

Office of the Child Advocate  
Childhood Trauma Task Force Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 9th, 2020  
1:00pm-3:00pm

**Task Force Members or Designees Present:**

John Millet (Probation)  
Claudia Dunne (CPCS)  
Andrea Goncalves-Oliveira (DMH)  
Laura Brody (DCF)  
Nicole Daley (DPH)  
David Melly (Representative Dykema’s Office)  
Kate Lowenstein (CFJJ)  
Dr. Yvonne Sparling (DYS)  
Michelle Botus (DMH)

**Other:**

Edward Jacoubs (Plymouth County DA’s Office)  
Members of the Public

**OCA Staff:**

Melissa Threadgill (OCA)  
Kristi Polizzano (OCA)  
Alix Riviere (OCA)  
Melissa Williams (OCA)

**Meeting Commenced:** 1:10pm

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Ms. Threadgill welcomed the attendees to the Childhood Trauma Task Force (CTTF) meeting, and each person introduced themselves.

Ms. Threadgill reviewed the agenda.

**Presentation on Plymouth County Trauma Initiatives:**

Ms. Threadgill introduced Edward Jacoubs from the Plymouth County District Attorney’s Office who was presenting on their county’s childhood trauma related initiatives.

Mr. Jacobs provided a brief background on his 23-year employment with the Plymouth County DA's Office and spoke about their current ongoing childhood trauma initiatives within the county. Right now, the Plymouth County DA's Office is partnering with various agencies and non-profit organizations to expand trauma-related services to children and families in the community. They work with the Plymouth County Child Advocacy Center, United Way Family Center Brockton, the Office for Victims of Crime, and Plymouth County Outreach. Through these partnerships, they have created numerous county-wide programs and efforts to respond to children who have experienced traumatic events. A few of their programs and initiatives include the following:

1. **Plymouth County Outreach:** An agreement between 28 police departments, 6 hospitals, and multiple recovery centers/coaches to respond collaboratively when an overdose in the community occurs. Together they share information on whether or not follow-up with the overdose victim is necessary depending on if they engaged in treatment following the event. This initiative has successfully placed 750 people in treatment thus far.
2. **Helping Traumatized Children Learn:** This is a trauma-informed training program for schools and educators to learn about working with and understanding children who go through traumatic experiences outside of school and the effects it may have on the child.
3. **Handle with Care:** This initiative was created to increase communication between schools and police when a child experiences a traumatic event in the home or community. The responding police officer will fill out a "Handle with Care" form with the child's name/age and return to the school so the school is aware something traumatic has happened to this child. No further details are provided to the school for confidentiality purposes.
4. **Enhancing Law Enforcement Response Toolkit:** Training for police departments on responding to incidents involving children who have been exposed to violence, drug-use, and other traumatic experiences. This toolkit has originally created by Yale School of Medicine and their School of Social Work in an effort to place students in ride alongs with New Haven Police for a joint response. Plymouth County is now doing the same.
5. **Balance for Kids:** Trained 24 teachers/facilitators on leading a trauma-informed yoga workshop for children.
6. **Word on the Street:** In collaboration with the Child Advocacy Center, this program has trained 24 facilitators on CSEC related issues and a trauma-informed approach to working with this population.
7. **Helping Traumatized Children Learn Book and the Hey Kiddo Book:** Plymouth County has distributed 1000 copies of books focused on the effects of trauma on children to teachers and librarians across the community.

Mr. Jacobs explained the goals of these initiatives within the Plymouth County DA's Office is to raise awareness, create new initiatives on various child and trauma related topics, and to

inform policy work. He presented multiple maps of Plymouth County displaying narcotics-related incidents, firearms-related incidents, and juvenile arraignments over time to demonstrate both the need and the positive impact these programs and initiatives are having on the community.

