



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Kansas Citizen Review Panel
Intake to Petition/CJA Task Force

May 31, 2023

Kansas Citizen Review Panel – Intake to Petition Annual Report

The **Kansas Citizen Review Panel – Intake to Petition (ITP)** is one of three Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) in the State of Kansas. This panel also serves as the state's **Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force**, per requirements set forth in Section 107(c) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). This is a multi-disciplinary body of private and public agencies, law enforcement representatives, attorneys, judges, social workers, consumers and citizens committed to the protection of children in Kansas. Also serving as the state of Kansas' Children's Justice Act Task Force, as required under federal Section 107 of CAPTA to enable a state agency to receive funding from the Department of Justice – Office of Victims of Crime, this CJA Task Force oversees grant funds used to improve the investigation, prosecution, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect.

The work of the Task Force operates in accordance with CAPTA requirements. In this role, members focus on gathering citizen input, creating a network of engaged community partners across the state and making recommendations to modify and/or improve the state child protective services system from the **intake of a child into care to the point a petition is filed**.

The Task Force began to meet bi-monthly following the Annual Strategic Planning Retreat in August of 2022, in efforts to increase panel member engagement, effectiveness and efficiency. The Strategic Planning Retreat is a joint meeting bringing both the Intake to Petition (ITP) and Custody to Transition (CTT) panel together for collaboration and opportunities for shared opinions and skills. Although subcommittees have been utilized in previous years to execute tasks as identified by the Task Force, the panel has decided to improve self-governance and unity within the panel by working as a whole on each goal.

Kansas complies with the membership requirements for the CJA Task Force. Intake to Petition has made efforts to recruit members through recommendations made by panel members in their various organizations. Currently, the ITP panel consists of 17 members. The panel strives to balance membership requirements of the CJA Task Force, as well as local interested citizens with lived experience and providers of services supporting the wellbeing of children and family. Intake to Petition is currently making efforts to recruit the following positions:

- **Civil Court Judge**
- **Law Enforcement**

This past fiscal year ITP lost members who were invaluable assets to the panel. Ann Goodall, appointee and manager for the DCF CAPTA CRP grant transitioned into a new role. ITP welcomed Jennifer Slagle in this new role as the DCF appointee and manager of the DCF CAPTA CRP grant. Valerie Leon, Saint Francis Ministries has also transitioned into a new position. ITP welcomes Shelby Ponder with Saint Francis Ministries as one of the three new members. The panel has also welcomed Brynn Blair as the new Guardian ad Litem.

*Please, find a panel roster below and visit our DCF CAPTA page for updates on roster changes.

The immediate threat and risks of COVID-19 have largely receded, though the panel has experienced issues that impacted attendance throughout the year. The panel voted to keep a majority of meetings in 2022-2023 virtual due to the increase in attendance of members. The panel has strived to increase engagement as it has decreased since meetings moved virtual. In efforts to increase panel understanding and effectiveness a CAPTA Orientation is held at the beginning of every bi-monthly meeting. Additionally, the panel met in a hybrid format at the Annual Strategic Planning Retreat accommodating access and preference for all members.

The panel focused on bringing increased structure for improved function, thereby increasing effectiveness and efficiency. ITP is reviewing bylaws and instituting new bylaws as an agenda item at every panel meeting. ITP has voted and approved nine new articles. ITP has reached out to DCF's legal counsel regarding a legal opinion on how ITP and CTT panel may fall under KOMA. The panel's plans to revise bylaws upon directive of DCF's legal counsel.

***Please see Appendix C for a list of approved Bylaws**

The panel recognizes that in order to have membership engaged and effective there needs to be a diverse panel as to make improvements through interdisciplinary and interagency collaboration. The panel extended efforts to understand each member's position on the panel as well as the resources at the panel's disposal, using bimonthly meetings and overviewing each member's background agency and position.

Task Force Membership Listing
State/Territory: Kansas

Task Force Membership Designation	Name	Title	Organization	Relevant Background/Experience
Law Enforcement	Recruiting			** please see bios in appendix B
Criminal Court Judge, Chairperson	Doug Jones	District Magistrate Judge	5 th Judicial District	
Civil Court Judge	Recruiting			
Prosecuting Attorney	Katy Britton	Senior Assistant District Attorney	Douglas County District Court	
Defense Attorney	Miranda Johnson	Attorney	Caffey, Johnson & Ingels, P.A. Manhattan	
Attorney for Children	Brynn Blair	Managing Attorney	Kansas Legal Services	
Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)*	Kristin Hines	State Trainer	Kansas CASA	
Health Professional	Jennifer Hansen	SANE Medical Director	Children's Mercy Hospital	
Health Professional	Emily Killough	Child Abuse Pediatrician	Children's Mercy Hospital	
Mental Health Professional	Angela Dunn	Behavioral Health Coordinator	Kansas City Public Schools	
Child Protective Services	Recruiting			
Child Protective Services	Jennifer Slagle	CAPTA/CJA Public Service Administrator	DCF	
Individual Experienced in Working with Children with Disabilities	Darla Nelson-Metzger	Advocate Coordinator	Families Together, Inc.	
Parent/ Representative of Parent Group	Pamela Robbins	Executive Director	KFAPA	
Adult Former Victim of Child Abuse and Neglect**	Amber Jewell	School-based Social Worker	USD 245	
Individual Experienced in Working with Homeless Children and Youth	Tate Toedman	State Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youth	Kansas Department of Education	
Optional Categories				
Office of Judicial Administration	Lana Goetz	Court Program Specialist	OJA	
Child Welfare Advocate	Recruiting			
Division of the Child Advocate	Kerrie Lonard	Kansas Child Advocate	Division of the Child Advocate	
Family Preservation	Christi Smith	Executive Director	DCCCA, Inc.	
Education Advocate	Kelly Stanford	Chief Program Officer	Communities in Schools	
Other State Agencies	Libby Snider		Kansas Department of Corrections	
Tribal Representative	Sandra Shopteese	Tribal Specialist	DCF	
Child Welfare Contractor	Shelby Ponder	Director of Reintegration	Saint Francis Ministries	
Substance Abuse Counselor	Jennifer Gassmann	DEC/Parent Child Assistance Program Supervisor	Kansas Children's Service League	
Advisory Member	Christine Lucero	Program Specialist	ACF, Region VII	
Advisory Member	Sara Hortenstine	Executive Director	Kansas Child Death Review Board	
Foster Parent	Jenny Broyles	--	--	
CRP Coordinator	LynTia Gwess	CRP Coordinator	Mainstream Nonprofit Solutions	
CRP Support	Kara-Kae James	Marketing Director	Mainstream Nonprofit Solutions	

CRP Intake to Petition/CJA Task Force Meeting Overviews

➤ August 3, 2022

Focus: This meeting consists of both the Intake to Petition Panel and Custody to Transition panel coming together in a hybrid setting to strategize and collaborate on 2022-2023 goals and objectives. This meeting focused on best practices for CRPs. Blake Jones; former Kentucky CRP coordinator provided a CRP 101 for both panels. The panels focused remaining time on strategic planning honing in on community awareness, increased panel engagement, resources for aging out youth, and quality training for welfare workers.

