

Office of the Child Advocate  
Childhood Trauma Task Force Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 9, 2024  
1:00pm-2:30pm  
**Meeting held virtually**

**Task Force Members or Designees Present:**

Maria Mossaides (OCA)  
Beth Schatzel-Murphy (DYS)  
Laura Brody (DCF)  
Stacy Cabral (DESE)  
Thula Sibanda (DYS)  
Kate Lowenstein (CfJJ)  
Keesha LaTulipee (DPH)  
Andrea Oliviera (DMH)  
Jimmy Quinn (Probation)  
Claudia Dunne (CPCS)

**OCA Staff:**

Audrey Smolkin (CCWT)  
Joy Cohen (CCWT)  
Juan Rojas (CCWT)  
Arianna Turner  
Kerin Miller  
Daisy Perez  
Ari Fertig

**Other:**

Katie-Perry Lorentz (DYS)  
Kathleen Bitetti (OSA)  
Mike Murray (The Key Program)  
Jayne Singer (MassAIMH)  
Anat Weisenfreund (MassAIMH)  
Omar Irizarry (DMH)  
Allison Morrissey (Baystate Health Center)  
Amy Whitehead-Pleaux (EEC)  
Andrea Parker (Federation for Children with Special Needs)  
Katherine Hughes (Parent Child Trauma Resources)  
Carisa Pajak (MassHealth)  
Charity Bell (DMH)

Carmel Craig (ABH)  
Jennifer Burns  
Cindy Tervalon

**Meeting Commenced:** 1:01 PM

### **Welcome and Introductions**

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

Ms. Cohen then introduced the agenda for the meeting, which would consist of a discussion of the CTTF 2024-2025 work plan and a presentation from the Department of Youth Services (DYS) on the *Trauma and Racial Equity Empowerment (TREE) Academy*.

### **Presentation and Discussion of CTTF 2024-2025 Work Plan**

Ms. Cohen provided background on the proposed CTTF work plan, explaining the recommendations that came out of the 2022 CTTF report as well as the work that has been completed in prior CTTF meetings in 2023.

Ms. Cohen then presented the proposed CTTF 2024-2025 work plan, which centers on mapping out trainings provided by state agencies on childhood trauma and resilience. She also shared the short term and long-term goal of the work plan.

Ms. Cohen then proposed a series of questions to the task force, including:

- If you could choose training focus areas (e.g. child welfare, juvenile justice, child behavioral health) for all MA child-serving state agency employees and contracted providers, what would they be?
- If you could pick a few training topics that all MA child-serving state agency employees were required to take, what would they be?
- If you could pick a few training topics that all MA child-serving state agency contracted providers were required to take, what would they be?
- Are there any state agencies, training providers, or advocacy organizations that came to mind during this conversation that are strong in this area?

Ms. Cohen launched a series of Zoom meeting polls for meeting attendees to complete which contained the above questions.

After attendees had time to complete the polls, Ms. Cohen shared the answers to the poll questions with the group.

Ms. Cohen then shared the project methodology for creating training resources for the state, including:

- Review of what other states are doing
- Analysis of available documentation
- Stakeholder interviews
- Summary and recommendations

Ms. Cohen then shared the next steps in the project, including:

- Develop a key question for agencies
- Identify interview participants from state agencies
- Identify and analyze available resources and documentation from each agency
- CTTF discussion of interview tool
- Conduct interviews
- Develop findings and recommendations

Ms. Smolkin welcomed questions and comments about the project. None were raised.

Ms. Cohen then welcomed Ms. Perry-Lorentz from the Department of Youth Services (DYS) to present on the *Trauma and Racial Equity Empowerment (TREE) Academy*.

Ms. Perry-Lorentz introduced herself and provided background information on the DYS Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).

Ms. Perry-Lorentz then began presenting on the JDAI Trauma and Racial Equity Empowerment (TREE) Academy, explaining the TREE is an introductory course on trauma and racial equity issues, with the goal of training participants to then lead trainings within their own agencies and organizations. The course aims to:

- train members of their workforce to utilize trauma-informed and responsive strategies with children, youth, and families
- understand how racial trauma and racism affect individuals and systems and where solutions may be possible
- build internal capacity in their agency that sustains and promotes trauma-informed and responsive practices

Ms. Perry-Lorentz then provided an overview of the program's target audience and explained that DYS will be reaching out to advertise the program and provide further information on the core courses offered.

Ms. Perry-Lorentz shared a draft of the TREE Academy Curriculum and discussed the focuses of each learning module as well as the groups that will be leading each of the courses. She shared that applications will be coming out soon, and she is hoping to start in November with the first cohort. She added that the program is open for anyone to apply.

Ms. Smolkin welcomed questions on the program.

Members discussed the logistics of the outreach and application processes related to the program. Ms. Perry-Lorentz shared that all agencies will be contacted by DYS and that all those who are interested should apply, even if there are multiple individuals from the same agency.

One attendee asked if there was a specific LGBTQ training included in the course. Ms. Perry-Lorentz shared that, right now there is not a specific module, but that is something DYS can consider as the curriculum continues to develop over time. She also added that the focus of this curriculum is how to train adults, rather than how to speak with youth.

Ms. Cohen then shared discussion questions related to TREE with the group, including:

- What is the best way to market TREE to solicit the most participation?
- What is the most useful application criteria?
- Any feedback on training series?

One member shared the importance of including individuals with lived experience in these systems in the trainings, especially those who had relevant training experience.

Ms. Cohen welcome members to share their thoughts on this project as they arise via email after the meeting.

### **Closing Comments**

Ms. Cohen shared that the next CTTF meeting will be held on Monday, December 9, 2024 from 1pm-2:30pm and welcomed attendees to reach out to her with questions and comments. Ms. Cohen adjourned the meeting.

**Adjournment:** 2:14 PM