

Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect Fact Sheet

Revised January 2011 and Updated October 21, 2011

The Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect was established in 1991 under Federal Mandate for Michigan to qualify for over \$500,000 per year in Federal funding. The Task Force is 100% federally funded through the Children's Justice Act grant, receiving approximately \$500,000 each year. The Task Force is and has been chaired by Justice Elizabeth Weaver since its inception by appointments by Governors Engler and Granholm. The Task Force consists of approximately 34 volunteers, all of whom are appointed by the Governor. The Task Force members are dedicated volunteers from across the state who represent expertise in all areas of child abuse and neglect: judges, prosecutors, defense counsel, law enforcement officials, doctors, social and child welfare workers, educators, psychologists, counselors, citizens and parents.

The main responsibilities of the Task Force are to:

1. Review and evaluate Michigan's investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect; and to
2. Make recommendations about what we all should do to improve and reform how Michigan addresses child abuse and neglect. The Task Force, while housed in the Department of Human Services (DHS) with a staff of one (1) full time DHS employee funded by the Federal grant requiring the Task Force, is not a part of or controlled by the DHS. The Task Force is responsible to make independent recommendations concerning child abuse and neglect issues to the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of government. While cooperative with all three branches, the Task Force offers non-partisan advisory opinions concerning child abuse and neglect policies arrived at through its own independent study, experience, and work.

Since its creation, the Task Force has developed child abuse protocols; awarded grants for the creation of programs in experimental, model, and demonstration pilot programs; funded programs for training; and held a yearly educational Summit conference.

From the approximate \$500,000 a year the Task Force receives from the federal government, the Task has funded, and continues to fund, training through the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO), with an annual grant of \$300,000, to develop and provide cross professional training to Michigan's child welfare professionals. The Task Force regularly funds grants to the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan (PAAM) to provide cross professional training to DHS staff, law enforcement and prosecutors on various child welfare topics. The Task Force also funds the Task Force Coordinator's salary, who is an employee of the DHS.

The Task Force had created and maintained the following protocols:

- A Model Child Abuse Protocol: Coordinated Investigative Team Approach (the use of this protocol is mandated by the Child Protection Law)
- A Model Child Abuse Protocol: Multidisciplinary Team Approach Tribal Specific Protocol

- Forensic Interviewing Protocol (the use of this protocol is mandated by the Child Protection Law)
- Lawyer-Guardian Ad Litem Protocol
- Munchausen By Proxy: A Collaborative Approach to Investigation, Assessment and Treatment
- Michigan Child Injury and Death Coordinated and Comprehensive Investigation Resource Protocol
- Michigan Child Death Review Team Protocol

The Task Force has funded annual Summit conferences on child abuse and neglect, all featuring national speakers. The last nine Summits and speakers follow:

- 2001 – Children’s Issues for the Millennium, featuring Dr. Peter Jaffe, Dr. Harry Chugani, Dr. Donna Rosenberg, and Honorable B.J. Jones.
- 2002 – Effects of Violence on Children: Part Two, featuring Dr. Deborah Prothrow Stith, Dr. R. Dale Lefever and Dr. William S. Pollack.
- 2003 – Traditional vs. Non-Traditional Placements, featuring Dr. Kyle Pruett, Dr. John R. Seita, and Dr. Alvin Proussaint.
- 2004 – 10th Annual Summit on Child Abuse and Neglect, Held in Conjunction with the State Bar of Michigan, featuring Dr. Kyle Pruett and Dr. James Garbarino.
- 2005 – Child Neglect: A Multi-Systemic Problem, featuring Dr. Beverly Coleman-Miller and Dr. Eli Newberger.
- 2006 – Identifying Strategies for Success, featuring Geoffrey Canada and Victor Rivas Rivers.
- 2008 – There Is No Such Thing as a Bad Girl: How to Make a Positive Difference in a Young Girl’s Life, featuring Rachel Simmons and Dr. James Garbarino.
- 2009 – Gray Matters: The Impact of Child Abuse and Neglect on Brain Development, featuring Dr. Bruce Perry.
- 2010 – A Snapshot of Internet Child Exploitation, featuring Chris Hansen and Jennifer Lee.
- 2011 – Calling all Dad’s! The Importance of Fathers in Children’s Lives, featuring Roland Warren, President of the National Fatherhood Initiative and Isaiah “Ike” McKinnon, author of Stand Tall.

Current Task Force Members serving terms to 2014 are:

- Daniel Adams - Grand Rapids Police Department Detective
- John Ange - Macomb County Prosecutor’s Office, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Chief, Juvenile Division
- Wayne Beerbower - Retired Farmington Hills Police Officer, Business Agent, Police Officers Association of Michigan
- Jeanie Colella – Michigan CASA, Inc., Vice President, Board of Directors
- Nancy Diehl - Retired Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Chief, Trial Division, Wayne County Prosecutor's Office and Past President of the State Bar of Michigan.
- Susan Dobrich - Cass County Probate Judge and Immediate Past President of MI Probate Judges Association
- Shauna Dunnings – Ingham County Friend of the Court, Deputy Court Administrator and attorney

- Elias Escobedo, Jr. - Attorney in private practice in southeast Michigan, criminal defense and family law
- Cheryl Follette – Attorney in private practice in Grand Traverse County, attorney/guardian ad litem for child abuse and neglect
- Euphemia “Sue” Franklin - South Eastern Michigan Indians, Inc., Executive Director
- JoAnne Gasco - Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Judge
- Pamela Gilbert-O’Sullivan - Macomb County Probate Court, Judge
- Gloria Gillespie – Therapist in private practice with Assault Recovery Services, retired Berrien County Commissioner
- Linda S. Hallmark - Oakland County Probate Court Judge
- Judy Hartsfield - Wayne County Probate Court Judge
- Frederick Johansen, M.D. – Pediatrician and Medical Director of Berrien, Van Buren, and Cass County Health Departments
- William Johnson - Michigan Children’s Institute, Superintendent, Michigan Department of Human Services
- Kathleen A. Lacko - West MI Community Mental Health, System of Care coordinator, Lake, Mason and Oceana Counties
- Judith Labovitz – Retired, Department of Human Services, Clinton County
- William Lansat ESQ., J.D. - Attorney in private practice in south east Michigan, attorney/guardian ad litem for child abuse and domestic cases
- Jennifer Leppien - Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), Volunteer, Gratiot County
- Sandra Lindsey - Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority, Chief Executive Officer
- Julie McMurtry - Oakland County Prosecutor’s Office, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Chief, Juvenile Division
- JoAnn C. Monaghan - Retired principal, Port Huron Area School District, St. Clair County
- John D. Monaghan - Seventy-second District Court, Judge, St. Clair County
- Eugene A. Moore - Retired Judge, Oakland County Probate Court, Former President of MI Probate Judges Association, Former President of National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- Donald S. Owens - Michigan Court of Appeals Judge, former Probate Juvenile Judge of Ingham County
- Gregory Pittman - Muskegon County Probate Court Judge
- Lawrence Richardson - Retired Sheriff, Lenawee County Sheriff’s Department, Supervisor of Madison Charter Township
- Patricia Sorenson - Michigan’s Children, Vice President for Policy, Ingham County
- Lisa Sullivan - Clinton County Probate Court Judge
- Elizabeth A. Weaver - Retired Justice, Michigan Supreme Court, former Leelanau County Probate Court Juvenile Judge and former Court of Appeals Judge, Chair of the Governor’s Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect
- David Wolock – Retired Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Attorney in private practice in south east Michigan, family law
- Tracey Yokich - Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court Judge, Macomb County, former Probate Court Judge