Overview: On August 3rd, 2022, a joint meeting was held between the Kansas Review Panels. The meeting opened with an overview of the panel chairs and positions that are currently being recruited. Jennifer Slagle reported DCF updates and upcoming priorities for the panel and general updates were given by various panel members. Upcoming DCF priorities include the following: Soul Family, State Kansas Model, family crisis response, shifting from mandated reporter to mandated supporter. Blake Jones presented a CRP 101 and best practices. The panel then separated and started their strategic planning sessions. The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

➤ October 19, 2022

Focus: Changes to panel function according to best practice by Blake Jones. Review of goals and objectives and providing tasks and assignments. Overview of a two panel members organizations

Overview: Changes to panel function included bi-monthly meetings, increased involvement from panel chairs, short CRP orientation before each meeting. update in CRP ITP roles, and review of bylaws at the beginning of each meeting. The panel reviewed Bylaw Article I & II, made changes, unanimously approving amendments to both Bylaw Articles. Judge Jones (panel chairperson) opened the discussion of goals and objectives and provided tasks and assignments. Judge Jones and Amber Jewell provided a quick overview of their organizations and their role on the panel. The meeting ended with updates from Kerrie Lonard and Darla Nelson-Metzger. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

➤ December 16, 2022

Focus: Focused on Bylaw Article III and reviewing task and assignments. Review organizations of panel members.

Overview: The panel meeting opened by updating Bylaw Article III and approval of changes. Panel was updated in recent flyer and updates to CAPTA webpage. Panel discussed the applicability of the Open Meetings Act and changing the public outreach goal to encompass the Intake to Petition time frame. This was adopted as a standing goal of the panel. Lana Goetz updated the panel on training hosted by OJA. Brynn Blair provided an overview of her organization and her function on the panel. This meeting ended with general challenges from the panel and DCF updates from Ann Goodall, DCF representative. Melinda Cline also shared the CFSR round 4 structure. The meeting adjourned at 11:40 p.m.

➤ February 17, 2023

Focus: Updating Bylaw Article IV, V, VI. Updating panel on CAPTA website and final Intake to Petition flyer. Panel discussed next steps for goal four, Substance Abuse Disorder Training. Presentation on aging out youth and discussion of annual report. Panel ended with member updates, as well as DCF updates.

Overview: Kara-Kae James was introduced as the new Marketing Director of TFI overseeing the CRP grant. The panel drafted and voted in Bylaw Article IV, V, VI. Emily Killough was nominated and approved as Vice-Chairperson and Sara Hortenstine was approved as Secretary. The panel updated language to goal 4 and Judge Jones assigned tasks and assignments. Stacy Tidwell and Amy Ervin updated the panel on resources for aging out youth, providing ways to get involved in supporting older youth. The panel determined subcommittees and set to meet in March to discuss future work and recommendations in the Annual Report. Judge Jones shared there has been an increased number of truancy and explained he is developing a truancy court model. Jennifer Slagle updated the panel of CFSR efforts and the partnership with KCSL on family resource centers. The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

➤ **April 21, 2023**

Focus: Updating Bylaw Article VII and VIII. Final discussions of recommendations to DCF and wording. Engaged in plans for a substance abuse webinar with Jennifer Gassmann. Discussion around the Joint Retreat. Panel meeting adjourned with updates from members and DCF updates.

Overview: The panel drafted and accepted Bylaw Article VII. Article VIII was drafted and discussed but was decided to revisit this article after discussions with DCF legal on if we are subject to KOMA. Panel defined recommendations to DCF and collectively added language to the annual report based off their goals and objectives. The panel set up a separate meeting to discuss the wording of the Annual Report and make final revisions. Judge Jones (Chairperson) shared he was asked to be a part of the Summit planning committee and that the Judicial Branch will be piloting a family treatment court. The panel discussed the Joint Retreat being completely in person and suggested different locations that might be more central for everyone. Decided to host a drug abuse awareness webinar on May 17, 2023. The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

CJA Prior Year Projects/Activities and Performance Report

The CJA Task Force provides funding to agencies from the State of Kansas utilizing a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Applicants are typically not-for-profit organizations including faith-based organizations; associations; universities and colleges that can provide programs or services statewide for systemic improvements in the handling of cases of child abuse or neglect. Applicants must successfully communicate a comprehensive approach to improve the assessment, investigation and prosecution of suspected child abuse and neglect cases including child abuse/neglect related fatalities and cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems, as it relates to the implementation of the program's standards. Multiple grants to organizations able to provide improved services Statewide were issued for the funding period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, with renewable agreements awarded in fiscal year 2023 and 2024. The maximum award amount per grantee is \$60,000. The total amount available to award for FY23 was \$189,747.

The purpose of this grant opportunity is to provide CJA funding to agencies from the state of Kansas; not-for-profit organizations may include faith-based organizations; associations; universities and colleges that are able to provide programs or services statewide to implement improvement of the assessment, investigation and prosecution of suspected child abuse and neglect cases, including child abuse/neglect related fatalities and cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems. The goal of this program is to improve the systemic handling of cases of child abuse or neglect. This grant will be awarded to multiple organizations that can make a statewide impact. Programs should contain design elements that may include the following:

- A. Investigative, administrative and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as cases involving suspected child maltreatment related fatalities and cases involving a potential combination of jurisdictions, such as interstate, Federal-State, and State-Tribal, in a manner that reduces the additional trauma to the child victim and the victim's family and which also ensures procedural fairness to the accused;
- B. Experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and techniques that may improve the prompt and successful resolution of civil and criminal court proceedings or enhance the effectiveness of judicial and administrative action in child abuse and neglect cases, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation cases, including the enhancement of performance of court-appointed attorneys and guardians ad litem for children, and which also ensure procedural fairness to the accused; and
- C. Reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children from abuse, including sexual abuse and exploitation, while ensuring fairness to all affected persons.

