



The Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk
January 3, 2025
Boise, ID/ Virtual Only

(A)Nadine McDonald, Juvenile Justice (Chairman)	(V)Jennifer Tachell– Educator (Vice-Chairman)
(V)Andie Blackwood- DHW, Family & Children Services	(V)Susan Bradford, MD – Pediatrician
(A)Lena Biondolillo- Children with Disabilities	OPEN- Child Advocate Attorney
(V)Sheila Sturgeon Freitas, PhD– Mental Health	(V)Hon. Steve Clark- Civil Magistrate Judge
(A)Curtis Carper- Law Enforcement	(V)Kyle Bringhamst- Prosecuting Attorney
(A)Maddi Ames– Foster Youth	(V)Tahna Barton – CASA
OPEN – Homeless Education Liaison	(V)Hon. Brent Ferguson- Crim. Magistrate Judge
(V)Jill Robertson– Parent	(V)Joshua Wickard- Public Defender
(V)Susan Nalley– Victim Services Coordinator	(V)Teresa Vance- Administrator of the Courts
(V)Mindy Peper – Task Force Support	Indicates Absent (A) Virtual (V)

Guests: *Shannon Romero, Director Alternate Counsel Division- Office of the Idaho State Public Defender; Jared Ricks, Contract Coordinator Alternate Counsel Division; Eric Frederickson, - Office of the Idaho State Public Defender*

Meeting Purpose

Monthly meeting of the Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk (CARTF) to discuss updates, review goals, and plan for upcoming conferences and events.

Key Takeaways

- **State Public Defender's office provided an update on changes to child protection case representation, including challenges and improvements in attorney assignment timelines**
- **Task force reviewed and updated strategic goals for annual report, focusing on legislative updates, training, and system improvements**
- **Plans made for upcoming San Diego conference attendance and session selection**
- **Updates provided on Child Fatality Review team progress and challenges with coroner reporting**

Topics

Welcome and Minutes

- **Motion to approve October 2024 minutes, as is, no changes. Motion made by Blackwood, seconded by Vance, all in favor and so moved.**

Budget Update

- Motion to approve increase budget to send 6 CARTF task force members to San Diego Child Maltreatment conference in January 2025. Motion to increase budget to \$20,000. **Motion made by Vance, seconded by Barton, all in favor and so moved.**

Public Defender System Update

- **New statewide system implemented Oct 1st for assigning counsel in child protection cases**
- **Initial transition was challenging but placement times have significantly improved (now averaging 0.3 days)**
- **Working to expand remote court appearance options to increase attorney availability statewide**
- **Exploring creation of dedicated family/child protection division within public defender's office**
- **Title IV-E funding now available for parent representation; exploring for guardian ad litem representation**

Child Fatality Review Team Update

- **Finalizing 2022 report and preparing to start 2023 reviews**
- **National Fatality Review Association director to assist with strategic planning in February**
- **New coroner in Bonneville County expected to improve previously non-existent reporting**
- **Team planning individual meetings with coroners statewide to build relationships**
- **Challenges remain with timely data collection and reporting lag**

Strategic Goal Review

- **Reviewed and updated goals 2-3 for annual report**
- **Discussed activities and accomplishments related to each goal area**
- **Identified areas needing additional focus or updates in coming months**
- **Planning additional presentations on foster care licensing, legislative updates**

Next Steps

- **Peper to draft annual report by March 10th**
- **Blackwood to arrange foster care licensing presentation for February meeting**

- **Schedule Ombudsman office presentation for March meeting**
- **Plan for San Diego conference attendees to provide feedback at March meeting**
- **MDT survey results to be presented in April**