



The Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk
February 7, 2025
Boise, ID/ Virtual Only

(V)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	(A)Hon. Steve Clark- Civil Magistrate Judge
(V)Curtis Carper- Law Enforcement	(V)Kyle Bringham- Prosecuting Attorney
(V)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: *Citizen Review Panels from Districts 1-7; Marjean Hazen with IDHW*

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.

Topics

Welcome and Minutes

- Motion to approve January 2025 minutes, as is, no changes. **Motion made by Vance, seconded by Wickard, all in favor and so moved.**

Budget Update

- Blackwood reports that the CARTF budget remains on track. Working from grant cycle 2022. The remaining funds of \$104,053 must be spent down by September 30, 2025.

Subcommittee Updates

- **Grants-** Cycle 1-2025 opened February 3 and applications are due April 5. Award decisions will be made at the May 2025 meeting. Updates and new guidance to grantees are reflected in the new applications.
- **MDT-** Continues to meet about once a month. Working on creating a report from the MDT surveys and will present it to CARTF in April.

- **Conference-** San Diego delegation has returned and is excited to share the results of their trip with CARTF in March. Peper reports that venue bids and One Department paperwork have been turned into IDHW and seem to be moving along. Once approved we can sign a contract with the chosen venue. The date of the conference is October 23.
- **Legislative-** met early Feb and discussed various bills. CARTF shared some other potential bills the subcommittee may want to track. Vance is keeping an updated spreadsheet. The subcommittee will meet every two weeks through the legislative session.
- **CFRT-** met in early February with the national office for training and technical assistance. Two key goals include formalizing the processes of CFRT and work to narrow that gap between year of case reviews and release of data and trends via the annual report. They have added additional meetings to help with these goals. They are also discussing ideas for a new name for the annual report.

Review of Goal 4 in the 3-Year Report

- The meeting with the National office helped meet several strategies in the report.
- The annual report was sent out in January 2025
- Membership is steady and continues to grow. Plan to fill the attorney representation soon with possible former candidate; will add Health and Social Services Ombudsman, Trevor Sparrow, to the membership.
- Team is working to create subcommittees that will include additional members versed in the cause of death that will be reviewed, for instance, inviting IDOT to the motor vehicle reviews.

Spring Planning

- CARTF discussed meeting ideas for March through May. Also decided to move April 4 and September 12 meetings to hybrid.

Meeting with CRP Districts 1-5, 7

- The meeting involved representatives from different districts discussing their experiences and concerns regarding the Child Welfare System. Many echoed similar concerns, such as:
 - Need for continued communication and collaboration among districts.
 - Lack of CPS intervention before multiple referrals.
 - Need for better training for panel members and focused recruitment efforts.
 - Lack of preventative parenting services in jails and ability for imprisoned parents to work their reunification case plans.
 - Challenges of families with substance abuse and mental health issues
 - Importance of evidence-based prevention programs and outcomes
 - Challenges in coordinating multiple schedules for trials and hearings, which may be part of the extended timeline
 - Fewer reunifications and more terminations.

- In the meeting, the participants discussed the decrease in child protection cases and the reasons behind it. Judge Ferguson explained that the Federal Court decision in Ingram vs. Mauser had curtailed law enforcement's ability to remove children from homes in emergency situations, leading to a decrease in cases. Teresa added that a new court process had been recently established to facilitate after-hours removals. Blackwood noted that the case in Ingram vs. Mauser was typical and not abnormal, contributing to the change in definition of 'eminent danger'. Det. Carper shared his experience of the process changes and the impact on law enforcement. Delva agreed with the need for a statewide process and expressed concern about the severity of cases when children are removed. Bringhurst mentioned that Ada County had seen a reduction in cases but had a functioning process in place.

Meeting with Marjean Hazen, IDHW

- Hazen reviews the steps to becoming a licensed foster care parent in Idaho and the new changes that have recently occurred under new department leadership. Team discusses what a medical recommendation is on the application, which is required for foster families looking to adopt. The group also discusses what training is required for new foster parents, in addition to other offered training, as well as the participation rate and engagement. Blackwood notes that the department now adopts a more individualized approach, recommending specific training based on each foster parent's experience and the needs of the children they plan to foster.

Meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm MST