Grantees are asked to focus submissions on:

- Training,
- Organization support,
- Collaboration efforts,

- Tools and protocol development, and
- Coordination with court improvement programs.

Grantees are made aware that funding is not to be used for supporting child abuse prevention programs or treatment services. Grantees are responsible for providing indirect services that support the implementation of evidence-based strategies resulting in improvements in targeted state or community-level factors, while also contributing to state and local outcomes as indicated. Grant funds should reflect the recommendations of the CJA task force and should fall within one of the primary categories under CAPTA.

In addition to a clearly articulated design for the expenditure of funds, the grantee is responsible for including outcomes they expect to achieve goals during what time frame and the method for demonstrating and measuring that achievement.

Benchmarks for citing progress are required with quarterly reports identifying programmatic adjustments as necessary to achieve the project goals. Grantees must also demonstrate support and alignment to at least one of the CJA recommendations that were a result of Kansas' 2021 Three-Year Assessment, as required by the Children's Bureau.

For the year of 2023 (July 2022- June 2023), the CJA Task Force selected the following organizations as sub-grantees of CJA funds:

Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas	\$41,197
The Children's Mercy Hospital	\$56,500
Kansas Children's Service League	\$39,550
Kansas Child First, Inc.	\$52,525

These grants continue annually through June 30, 2024. The following is a description of each activity undertaken by selected grantees using CJA funds in the 12-month period preceding the date of the previous annual report submission.

Each grant funded organization must meet one or more of the recently revised three-year assessment priorities, as identified by the CJA Task Force:

Objective 1: (A)

The CJA Task Force recommends training and resources for stakeholders, including:

- prosecution; guardian ad litem trainings
- Law enforcement trainings, training creation, and training delivery
- Anti-human trafficking, mandated reporting, death scene investigations
- Train the Trainer models

Objective 2: (B)

The CJA Task Force recommends training and resources stakeholders focusing on improving the quality of the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases.

Objective 3: (B)

The CJA Task Force recommends training and resources for stakeholders at the front-end of the child welfare system to increase their knowledge and understanding of the effects of trauma on child victims of violence, the impact of coexisting and connected trauma experiences, and the importance of including caregivers in the healing process.

Objective 4: (C)

The CJA Task Force recommends training and resources that would enhance the capacity of stakeholders involved in the forensic and medical evaluation of child abuse as well as covers any medical professional, includes mental health aspects, enhancing MDT's and school counselors.

Kansas Children's Service League

Kansas Children's Service League (KCSL) is a statewide not-for-profit agency that has worked for over 127 years to prevent child abuse, strengthen families and empower parents and youth. Annually, KCSL along with other organizations provide the largest statewide conference in Kansas on the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

The 46th Annual Governors Conference for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect was held October 11th – 20th. Four institutes were held on October 11th and 12th. Keynotes and workshops were offered on the 18th, 19th, and 20th. Each day included a keynote speaker, with time for Q & A's from the group. Forty-three workshops were held over 3-day period.

Although there were obstacles in the first day with ability to access workshops through registration, they were able to be overcome with the Whova platform that was purchased with CJA funds awarded. KCSL applied CJA funds to deliver training to professionals in the areas of the assessment and investigation of suspected child abuse and neglect cases.

90% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the presentation provided information that will be helpful in their profession. 89% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the presentation provided information that will be helpful in their profession. Funds assisted with these findings.

CJA assisted KCSL to offer presentations and related expenses for the following speakers: Jean Mash, Shana Schmidt, Halley Counseling Services, Research Children of Color, Chefalo Consulting, Richard Smith, Mitchell Hamline School of Law, Jessica Mostaffa, Constance Porazka

The Keynote Speakers covered the following topics:

Keynote

K-1 Jean Mash - DSM-5 Personality/SUD and Ethical Complications

K-2 Shana Schmidt – Patterned: How the Brain is Wired for Protection from Birth

K-3 Halley Counseling Services – Family Peace Initiative

K-4 Research Children of Color – Addressing Racial Inequities in Child Welfare

K-5 Chefalo Consulting – Structural Violence and Race Trauma

K-6 Richard Smith – Trauma Impact on Young Men of Color

K-7 Mitchell Hamline School of Law – Mandated Reporter Training

K-8 Jessica Mostaffa Counseling – Making Space for Reflective Supervision

K-9 Constance Porazka – Mindfulness

Kansas Children's Service League's intended goals align with CJA Task Force Objective 3: (B)

The CJA Task Force recommends training and resources for stakeholders at the front-end of the child welfare system to increase their knowledge and understanding of the effects of trauma on child victims of violence, the impact of coexisting and connected trauma experiences, and the importance of including caregivers in the healing process.

Childrens Advocacy Center of Kansas

Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas, Inc (CAACKS) is a statewide membership association representing the 16 children's advocacy centers in the State of Kansas. The mission of the association is to promote excellence in child abuse response and prevention through training, program development, advocacy and leadership.

CAACKS Executive Director and Coordinator of Member Services collaborated with Childrens Mercy Hospital (CMH) to coordinate the ECHO series, which is referred to as Medical Aspects of Child Maltreatment. The first session of ECHO was held on August 2nd, 2022, on CAC's & Best Practices for MDT; 20 participants attended this session. On September 6th, 2022, another session was held on the medical role in the CAC accreditation process and had 13 participants. The next session was held on October 4th, 2022, which examined the Forensic Interview Process, wherein 12 people attended. The last session took place on December 7th, 2022, discussing best practices on documentation of the medical evaluation child sexual abuse/assault; 21 people attended this session. In addition to the didactic training at each session, 2 total cases were discussed with participants.

CAACKS was able to support the attendance of 4 staff to the virtual Governor's Conference. In addition to the Governor's Conference, CAACKS was instrumental in the facilitation of registration and travel plans for 8 staff to attend the International Symposium of Child Abuse and Neglect. These conferences helped support needed training and continuing education related to current trends in child advocacy, child welfare, child abuse investigations, and mental health treatment.

Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas' intended goals align with CJA Task Force Objective 1: (A)

The CJA Task Force recommends training and resources for stakeholders, including;

- prosecution; guardian ad litem trainings
- Law enforcement trainings, training creation, and training delivery
- Anti-human trafficking, mandated reporting, death scene investigations
- Train the Trainer models

Objective 4: (C)

The CJA Task Force recommends training and resources that would enhance the capacity of stakeholders involved in the forensic and medical evaluation of child abuse as well as covers any medical professional, includes mental health aspects, enhancing MDT's and school counselors.

Kansas Child First, Inc.

Kansas ChildFirst, Inc. is focused on healing the trauma of abuse to children and adults through prevention, support, and services. Kansas ChildFirst, Inc. sponsors Kansas ChildFirst Program which is an intensive five-day course that teaches professionals proper interview techniques when conducting an investigative interview of a potential child abuse victim, which is held in conjunction with the National Child Protections Training Center.

The First basic ChildFirst class was held on September 12-16, 2022, wherein 44 people attended and one observer. The observer was a supervisor of the EMCU department in Wichita, this training allowed him to feel more confident and effective in his supervision of these interviews. There were 31 agencies from across the state, 31 law enforcement officers, including KBI; 4 DCF workers from 3 offices, 3 prosecutors from 3 different counties; 3 CAC advocates/forensic interviews, and 3 missionary child protection teams. The training goals were measured through the grades of the final comprehensive test and overall evaluations. Overall, the evaluations were excellent and 44 of the participants passed with high marks in the final comprehensive test.

The next basic ChildFirst class is scheduled to be held in March 2023. CJA funds were used for work related to advertisement, purchase of supplies, and printing paperwork for the March class.

The 2023 Advance class will be held on March 13-17th. The class is full and has a small waiting list. Plans to start printing materials and supplies for the class have been made.

Kansas Child First's intended goals align with CJA Task Force Objective 4: (C)

The CJA Task Force recommends training and resources that would enhance the capacity of stakeholders involved in the forensic and medical evaluation of child abuse as well as covers any medical professional, includes mental health aspects, enhancing MDT's and school counselors.

The Children's Mercy Hospital

Children's Mercy Hospital was unable to provide a written quarterly update for the purpose of this report because they do not yet have a signed NOGA. A written report will be provided to the Children's Bureau when they have a signed NOGA.

Self-Care Kansas will help to ensure young children who may be victims of abuse/neglect receive expert assessment, including medical evaluation when indicated, to aid in the determination of whether abuse has resulted in injury and/or safety risks that require intervention.

When DCF is assigned an investigation for a child under 4 years of age with allegations of physical abuse or physical neglect, the assigned specialist will complete a medical referral form with basic information about the allegations, which will be reviewed daily by a child abuse pediatrician who will provide recommendations regarding the need for medical evaluation or detailed case review, or additional information about the maltreatment concerns in the allegation. Cases of physical abuse and physical neglect are the main targets of this program, but other concerns may also be submitted for review if a DCF specialist would like input from the Safe-Care Resource Center. Approximately 500 child referrals and approximately 75 case reviews per year are anticipated.

The Children's Mercy Hospital intended goals align with CJA Task Force Objective 4: (C)

The CJA Task Force recommends training and resources that would enhance the capacity of stakeholders involved in the forensic and medical evaluation of child abuse as well as covers any medical professional, includes mental health aspects, enhancing MDT's and school counselors.

Work of the CRP Panel

The following details the work of the panel towards goals that were established in August of 2022. This section includes an outline of goals established by panel members and explains certain challenges and information gathered by the panel. The intent is that stakeholders will use this information to encourage best practices and collaborate with other organizations to ensure resources are distributed and shared among Kansas children and families. The ITP panel has dedicated 2022-2023 to pursuing opportunities to gain information and seek the next steps to the following goals:

- Clearly Identify Roles of CRP Members to increase panel member engagement at quarterly meetings
- Increase awareness of CRPs and their function within Kansas' child welfare system to the public, consumers, and other child welfare system professionals, and stakeholders
- Identify resources for youth and their families, age group 14-17.
- Implement more quality training on substance use disorders for child welfare workers.

Clearly Identify the Roles of CRP Members to Increase Panel Member Engagement at Quarterly Meetings

The panel began meeting virtually during Covid-19 in 2020. Since then, the panel has noticed a decrease in panel involvement and a struggle by members to understand their role through an online platform at bimonthly meetings. Though steps were taken to increase panel member engagement it continues to be a struggle for the panel as a whole. Panel members agree that the Annual Joint retreat meeting should move back to in person starting August 2023.

Margaret Mead says to “*never doubt that a small, dedicated group of citizens can make a difference. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has...*” Although the panel knows this to be true, there are unique challenges that volunteer groups face, such as engagement in the digital age and a clear picture of roles within a group. The child welfare system has a long history of citizen involvement, which has proven to have powerful outcomes. That is one reason the federal statute of CAPTA was enacted in 1974.

Panel Facilitators provided a CRP CAPTA orientation at the beginning of each panel meeting to combat these challenges. This orientation covered panel member roles, a history of CAPTA, an overview of panel function, and an overview of the coordinator's role. The panel drafted and determined members roles and responsibilities. Membership roles and responsibilities are found in the panel member handbook and are as follows:

“Kansas Citizen Review Panel members will:

- Attend regularly scheduled panel meetings and subcommittees as assigned. The panel must meet a minimum of once every quarter and may meet up to six times per year. A member that is not able to attend the majority of meetings in a year may be asked to step down. Consideration will be given to extenuating circumstances for not attending meetings;
- Take an active part in the development and carrying out of the panel's strategic priorities;
- Review the meeting agendas and supporting materials, so as to be prepared for panel meetings;

- Participate in carrying out tasks associated with the development of recommendations, the strategic plan, and the annual report.
- Be willing to serve on a time-limited committee or task team or take on special assignments.
- Assist with new panel recruitment.
- Members will serve for a period of four years. At the end of the four-year period, the membership task team has the discretion to continue the appointment or recommend a new appointee.

