

Office of the Child Advocate
Childhood Trauma Task Force Meeting Minutes
Monday December 6, 2021
1:00pm-3:00pm
Meeting held virtually

Task Force Members or Designees Present:

Maria Mossaides (Chair, OCA)
Rick St. Onge (Probation)
Dawn Christie (Parent)
Laura Brody (DCF)
Rachel Wallack (Juvenile Court)
Yvonne Sparling (DYS)
Andrea Goncalves-Oliveira (DMH)
Kate Lowenstein (CfJJ)
Claudia Dunne (CPCS)
Tammy Mello & Rachel Gwaltney (Children’s League of MA)
Nicole Daley (DPH)

OCA Staff:

Melissa Threadgill (OCA)
Kristi Polizzano (OCA)
Morgan Byrnes (OCA)

Members of the Public::

Mathieu Bermingham
Mary-Beth Landry (FCSN)
Audrey Smolkin (UMass)
Jennifer Urff (MAMH)
Brooke Arrigo (SCDAO)
Cathie Twiraga
Andrea Parker
Courtney Chelo
Carmel Craig
Kathleen Bitetti (SAO)
Ivana Boyd (CfJJ)
Aditi Subramaniam
Caroline Palleschi
Other members of the public

Meeting Commenced: 1:02pm

Welcome and Introductions:

Ms. Threadgill welcomed the attendees to the Childhood Trauma Task Force (CTTF) meeting. CTTF members and guests introduced themselves.

Update on Center for Child Wellbeing and Trauma:

Ms. Threadgill introduced Ms. Smolkin who gave an update on the Center for Child Wellbeing and Trauma at UMass Medical School. Ms. Smolkin was excited to announce that the Center was fully staffed with the addition of an assessment manager and an assessment coach. She updated the committee on cohort study program in partnership with Thriving Minds to focus on trauma and resilience in K-12 students and educational professionals stating that she expects the pilot to begin in January. Additionally, Ms. Smolkin discussed the launch of a program dedicated to a community approach to trauma, racism/racial trauma, and resilience in Worcester.

Review and Approval of Minutes from November 2021 Meeting:

Ms. Threadgill held a formal vote on the approval of the November 1, 2021, meeting minutes. No one was opposed voting on the November meeting minutes. Rachel Wallack, Tammy Mello, Yvonne Sparling, Nicole Daley, Maria Mossaides, Claudia Dunne, Dawn Christie and Kate Lowenstein all voted in the affirmative. Rick St. Onge and Laura Brody abstained.

The meeting minutes for November were approved.

Final Review and Vote on the 2021 CTTF Interim Report on Trauma Screening

Ms. Threadgill asked the group if there was any discussion on the final draft of the group's legislative report. Members wanted to add additional context about racism as a source of trauma earlier on in the report, in addition to information on this that was included in later sections. Members discussed and made the following edit:

- Adding additional context re: on racism as a source of trauma to page 11 of the report.

A motion was made to vote to send the final version, with this edit, to the legislature. A vote was held on the 2021 legislative report.

Maria Mossaides, Chair (OCA)—Yes
Dawn Christie (Parent Representative)—Yes
Tammy Mello (Children's League of MA)—Yes
Yvonne Sparling (DYS) —Yes
Andrea Goncalves-Oliveria (DMH) —Abstained
Rick St.Onge (Probation) —Yes
Kate Lowenstein (CfJJ) —Yes
Nicole Daley (DPH) —Abstained

Claudia Dunne (CPCS) —Yes

Laura Brody (DCF) —Yes

Rachel Wallack (Juvenile Court) – Abstained

The legislative report was approved by the Task Force.

Ms. Threadgill announced next steps to the group including a final edit for grammar and formatting of the document, submission to the legislature and distribution of the report. She suggested the committee take a few months off take some time to get feedback on this report and in anticipation of the OCA staff member supporting this work's return from maternity leave in late February. She said the group's meetings in 2022 would resume in March.

Closing Comments:

Ms. Threadgill asked Ms. Mello to share an update with the other members. Ms. Mello shared with the committee that she is leaving Children's League of Massachusetts at the end of the December to pursue a new role as Executive Director of the Key Program. She will continue to participate as a member of the public.

Ms. Threadgill thanked the group for their enthusiasm and ideas.

Adjournment: 1:40 pm