Mr. Jacobs and the CTTF members had a robust discussion on identifying missing potential key partnerships, the importance of collecting data on race to analyze racial disparities, training first responders such as firefighters and paramedics, and the connection between children who witness a traumatic event and their future involvement in the juvenile justice system. Mr. Jacobs explained Worcester County DA's Office is looking to follow suit to the initiatives launched in Plymouth County and they are currently looking into children who have experienced violence and tracking them into the juvenile justice system. Suffolk County Superior Court has also launched a project. Overall, more and more counties across the Commonwealth are beginning to focus on childhood trauma.

### **JJPAD 2020 Work Plan:**

Ms. Threadgill received feedback from each subcommittee that it would be helpful to have an update on the work of the Full JJPAD and the other subcommittees. In an effort to increase transparency between each group, Ms. Threadgill proceeded to present the JJPAD 2020 workplan. This workplan was voted on and approved at the last full JJPAD meeting. The overall 2020 objectives include the following:

1. **SBI Subcommittee:** Prepare for Launch of Statewide Diversion Coordination Learning Lab
2. **Data Subcommittee:** Improve Data Reporting Quality and Availability
3. **Childhood Trauma Task Force:** Establish Statewide Framework for Trauma-Informed and Responsive Practice
4. **Full JJPAD Board:** Oversight/Direction of Subcommittee Work and Conduct Juvenile Justice System "SWOT+" Analysis (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats, and Vision)

For a more in-depth look at each objective and their corresponding timeline, please review the March 9th, 2020 CTTF PowerPoint.

### **Continued Discussion on Draft Framework for Trauma-Informed and Responsive Practice in Massachusetts:**

Ms. Threadgill discussed the changes that were made to the Framework for Trauma-Informed and Responsive Practice in Massachusetts after the feedback received during the last CTTF

meeting held on February 4th, 2020. She explained today’s focus will be on reviewing the previously made edits to make any outstanding changes to the remaining principles.

Ms. Threadgill noted the addition of a paragraph in the beginning as a framework for the rest of the document.

*Principle Four: Equity and Cultural Humility*

Ms. Threadgill explained Principle Four focuses on equity and cultural humility and the importance of systemic discrimination and its impact on communities. After reviewing Principle Four in detail, the CTTF members agreed to the following changes:

1. Change the title of Principle Four to *Equity, Anti-Bias, and Cultural Inclusivity*.
2. Add xenophobia and transphobia.
3. Second Paragraph: Include the names of communities and institutions with systemic racism: Black, Latinx, immigrant communities, and the LGBTQ community.
4. Include a sentence about historical and community trauma from the previous CTTF report to demonstrate the discrimination doesn’t need to happen to an individual themselves to be traumatic.
5. Add a sentence about the broader social and cultural context.
6. Instead of encouraging cultural humility, use the phrase “*practicing cultural inclusivity...*”
7. Add privilege and power to the fourth bullet point.
8. Second Bullet Point: Instead of individual, re-write to say personal as well as others.
9. Last Bullet Point: Add concrete actions such as analyze policy.

*Principle Five: Healthy Relationships*

Ms. Threadgill explained Principle Five focuses on the importance of healthy relationships between children/youth and adults. After reviewing Principle Five in detail, the CTTF members agreed to the following changes:

1. Revise the section generally to be more applicable across sectors and less specific.
2. Delete bullet points in the first two sections regarding effective communication and asking appropriate questions.
3. Add a paragraph about the importance and impact of first impressions.
4. Add “feeling safe” to the paragraph about promoting healthy relationships.

**Closing Comments:**

## CTTF MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED BY SUBCOMMITTEE 4.1.20

Ms. Threadgill explained the next steps will be to accept all previous edits and to review the final document during the April CTTF meeting. The goal is for the April meeting to be the final day to make changes and edits and decide if we are okay with making this a draft publication. After, the CTTF will begin collecting feedback from outside stakeholders.

### **Approval of Minutes from February Meeting:**

Ms. Threadgill held a formal vote on the approval of the February 4, 2020 Childhood Trauma Task Force meeting minutes. The February 4, 2020 meeting minutes were approved.

The meeting adjourned.

**Adjournment:** 3:00pm