Kansas Citizen Review Chairpersons will:

- Provide input on the agenda format, identifying what topics and/or discussion needs to happen at each meeting.
- Provide the panel with leadership and guidance to stay on track with strategic goals, objectives and the Annual Report.
- Lead the meetings and encourage panel member engagement and involvement.
- Assigns tasks, as necessary, to panel members and/or staff to ensure panel is staying on track.
- Assist with new panel recruitment.

Kansas Citizen Review Panel Staff will:

- Provide administrative support to help the panel function effectively & efficiently. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Scheduling meetings
 - Forming and sending out the agenda
 - Taking and distributing meeting minutes
 - Conduct research and pull policies and procedures
 - Inviting individuals to present at panel meetings
 - Report National CRP trends back to the panel
 - Assist with writing the annual report
 - Maintaining communication with external parties via multiple channels & helping to provide the panel with an external presence.”

Increase awareness of CRPs and their function within the Kansas child welfare system to the public, consumers, and other child welfare system professionals and stakeholders

The ITP panel has made an effort to increase panel member engagement with the public, consumers, and other child welfare system professionals and stakeholders. The panel provided additional training and resources to panel members, in an effort to increase their ability to answer questions and increase confidence to share regarding the panel and their function. The panel has added membership roles to its handbook and initiated the process of reviewing and adopting bylaws at each meeting. This has resulted in increased engagement within the ITP panel, and increased collaboration between the public, consumers, and other child welfare system professionals and stakeholders.

The ITP panel also made great strides in searching for tools to engage youth and connect them with resources. The panel explored social media platforms, a public forum and other avenues of

public comment. ITP panel has seen a growing need for an undemanding way to access available resources. The panel clarified their target population as youth ages 14-17.

ITP pursued public outreach through social media. ITP reached out to other CRP panels to gauge the engagement of social media platforms and explored other alternative outreach platforms. The panel recognizes the need for healthy relationships with welfare professionals and others within child welfare. ITP believes pursuing this will aid recommendations to be more robust and applicable to DCF. There are many voices the panel seeks to engage in the future to shape the panel's focus and impact.

On Feb. 23, 2023, DCF CAPTA/CJA Program Manager Jennifer Slagle gave a presentation to the Interagency and Community Advisory Board (ICAB) which is a Kansas cross-system multi-agency collaboration that was established to support the statewide implementation of Kansas Strong for Children and Families and Family First Prevention Services. The presentation informed ICAB of the history and purpose of Citizen Review Panels (CRPs). The board was educated about the focus and goals of CRPs in Kansas. The board had many questions as many members were not aware of the existence of CRPs. As a result of the presentation, there has been a request for application for membership to the Custody to Transition Citizen Review Panel.

Identify Resources for youth, age group 14-17.

One way to decrease the number of older youth entering care at such an exponentially high rate is improved community and prevention services targeted to address the following risky/unstable factors:

- Mental Health
- Unengaged in Transition Planning
- Substance Abuse
- Truancy
- Multiple Sex Partners
- Early Pregnancy
- Health/Well-being (STI; Diabetes; etc.)
- Life Skills
- Stable Housing
- Community Supports (Support System)
- Employment or Financial Plan

Older youth entering care have a higher likelihood of experiencing negative outcomes, such as:

- Multiple Placements
- Lack of access to Mental Health Services
- Distrust in authority
- Unhealthy sexual relationships
- Education/truancy

Implement more quality training on substance use disorders for child welfare workers.

Kansas is experiencing an increase in substance use and a change in the type of substances used. Methamphetamine remains a primary substance of choice in Kansas, but there has been a surge in Opioid, specifically fentanyl distribution in recent years. Illegal manufacturers of drugs

are known to add Fentanyl to other substances such as heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, pills from non-medical sources and other street projects to increase the potency and to lower the costs for their production. Fentanyl cannot be detected by sight, smell, or taste and even a small amount can be fatal.

Kansas understands that parental substance abuse can affect children in a number of ways. Infants exposed to substances in utero can experience birth defects, impaired growth, and altered brain development. Children are more likely to be abused or neglected and have a number of adverse childhood experiences from parental substance use. It is important for service providers to understand the impact of substance use on infants and children and to have knowledge of best practices to help these families.

There are a number of considerations when providing substance abuse training. Though there is no required training through DCF, the panel has identified that substance use training is addressed in Building Well-Being and Safety with Families, part 1. Substance use is also included in example scenarios where substance use is part of the issue with a parent or caregiver. UNCOPE screening is another resource provided to DCF staff, which can be found on the Kansas Practice Tools Roadmap V6.2, Handout 25. Regions may organize training locally with law enforcement on substance abuse/drug topics, though the panel was unable to obtain records of these. There is no required annual training for DCF staff or grantees related to substance abuse by parents/caregivers or substance abuse by children.

- St. Francis Ministries - Optional (ongoing staff training addressing best practice related topics such as substance abuse)
- TFI - Optional & As Assigned by Supervisors (Online Webinar “Substance Abuse and Adolescents” with an emphasis on adolescent usage)
- DCCCA - Optional (Online Training “Substance Use and the Family for Paraprofessionals”, “Treatment Options for SUD”; other training outside of agency)
- KVC - Optional (courses from outside of the agency for elective or mandatory training)

DCF workers are encouraged to use PARS, Prevention and Resiliency Services for training. Trainers are working on offering recorded webinars from the National Center for Substance Abuse and Child Welfare through the Learning Management System (LMS); challenges will be work on the part of the LMS creators.

Panel member Jennifer Gassmann also presented Drug Endangered Children Community Awareness Training at the Kansas Alliance for Drug Endangered Children Conference in Manhattan, Kansas, on March 28, 2022. The day-long conference also covered the following topics: Helping Traumatized Children Learn and Succeed, Marijuana and Children, and Current Drug Trends.

Jennifer Gassmann provided a training webinar to DCF staff and contracting agents on May 17, 2023. 1.5 CEUs were provided for the training. 83 people participated in the virtual training from DCF and a variety of agencies focused on children and families. The training will help participants understand the risks and long-term impacts that are associated with parental and caregiver substance misuse and drug activity. This course identifies factors that create an environment where substance use endangers the health and safety of children. It will discuss best practices for working with families and methods for inter-agency cooperation to provide safe environments for children. The training will discuss the importance of early identification and intervention and the need for multidisciplinary collaborative efforts to help these children. It will help attendees understand that they have opportunities to change the trajectories of the lives of drug endangered children and break multigenerational cycles. A survey was sent following the training, the average responses are as follows:

100% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they gained new knowledge of content due to the training. 95% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend this session to a colleague. 100% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they gained new information and ideas from this training. 100% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they will be able to apply knowledge learned.

