child maltreatment related fatalities are reflected in the new recommendations and strategic plan for 2021-2024.

Recommendations of the Children at Risk Task Force for 2018-2020

The recommendations submitted for 2018-2020 have been modified to reflect the findings of the review and the current needs of Idaho's child protective system. The goals and strategies address ongoing and new priority areas. They are broad in their focus and are the vehicles through which a variety of changes to Idaho's system for investigating and prosecuting child abuse and neglect can be made. They include improving the system for cases involving a potential combination of jurisdictions, such as interstate and state-tribal involvement. Many of the recommendations allow for innovative approaches and techniques which will improve the prompt and successful resolution of civil and criminal court proceedings or enhance the effectiveness of judicial action in cases including child physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. During the next three-year period, the Task Force will work on goals and strategies reflected in the new recommendations and strategic plan that is submitted below.

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GOAL 1

Continue support and enhancement of Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) in each Idaho county in accordance with Idaho Code Section 16-1609. Support development of training in core competencies for professionals involved in the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect.

STRATEGIES	TIME FRAMES
a. Provide annual area MDT training to promote the continued formation of MDTs and enhance existing MDTs.	Ongoing, Annually
b. Encourage MDT formation and functioning. Prepare handouts for stakeholder’s meetings with information to promote initiating MDTs or enhancing their current function.	Ongoing, Annually
c. During the next three years, invite child protection stakeholders to share training strategies and concerns involved in the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect.	Ongoing, Annually
d. Using federal Criminal Justice Act funds, continue to provide funding resources that are available for training MDTs.	Ongoing, Annually
e. Develop a process to request annual information from MDTs that includes (1) activities, (2) strengths and (3) needs.	Ongoing, Annually

GOAL 2	
Review and make recommendations to improve current and proposed legislation and rules pertaining to the child protection process.	
STRATEGIES	TIME FRAMES
a. Review proposed legislation relating to child abuse and neglect, communicate conclusions to the governor, and make recommendations to legislators or other appropriate entities.	Ongoing
b. Review the CPA and if appropriate, make recommendations for revision.	Ongoing
c. Invite Office of Performance Evaluation to update CARTF on current legislative issues regarding child protection system.	2018-2020

GOAL 3	
Evaluate and improve the investigation and prosecution process for civil and criminal cases involving child abuse and neglect.	
STRATEGIES	TIME FRAMES
a. Develop a process to recognize stakeholders in the child protection system.	Ongoing, Annually
b. Evaluate, develop, update, and distribute materials via a variety of modalities to educate the public and those involved in the legal processes related to child abuse and neglect.	Ongoing, Annually
c. Annually, receive a report from the Supreme Court Committee Child Protection Committee to identify and monitor practices within the legal process.	Ongoing, Annually
d. Research the impact of court-related trauma to children by helping them understand their role in court.	Ongoing
e. Review Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Centralized Intake Unit's processes for receiving and dispatching reports of child abuse and neglect to protect children.	Ongoing
f. Identify and review how societal issues affect child welfare in Idaho.	Ongoing

g. Review the foster care system in the state of Idaho. exemption in Idaho Child Protective Act 16-1602(25)(a).	Ongoing
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GOAL 4	
Oversee the Statewide Child Fatality Review Team to examine child deaths.	
STRATEGIES	TIME FRAMES
a. Continue to seek technical assistance as needed and attend the National Resource Center on Child Fatalities to assist in maintaining a statewide Child Fatality Review Team.	Ongoing
b. Provide financial support of Child Fatality Review Team.	Ongoing
c. Support legislation to meet the needs of the Statewide Child Fatality Review Team. Continue to support the ongoing development of CFRT bylaws and procedures for the gathering of child fatality data.	Ongoing
d. Support the continued development of a robust CFRT membership.	Ongoing
e. Support the dissemination and development of the CFRT Report.	Ongoing