

Office of the Child Advocate
Childhood Trauma Task Force Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 18, 2025
12:00pm-1:00pm
Meeting held virtually

Task Force Members or Designees Present:

Elizabeth Schatzel-Murphy (DYS)
Heidi Gold (EOE)
Dawn Christie (Parent Representative)
Kate Lowenstein (Citizens for Juvenile Justice)

OCA Staff:

Alix Rivière
Kerin Miller
Samantha Perry
Bessie Pierre

Other:

Kathleen Bitetti (State Auditor's Office)
Carisa D. Pajak (MassHealth)
Amy Whitehead-Pleaux (EEC)
Theresa Wilson

Meeting Commenced: 12:01pm

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Rivière welcomed attendees to the first of two optional brainstorming sessions. She clarified that everyone present will vote on the meeting minutes for the session they attended.

Ms. Rivière described that the purpose of the one-hour session was to review the draft recommendations, line by line.

Review of CTTF 2025 Draft Recommendations

Ms. Rivière asked if anyone had general comments, questions, or feedback on the six-page recommendations sent before the meeting for review. None were raised.

Ms. Rivière shared her screen for attendees to review the recommendations together and provided an overview of the recommendations' three goals. Ms. Rivière asked attendees if the proposed goals align with what attendees had in mind.

One participant shared that the recommendations should explicitly explain the “why” behind them to garner buy-in from trainees and provide more clarity as to why more training will be asked of them.

Another participant added that the recommendations might benefit from including a problem statement or theory of change.

Ms. Rivière stated that the question of building buy-in might sit beyond the purview of training recommendations. She proposed that goals for engaging uninterested trainees could be addressed elsewhere.

Regarding the first recommendation about agencies strengthening training requirements regarding trauma, trauma-responsive practices, and resilience, one participant shared that there should be a mechanism to get feedback on training efficacy to ensure that participants feel trained and helped.

Regarding what agencies should strive for in training staff and contracted providers on trauma-informed and responsive (TIR) practices, members discussed the need for trainings to cover:

- Behaviors related to trauma
- How relationships are affected by trauma
- A developmentally-focused approach to trauma
- Support for providers who may have traumatic experiences of their own

Regarding the recommendation for training content to include the role of resilience, one member shared that they appreciated the inclusion of this lens.

Regarding the need for system-level changes across child-serving state agencies, members discussed the need for the recommendations to acknowledge that:

- System involvement can be inherently traumatic, including that systems involvement can put children in situations that are developmentally harmful
- Systems have a responsibility to promote resilience at both an individual and community level

CTTF MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED 12/15/2025

- Identifying policies to promote or peel back can be integrated into Continuous Quality Improvement

Regarding what mechanisms could be in place to ensure agencies/providers meet training requirements, members discussed:

- The role of the Human Resources Division
- The example of the Behavioral Health Workforce Training Clearinghouse

Several members raised the importance of including those with lived experience in the training development process and provided examples of some groups who could be a resource. Ms. Rivière acknowledged that the Childhood Trauma Task Force should have criteria for naming specific organizations in the recommendations.

Ms. Rivière asked members if they had any ideas for operationalizing services at local spaces and training resource hubs. None were raised.

Closing Comments

Ms. Rivière thanked everyone for their suggestions and participation. She shared that attendees could expect a full report to review on December 1st and adjourned the meeting.

Adjournment: 12:56pm