Recommendations and Opportunities for Future Work

As required by Section 106(c)(6) of CAPTA, the Citizen Review Panel must provide recommendations to improve the child protective system at state and local levels. The Kansas CRPs remains strong partners with the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) and are committed to continued collaboration with the agency on the following recommendations to further aid in system-wide child protective outcomes.

The CRP Intake to Petition panel is dedicated to pursuing opportunities to improve the performance of processes, systems and services. Recommendations identify ways to move forward in addressing the findings and challenges.

Recommendations & Observations for Goal One – Clearly Identify Roles of CRP Members to Increase Panel Member Engagement at Quarterly Meetings

The panel recognizes that there needs to be a diverse panel in order to have membership engagement and to make effective improvements through interdisciplinary and interagency collaboration. The panel understands the need for clear roles for the CRP members. The panel will continue to pursue increased engagement, as it is critical to the work of the panel. While the panel has no direct recommendations for DCF regarding this goal, the panel does seek continued support from all stakeholders in the child welfare system including DCF.

Recommendation and Updates on Goal Two – increased awareness of CRP’s and their function within the child welfare system in Kansas to the public, clients, and other child welfare system professionals:

As the panel works to build relationships with the public, consumers, and other child welfare system professionals and stakeholders, having a central place for people to contact the panel and have a voice is imperative. The panel recommends continued and increased collaboration on the expansion of the current CRP CAPTA DCF Website. Expanding the website will assist with goal number one and will be instrumental in accomplishing goal number two. As the website is expanded and updated, there will be more opportunity to direct information and to collaborate with the general public, clients, and other social welfare system professionals. The panel suggests that as a part of this collaboration, there should be a more intentional means of monitoring the website. Gathering a baseline of interaction through the website will allow the panel to make attainable and measurable goals in the future.

The Panel intends to send the Annual Report, as well as an informational handout more broadly through a tiered outreach system listed below. The panel recommends DCF partner in this effort by sending one page of the report and the informational handout, to partners, stakeholders, and legislature (listed below). Additionally, posting electronically on DCF public website and other media platforms. The panel’s target is to have the Chairperson or facilitator prepared to present and answer questions regarding the report to stakeholders and other child welfare partners.

Below is a list of potential legislative committees that the panel seeks to engage with:

- Joint Committee on Child Welfare System Oversight
- House Committee on Child Welfare and Foster Care
- House Committee on Welfare Reform
- House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice
- House Committee on Health and Human Services
- House Judiciary Committee
- House Committee on Social Services Budget

- Senate Judiciary Committee
- Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare
- Robert G Bethell Joint Committee on Home and Community Based Services and KanCare Oversight

¹Additional examples of child welfare collaborators ITP wish to engage with:

- DCF main contractors: (CMP, Family Preservation, FF grantees, etc.)
- Other DCF Prevention Contractors
- Child Placing Agencies and Residential Programs
- Judicial systems and partners (CRPs, CASA, GALs, judges, KLS, etc.)
- Youth Engagement groups (KYAC and RYAC, etc.)
- Juvenile/Correction services
- School districts
- Tribal Nations
- Community Mental Health Centers
- Community Developmental Disability Organizations
- Managed Care Organizations
- Law Enforcement
- Statewide Food Banks
- Community Social Service Organizations

Recommendations & Updates on Goal Three - Identify Resources for youth and their families, age group 14-17.

ITP strives to ensure consumer voice is heard and aims to ensure resources for all Kansas youth. As the ITP engaged resources for the older youth population, they have determined a deficiency in resources for this population, as well as having the established resources readily available for communities, organizations, and youth. To ensure that Kansas' youth and their families have the necessary resources for success and increase positive outcomes for our young adult population. The Panel recommends DCF provide ITP with demographics and statistical information on the removal of older youth. The panel recommends further collaboration from DCF by regularly presenting updates and findings to the panel directly.

Recommendations & Updates on Goal Four – Implement more quality training on substance use disorders for child welfare workers.

As substance use is rising and is identified as a contributing factor in many child abuse cases, the ITP/CJA Task Force sees a growing need for our frontline workers to be equipped with more training. Substance use training is listed as an optional training for both DCF and CMPs. The Task Force believes the need to be better equipped in substance use is essential as its presence only increases within mental health and child welfare. The ITP/CJA Task Force recommends DCF implement a bi-annual requirement and an onboarding requirement for training on substance use disorders.

The Task Force recommends DCF look towards offering quarterly one-hour virtual sessions on relevant topics to supplement the day-long Drug Endangered Child conference. One-hour virtual training courses are more efficient and practical for frontline workers to attend and having quarterly sessions means that the information could be timelier and more relevant to what

¹ See Appendix A for a list of Acronyms.

issues we are seeing month to month. Adding a feedback session at the end of the training where workers could share what they are seeing and doing, including some light staffing of issues would be helpful.

2023 Annual Report Conclusion

The Kansas Citizen Review Panel—Intake to Petition members remain committed to ensuring citizen and community voice is a part of shaping and improving the child protection and child welfare system. Working with DCF, ITP will continue to be an important source of information that is a valuable component of policy and practice development. The panel will continue to look for ways to increase the relevance of the panel's work and invite agency leaders to do the same. For more information on the content of the report, contact: LynTia Gwess at lqwess@tfifamily.org

Appendix A: Acronym List

CMP - Case Manager Provider

FF grantees - Family First Grantees

KYAC - Kansas Youth Advisory Board

RYAC - Regional Youth Advisory Board

CRP - Citizens Review Panel

CASA - Court Appointed Special Advocate

GAL - Guardian Ad Litem

KLS - Kansas Legal Services

OJA - Office of Judicial Administration

Appendix B: CJA Task Force Member Background Descriptions

Kellie Hans Reid, Kellie is the Director of Child and Family Health at CareSource. She previously served as the Director of Medicaid and Children's Mental Health at the Department for Children and Families. She is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and has practiced individual and family therapy for the last 15 years. Kellie has also served in a variety of roles in the child welfare system in Kansas.

Kerrie Lonard, Division of the Child Advocate, Topeka – Kerrie is the Child Advocate/Director of the Kansas Division of the Child Advocate. The Division was established by Executive Order in October 2021, with Kerrie's appointment announced in December. Kerrie is also the current state coordinator for the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC). Kerrie spent 14 years with Kansas Legal Services serving as both Staff Attorney and Managing Attorney. Kerrie has represented children and youth as Guardian ad Litem (GAL), as well as parents, and interested parties in child-in-need-of-care proceedings. She has facilitated and presented at statewide GAL and Child Welfare practitioner continuing legal education trainings and served as a member on the Kansas Supreme Court Taskforce on Permanency Planning. During law school she interned as a CINC prosecutor and volunteered as a CASA. Kerrie holds BSW and MSW degrees and worked as a school social worker for several years as well as positions within foster care and mental health.

Judge Douglas Jones, Cottonwood Falls – As District Magistrate Judge, Judge Jones is interested in helping to improve the system. Judge Jones believes the most critical decisions made regarding a child are whether or not to remove a child from the home. He offers perspectives and ideas to formulate policies that ensure safety as well as what is involved in the decision to remove or not remove a child from the family. While in private practice, he served as a Guardian Ad Litem in numerous child in need of care cases. He handles most of the temporary custody hearings in child in need of care cases in the Fifth Judicial District.

Miranda Johnson, Caffey, Johnson & Ingels, P.A.– As a Guardian Ad Litem and defense attorney in Kansas for more than 15 years, Miranda has witnessed a need to ensure the safety of the child prior to court involvement. On this panel, she works to review and improve the policies not only from intake to petition, but before, to help keep families intact and children safe. Her knowledge of the court system as it relates to CINC cases is extensive.

Christi Smith, Christi is the Family Preservation Director at DCCCA. Christi provides leadership to the Family Preservation teams located in the Wichita and Kansas City Regions focused on providing in-home services for at-risk families. They focus on improving parenting and family functioning to empower parents to change their lives and create a safe environment for their children.

Amber Jewell, School Social Worker K-12, USD 245—With the Kansas Child Welfare System, I have had a three-prong experience. Initially, I was a youth in foster care that was reliant on the parts of the foster care system. Next, I became a LMSW and a case manager within the foster care reintegration system that worked with families and youth who had experienced an out of home placement. Now, I function as a trainer, foster parent and advocate for people impacted by the foster care system with the hope to better the foster care system and those it serves. I am a K-12 school social worker and collaborate with many providers to train professionals as needed within and for the foster care system. I also participate in CPS groups and boards and maintain a foster care home license.

Dr. Emily Killough, Child Abuse Pediatrician, CMH—I am a child abuse pediatrician and specialize in the forensic medical evaluation of children who may have been abused or neglected. I work closely with other professionals in the child welfare field including DCF and law enforcement and help explain the medical significance of injuries and other findings. I am considered a regional expert in the medical evaluation of child maltreatment.

Dr. Jennifer Hansen, Child Abuse Pediatrician, CMH—As a resident of KS and health care provider with a specific interest in child health (with focus on child abuse), I would like to advocate to improve the systems of care for children in the state. I have special expertise in this area that may be helpful in reviewing cases and informing policies. I am also a parent and have a vested interest in ensuring the overall health and safety of children in our state for the future.

Angela Dunn, Angela is currently the Behavioral Health Coordinator for Kansas City Kansas Public Schools. She leads the mental health and suicide prevention initiatives for the school district and provides clinical guidance for each school's behavioral health teams. Angela was previously a case manager foster care youth with KVC and the Director for Clinical and Specialty Services for PACES Inc. in Wyandotte County. She is an advocate for mental health and has provided testimony to the Kansas State Legislature on improving funding for Community Mental Health Centers and mental health in schools.

Pamela Robbins, Pamela Robbins serves as the Executive Director of Kansas Foster and Adoptive Parent Association. KFAPA provides education, advocacy and support for foster, adoptive and kinship families throughout the state. Pamela has worked in the child welfare system for twenty years as a trainer as well as experience in licensing and placement. Pamela and her husband also have lived experience, having served as foster parents for 22 years. Three of their five children are adopted. Pamela holds a Master of Public Administration. Pamela is a parent advocacy volunteer for North American Council on Adoptable Children and also serves on the National Foster Parent Council of States.

Katy Britton, Douglas County District Attorney's Office – Katy is a Chief Assistant District Attorney and CINC prosecutor in the DA's office, where she has worked since 2007. She was named the Kansas Prosecutor of the Year in 2022. In her first nine years as a prosecutor, she handled a wide range of criminal cases including domestic violence, sexual assault, and gun crimes. Six years ago, she begrudgingly handled the office's CINC prosecutor role when another attorney was on maternity leave. She fell in love with the collaborative nature and common goal of these cases and has been working in this area since. Katy is very proud of the Douglas County CINC team: attorneys, law enforcement, DCF investigators, KVC case managers, Child Advocacy Center staff, and CASAs.”

Darla Nelson-Metzger, Families Together, Inc. – Darla has served as the coordinator of the Education Advocate Program for 26 years, working with contracting agencies, schools, foster and adoptive parents and volunteers. The education advocate program currently serves over 900 CINC and JOs who receive special education services. Additionally, she works as the Training Director and Family Resource Specialist at Families Together serving birth, foster, adoptive and other persons acting as parents regarding issues involving special education. Darla has served on various committees and boards; all revolve around suggestions for improvements in the lives of children with disabilities: Kansas Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Developmental Services-parent member; Governor's Behavioral Health Services Planning Council's Children's Subcommittee; Foster Home Licensing Advisory Committee; Kansas Assistive Technology Cooperative Board Member.

Tate Toedman, Kansas Department of Education, Topeka – As Assistant Director of the Special Education and Title Services team, he works with programs that assist at-risk students and families. Tate has a deep understanding of how these students need advocates and a system that is respectful to their unique needs. He oversees at-risk programs in school districts throughout the state, having served as the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth for the State of Kansas. As a past teacher, Tate has taught and been a school counselor in high poverty schools in the Topeka school district as well as serving as a mentor in the Big Brother Big Sister program. He has previously served as a community action board member for Brown and Nemaha Counties in the Big Brother Big Sister program. Tate also

has served on the Governor's Subcommittee on Housing and Homelessness and the Kansas Statewide Coalition for Homelessness and Housing.

Kelly Stanford, Chief Program Officer for CIS of Mid-America and has been with the organization since 2013. She holds a B.A. in English and history from Texas A & I University, along with a M.Ed. in Education Administration from Angelo State University. She brings many layers of experience to CIS of Mid-America, including teaching at alternative schools in Texas, school and district leadership at both the director and assistant superintendent level in Texas and Colorado and, most recently, five years as the Executive Director of Routt County United Way in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. She is a 2017 graduate of the Allstate Foundation's Greater Good Non-profit Leader's Program in conjunction with the Kellogg School of Management's Center for Non-profit Management at Northwestern University and a 2022 Northwestern University Executive Scholar.

Libby Snider, Kansas Department of Corrections – Juvenile Services, Topeka – Libby is a staff attorney at KDOC, where she has practiced since 2005, beginning at the Lansing Correctional Facility, moving to the Central Office in Topeka in 2008, and assuming the attorney role for Juvenile Services in 2018.

Sandra Shopteese, Department of Children and Families – Sandra is the Tribal Specialist for Kansas. She is an enrolled member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation. Sandra has worked in child welfare for twenty- seven years. Currently her work involves oversight of a grant with the tribes. Also enhancing communication with the Residential Kansas Tribes to coordinate educational training, culture, policies, and services. Sandra is a Qualified Expert Witness and has worked with CINC cases. She has been an ICWA emergency foster home, Native American MAPP Trainer, and currently is a Positive Indian Parenting facilitator. Sandra lives in a three generational home, volunteers as a Peacemaker, is a legal guardian, and volunteers as a member of the Social Services Advisory Board for her tribe.

Valerie Leon, Valerie has been providing hope and healing to children and families for the fifteen years. During her time at Saint Francis Ministries, she has worked as an In-home Family Preservation Therapist and later provided leadership to the Family Preservation Program as supervisor for the West Region. Valerie transitioned to Foster Care Homes Program for several years working as the Recruitment/Licensing Supervisor. Her work in Family Preservation allowed her to bridge the gap between programs, keeping the voice of children and families first. In this program she was able to spend time recruiting, training, building community partnerships, and licensing foster homes as well as share birth families' feelings of grief, shame, and loss as their children entered the child welfare system. In her role as Reintegration Director, Valerie continues to advocate for children, birth families, foster/adoptive families in the child welfare system along with staff working in this field. She has continued to maintain important connections with foster/kinship families while continuing to build new relationships with foster/kinship families by providing TBRI (Trust Based Relational Intervention) training and instructing CPR/First Aid Training for families licensing and recertifying their homes to care for children.

Sara Hortenstine, Kansas Child Death Review Board, Topeka – Sara Hortenstine is Executive Director of the State Child Death Review Board, housed in the Office of Kansas Attorney General. The CDRB is the third of the three Citizen Review Panels in Kansas. Sara attends the meetings of the other two panels, acting as a liaison and sharer of information and resources. The CDRB examines trends and patterns that identify risk factors in the deaths of children, from birth through 17 years of age, that occur in the state of Kansas.

Kristin Hines, Kansas CASA Association, Topeka – Kristin has worked in social service nonprofits for 18 years. She served as the Executive Director of the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program serving all six of the rural and frontier counties of the 16th Judicial District in Southwest Kansas for 15 of those years. She holds an MBA and scored in the top 10% of students on the National Field Test for MBAs in 2015. Kristin is well-known as a

professional willing to help those within and outside the CASA network. In 2021, she moved into the position of State Trainer for the Kansas CASA Association. In this role she is able to support children and families through building the capacity of all CASA programs and their volunteers across the state of Kansas.

Jennifer Gassmann, KCSL Jennifer Gassmann is the supervisor of the Parent Child Assistance Program in Shawnee County with Kansas Children's Service League. She has worked as a social worker for twenty-six years and has a variety of experience in providing services to families, including foster care, adoption, family preservation, and substance use. She received her bachelor's in social work Degree at Kansas State University, and also has certification in substance use case management. Jennifer is the board chair of the state Kansas Alliance for Drug Endangered Children. She is a licensed foster parent and also volunteers as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for children in the court system.

Jenny Broyles, Jenny has been a single licensed foster parent for 6 years to troubled teens and special needs kiddos. I have also been in the Army National Guard for the past 11.5 years and really enjoy it. It has been a privilege to be a part of this committee and learn from the amazing professionals. I also work a full-time job as a Targeted Case Manager for individuals on the IDD waiver. I enjoy being outdoors and having fun with my kiddos.

Brynn Blair, A licensed Kansas Attorney and worked as a Staff Attorney at Kansas Legal Services-Topeka from May 2018 until February 2023. As of March 1, 2023, Brynn became the managing attorney for the KLS Topeka office. While Brynn practices a variety of law at Kansas Legal Services, about 50% of her cases consist of Child In Need of Care (CINC) work. Brynn receives CINC cases through Kansas Legal Services' participation in the Douglas County Child in Need of Care Appointment panel. Through the Douglas County panel, KLS attorneys are appointed as either Guardian Ad Litem or parent attorneys.

Lana Goetz, Office of Judicial Administration Appointee

Shelby Ponder, Saint Francis Ministries, Wichita- Shelby has been providing hope and healing to children and families for eight years. During her time at Saint Francis Ministries, she has worked as an In-home Family Preservation Therapist and later provided leadership to the Family Preservation Program as supervisor for Wichita. Shelby transitioned to Reintegration where she began to supervise in the Aftercare program. In her role as Reintegration Director, Shelby continues to advocate for children and families in the child welfare system along with staff working in this field. Shelby is excited to continue in her current role providing support to children, families, and staff.

Christine Lucero, ACF Region VII Appointee

Docia Small: Docia is the Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act, Child Justice Act Grant Administrator for the Kansas Department of Children and Families, Topeka KS. She has expertise and previous appointments within social & juvenile field services. While serving within the child welfare system & juvenile services for the past 12 years, Docia has cultivated the needed interpersonal skills to build rapport with referred families for service and effectively develop fraternization with community stakeholders, court personnel & law enforcement that fosters engagement within the community to strengthen and support parental capacity as well as build stronger families with a coalition of supports.